

# ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## Part 15 – When is it Okay not to Obey God?

### Acts 5.27-42

*Hostility of culture* – whenever someone has something to lose because of the Gospel, you can expect hostility (religious or political) – and blame-shifting is one of the easiest ploys

- Everyone has something to lose because of the Gospel...but EVERYTHING to gain

#### **Obey God (v.29)**

- Don't use this to justify your selfishness or insecurity or even to jab your finger in the eye of folks you consider too religious
- The essence of this statement is the context of their arrest and the demand for silence – DON'T SPEAK (Jesus has best possible answers and the world needs to know them!)
- Language of evil – who are you to judge?
  - We tell our story as one of pain rather than one of failure
- Beauty of purity
  - Impurity doesn't work
  - Love is still celebrated as monogamous and lasting – Nicholas Sparks vs. 50 Shades
  - Purity is internal and expressed external – why it works! Still have passion but it has proper channels to run in
- Necessity of Wisdom
  - We live in a world of reactive thought with a refusal to wait that leads to selfless action that is partial to those we like – none of that is Wisdom (James 3)
- Insufficiency of Leadership
  - If I am not following, then I may be bossing, managing, dictating, manipulating, or directing, but I'm not leading – servanthood as model
- Obey God = live fearlessly and speak clearly
  - Apostles were living out what Jesus said – Fear right Person (Luke 12.4-7)
  - Living fearlessly and speaking clearly happens because of the Gospel

#### **Because of the Gospel (v.30-32)**

- Pursuit (v.30) – God came after us in all of our brokenness
- Propitiation (v.30-31) – Jesus paid to forgive our sin and purchased favor with God
  - God came after us and paid the price when we were at our worst! Why wouldn't we obey that kind of God and hope in Him?
- Proclamation (v.32) – undoubtable missionary seasoning – SALT on eggs
  - It doesn't require more, it's already there – this is not an add on (keeps us from thinking evangelism is for someone else)

### **No matter the cost (v.33-42)**

- Threats – emotional toll is not to be ignored but not to be exalted either
- Waiting – without control or insight (often hardest part)
- Beating – folded strap, 1/3 on front 2/3 on back
- Their response is remarkable: joy at joining Jesus in suffering and ongoing witness
  - Why? Because they must obey God rather than men

Obey God because of the Gospel no matter the cost

### Questions for Discussion

1. What is the most difficult thing that God has ever asked you to do? What was your response? What was the result?
2. Read James 3.13-17. How does James compare and contrast the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of heaven? What are examples of each that you can identify?
3. In the sermon, Trent worked with the idea of the Gospel as pursuit, propitiation, and proclamation. Think about your own story of coming to understand the Gospel. Where can you see those three elements in your story? Read 1 John 2.1-2. How does this passage display those three elements?
4. Who is someone you can think of that has suffered because they followed Christ? Was their suffering physical or something else? Out of the three forms of suffering listed above (threats, waiting, beating), which would be the worst for you? Why?
5. How could the disciples have joy and ongoing witness in the midst of their punishment? Read James 1.2-4. How does James speak to this question?