

IGNITE

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

Sunday, April 16, 2023

Acts 4:1-22

Reading Acts 4 is to be reminded when and where persecution began against individual Christians and the church. The entire chapter is built around the theme of persecution. Shortly after the resurrection, believers began to face persecution. Peter and John provide powerful examples for us to follow.

1. You can expect persecution for proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. (verses 1-7)

Persecution ebbs and flows throughout history against Christians. However, it is always present somewhere. Since persecution began in Jerusalem against Christians, there are many types of persecution.

- Physical
- Social
- Economic
- Emotional
- Subtle
- Overt
- Intimidation

In Mark 13:13, we read, “You shall be hated of all men for my sake.” In 2 Corinthians 1:5, the afflictions of Christ overflowed toward us. To the Corinthians, Paul says he was always bearing in his body the dying of Jesus Christ. He says to the Galatians, “I bear in my body the marks of Christ.” He even prayed for more, that I may know Him, and fellowship of His sufferings. Philippians 3:10. For the Christian then, persecution is a noble expectation. It produces growth and glory, and maturity, and assurance, and blessing, and encouragement, and reward, and is part of who we are. It is one of the privileges of our union with Christ.

(Matthew 5:10-12; Luke 21:12; John 15:20)

2. You must be prepared to face persecution as a Christian. (verse 8-16)

Peter was able to face persecution because he was...

- Spirit filled (verse 8)
- Faithful to speak (verses 9-12)
- Unashamed (verse 13)

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3. Your response to persecution is an opportunity to glorify God. (verses 17-22)

- They were obedient to Christ
- They were respectful
- They were bold
- They were clear

(Matthew 5:44 , Matthew 10:23; Romans 12:14)

Key Thought: “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33 (NASB95)