

Series: The Unstoppable Church (6/10/18)

Title: Facing Opposition

Text: Acts 4

(Matt 16:18) *upon this rock (Speaking of Himself)*

I will build my church;

& the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Jesus promised His Church would be Unstoppable.

Acts is our NT History Book of how the FBCJ carried out the Great Commission.

Acts is our & Operations Manual for the FBCK.

I. The Church's First Experience of Persecution:

What is Persecution to you? @work/school/online?

Unfriended/Unfollowed/Blocked?

(Jn 15:20) *Jesus Said: If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;*

(1 Pet 4:12-13) Hang on It's coming your way!

(1 Pet 4:16) We are to Glorify God through it.

(1 Pet 4:19) We are to trust God through it.

(Vs 1-2) & as they spake unto the people, the priests, & the captain of the temple, & the Sadducees came upon them, 2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

Our Method: Preaching

Our Message: The Gospel

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

Thinking a little prison time should make them recant.

Would jail time make you turn your back on Jesus.

What would it take for you to return to your sin?

What would it take for you to quit being faithful?

4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; & the number of the men was about 5000.

Our Mission: Evangelism - Repent, Believe, Receive!

5000 missionaries to their Families & Social Network

Do you realize that you're every bit a missionary to

your family & social network as these men?

B. The enemies of Christ Oppose the Gospel: (vs 5-7)

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and

as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7 And when

they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

'Who gave you authorization to do these things?'

Unbelievers always seek an alternate explanation.

B/C an Alternate Explanation takes no submission to

God, or humility.

If it was man's authority, they could choose not to

obey & reserve the right to complain about it.

BUT if It is God's authority, they have no choice.

Our answer to opposition is Jesus Christ: (8-12)

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost,

2nd Ref to Peter being “Filled” with the Holy Spirit.

W/o Tongues: some believe you can’t be w/o it.

Our Method: Spirit Filled Preaching

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

Our Message: The Gospel-Death, Burial, Resurrection

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Peter uses an OT Reference & Historical Illustration

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Peter Quotes (Ps 118:22)

(1 Pet 2:4-8) Peter Illustrates using an Historical event

Jewish tradition: as Solomon’s temple construction.

Each specific stone was cut and fitted off-site.

Transported & fitted @ the site by stone masons

The story was, the cornerstone of the Temple was shipped in advance.

The builders rejected the stone, not recognizing it.

They set it aside, tripping & stumbling over it.

It was cast aside and weeds grew up around it.

When time came for the corner stone to be installed, word was sent to the quarry that they were ready

The quarry replied it had been sent long ago.

They had to go get it.

Psalmist alluded to this event and prophetically made application to the Messiah.

Peter preaches that Jesus Christ is the long sought for corner stone they had foolishly rejected.

(Is 28:16; Zech 4:7) ref Messiah as a corner stone.

Our Mission: Evangelism - Repent, Believe, Receive!

Peter makes A Call to Receive the Lord!

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (John 14:6)

How could Peter Preach like that?

C. It was Evident that the had been with Christ:

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

“Boldness”- Evidence of being filled with the Spirit.

I know whom I have believed, & he is able...

“perceived that they were unlearned & ignorant men

Common men, not of social rank or Education.

“they took knowledge of them,”

“knowledge” they understood they were 2 of the 12.

They testified of what they experienced.

“that they had been with Jesus.”

“Your who your run with.”

Illus: That’s why it is OK to Pick your kids friends!

What effects does your friends have on you?

Are you bringing them to Christ, or are they bringing you down to the World.

Does your language change?

Does your Anger level? Entertainment?

Time with Christ, brings a visible change in your life!

Can those closest to you tell when you have been around Jesus?

Can they tell when you haven’t spend time with Jesus

Maybe its time you picked a better friend:

There is no better friend than Jesus.

The Miracle confirmed the Truth of the Gospel:

14 & beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

Hard hearts always reject the evidence:

As the Jewish authorities conferred, it was evident they could not undo or explain the miracle.

But they still refused to believe.

Some of the people you witness to will also.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it.

Not only will they refuse the evidence...

Unbelievers Hinder the Spread of the Gospel:

17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

It comes down to the ? Will we Serve God or Man?

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

When human authority conflicts with God’s authority, we must always obey God.

Human government is an institution ordained of God; BUT When it contradicts divine mandate, we have no alternative but to obey God.

(Josh 24:15) choose you this day whom ye will serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD

When being a Christian labels you as a hater.

When the Bible is labeled Hate Speech.

When witnessing is labeled a Hate Crime.

OH Wait, that's all going on now!

Imagine At your Next staff meeting you are told:

All Bibles are to be left at home.

All religious conversations are prohibited.

All Religious jewelry is prohibited.

You are denied an annual raise b/c your religious posts on social media reflect poorly on the company?

Will you take the fish sticker off the back bumper?

YES? Then Take it off now you Hypocrite! Why Wait

What if they ask you to compromise the bible?

Waiter & Waitresses serve Beverage Alcohol.

(Hab 2:15) Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, ...!

Who are you Going to serve? God, Self, World?

Who are you Serving now? (serving self is Idolatry)

Holy Spirit Filled Christians, cannot be silent:

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. (1 John 1:1-3) (Jer 20:9)

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done. 22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

Miracles Confirm the Truth of the Gospel.

Miracles Glorify God.

II. The Church's Response to Persecution is Prayer

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

Persecution Unifies the Church in Prayer:

(24a) And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord,

The devil didn't know that the church is like a tea bag
Its most effective when it's in hot water.

The Church was Unstoppable b/c of its prayer life!

They had Confidence in Prayer:

Because They saw God as the *Creator* of all things. (Vs 24b) and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

They had Confidence in Prayer:

Because They saw God as the *Controller* of all things. 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said,

Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

David prophecy in 700 yrs BC in (Ps 2:1-2)

They Knew God Had Everything Under Control
27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.
*(*28) For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.*

Illus: *We foolishly think that the devil has snuck in w/o God knowing.*

There is NO Panic in Heaven, only plans.

Trinity never meets in an Emergency Session!
This is what God fore-ordained.

We See their Confidence in God, in this prayer.

B/C They saw God as the Creator of all things.

B/C They saw God as the Controller of all things.

B/C They saw God as the Conqueror of all things:

Because They knew the rest of the Psalm 2
(Ps 2:4-6) *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision (ridicule/mockery) 5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. 6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

Do U see God as Creator of all things when you Pray?
Then there is nothing outside His Ability to supply.
There is nothing outside of God's ability but that which is outside of His will.

Do U see God as Controller of all things when U Pray
Nothing is outside of His Ability to bring to it pass.

Do U see God as Conqueror of all things when U Pray
He is Going to Win!
There is no future in picking a fight with God!
There is No Good Outcomes to Fighting God's will.

It took Persecution to mature their prayer life!

It will take Trouble & Trials to mature yours too.

Unstoppable b/c they were Confident in Prayer
Unstoppable b/c they were Committed in Prayer:
29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

"Servant" ~ Gk: Bond Slave

They knew WHO they belonged to.

Illus: *Have you & I made that Commitment to God.*

He is not your Co-Pilot,

He is not your Business Partner,

He IS Your LORD!

To have Power in your Prayer Life, Submit yourself to God as your LORD! (Boss, King, Owner, MIP)

We demonstrate this by our Obedience & Faithfulness
***Why would God give you more strength and Power
to Serve Yourself or the devil?***

(James 4:3) *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask
amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*

Why should He answer your Prayer?

Answers to Prayer is NOT for REBELS!

(Is 59:1-2) God will not Hear you!

(Vs 29) ***grant unto thy servants, that with all
boldness they may speak thy word,***

They were committing to Speak God's Word!

They were asking for something in God's Will!

They were asking for Boldness to OBEY!

They were asking to Preach The Gospel & Do the
Great Commission!

Preaching got them into trouble!

But They didn't ask for better conditions.

But They didn't ask for an easier time.

**Jesus did not come to get you out of Trouble,
but to Get Into Trouble With you!**

30a By stretching forth thine hand to heal;

Asking God to Stretch forth His Hands ***through*** them.

"do through us what you would do if you were here!"

Their Hands would become His Hands.

Their Tongues would become His Tongue.

(Vs 30b) ***and that signs and wonders may be done***
(Acts 5:12) & *by the hands of the apostles were many
signs & wonders wrought among the people.*

We Must Dedicate our bodies to Him for His use!

(Vs 30c) ***by the name of thy holy child Jesus.***

They Exalted The Lord Jesus -

Why do we say... *"In the Name of Jesus!"*

Jesus said to Pray in His Name!

It means to pray with His Authority.

It means to pray for His Glory, NOT OURS!

(So Jesus will get all the Glory)

Our Prayers can be so selfish, b/c we pray to advance
ourselves & our situation.

God is Not our personal valet to make us comfortable.

God is Not our personal butler to serve us!

God is Not our personal maid to clean up Our messes.

God is Not there to satisfy Our Whims and Wants.

God is not Pea Pod, who fills your orders &
delivers them for you!

***Prayer is the Means to bring the Power of God into
our lives: For His Glory, His Purpose, & His Praise.***

Powerful Prayer comes from Confidence in God.

Powerful Prayer comes from Commitment to God:

We see the Consequences of Powerful Prayer:

31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together;

God said Amen! to their prayer with an earthquake!

and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

(Vs 31a) The Filling of the Holy: The Spirit Fills:
When we recognize God as the Creator/Controller/
Conqueror we are submitting to His Holy Spirit.

Submission brings the filling of the Holy Spirit.

There must be a daily re-filling, by Daily Submitting.

(Vs 31b) The Witness of the Apostles:

they spake the word of God with boldness.

The Spirit Empowers our witness:

Spake with Boldness

The Spirit will Empower us when we Witness.

(Vs 32) The Unity: *One Heart and One Soul!*

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Our Ministry: Discipleship - Unity on the Word!

(Ps 133:1) *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

Unity is possible by submission to the Word of God. Unity is achieved through Prayer!

You will fall in love for those you pray for & with.

Spirit is Received.

Unity is Achieved.

The Gospel is Believed.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus:

Generosity is (common place) (Vs 34) Redefining of Values.

and great grace was upon them all. 34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

(Vs 35-37) Cheerful Giving

35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. 36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, 37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

(1 Pet 4:16) We are to Glorify God through the persecution.

(1 Pet 4:19) We are to trust God through the persecution.

They were Unstoppable b/c they responded to Persecution in Prayer:

They were Unstoppable b/c they were Confident in Prayer.

They were Unstoppable b/c they were Committed in Prayer.