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Rice Memorial MBC

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Witnessing to the Truth

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828/1913 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **September 20, 2015**

***Worship with us at 3201 Mary St until we rebuild our sanctuary at 802 W. 15th,
...We're just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas...***

Acts 5:27-29, 33-42

Introduction: On the night of his death, Jesus told his disciples, "If they have **persecuted me**, they **WILL** also **persecute you**." (John 15:20) Paul likewise declared that "all that will (desire, be inclined to) live godly in Christ Jesus **SHALL** (not must) **suffer persecution**" (2 Tim. 3:12). Christ even promised a special blessing on the persecuted (Matt. 5:10-12), declaring that their **reward** would be **great** in heaven.

Even in countries with a Christian heritage, such as the United States, Canada, and many European nations, persecution exists. This often includes ridicule, ostracism (exclusion), and efforts to stop evangelistic efforts.

As it was in the apostolic age, so **persecution** in other parts of today's world includes **imprisonment, beatings, and even death**. To be a Christians in such places requires a commitment to suffer for Christ. If nothing else, this means that those wearing the name "Christian" do so in a manner quite different from those in the so-called free world.

How the early church reacted to persecution can be instructive, for **opposition** to the **Christian faith** will certainly **intensify** as we near the **end** of the age (2 Timothy 3:13).
(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series*)

John 15:18-21, If the **world HATE you**, ye know that it **hated me** before it **hated** you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world **hateth** you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. **IF (forasmuch as [SINCE])** they have persecuted me, **they WILL** also **PERSECUTE** you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my **name's sake**, because they **KNOW not** him that **SENT** me.

Persecute defined 1377, pursue, persecute (1. to pursue in a manner to injure, VEX (make angry or annoyed by little provocations; to irritate; to torment; to harass) or afflict (trouble; grieve; distress); to harass with unjust punishment or penalties for supposed offenses). 2. to afflict, harass, or destroy (kill) for adherence to a particular creed (BELIEF) or system of religious principles, or to a mode of worship).

John 16:33, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have PEACE. In the world **ye SHALL** (he did NOT say MUST) have **tribulation (pressure, persecution):** but be of **good cheer;** I have overcome the WORLD.

Acts 5:14-18, And **believers** were the **more added** to the Lord, **multitudes** both of men and women.) Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the **shadow** of **Peter** passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were **vexed with unclean spirits:** and **they were healed every one.** Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the **Sadducees,**) and were filled with **indignation (heat, i.e. "zeal" (as of an enemy, malice),** And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common PRISON.

NOTE: As Campbell said: The Sadducees saw in Christ's resurrection the **refutation** of their system; and therefore they violently seized the apostles, because their preaching that doctrine was **fatal** to their distinguishing tenets (beliefs, doctrines). (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:19-20, But the **angel** of the Lord by night **opened the prison doors,** and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and **SPEAK** in the **temple** to the **people ALL the words** of **this life.**

NOTE: This does not denote any "particular" angel, but simply an angel. The "article" is not used in the original. The word "angel" denotes properly a "messenger," and particularly it is applied to the pure spirits that are sent to this world on errands of mercy. See the notes on Matthew 1:20. The case here was evidently "a miracle." An angel was **employed** for this **special purpose,** and the design might have been: **(1)** To reprove (disapprove, correct) the Jewish rulers, and to convince them of their guilt in resisting the gospel of God; **(2)** To convince the apostles more firmly of the protection and approbation (approval) of God; **(3)** To **encourage them** more and more in their work, and in the faithful discharge of their HIGH DUTY; and, **(4)** To give the people a **new** and **impressive proof** of the **TRUTH** of the **message** which they bore. That they were "imprisoned" would be known to the people. That they were made as secure as possible was also known. When, therefore, the next morning, before they could have been tried or acquitted, they were found again in the temple, delivering the same message still, it was a new and striking proof that they were sent by God. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:25-28, Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and **teaching the people.** Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they **feared** the people, lest they should have been **stoned.** And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not **we** straitly **command you** that ye should **not teach** in this **name?** and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your **doctrine,** and intend to bring this **man's blood** upon us.

NOTE: The people were favorable to the apostles. If **violence** had been attempted, or they had been taken in a cruel and forcible manner, the consequence would have been tumults and bloodshed. In this way, also, the apostles showed that they were NOT disposed to excite tumult. Opposition by them would have excited commotion; and though "they" would have been rescued, yet they resolved **to show** that they **were not obstinate** (unyielding), **contumacious** (disobedient), or **rebellious,** but were disposed, as far as it could be done with a clear conscience, to yield obedience to the laws of the land... (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:29, Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.**

NOTE: There was no device by which the powerful **priestly enemies** of the Lord and

his apostles could **intimidate** the **WITNESSES** of his resurrection. They were here bluntly told by the apostles that they were subject to God's orders, rather than to the Sanhedrin's prejudice. A new age had dawned, and the religious leaders could not prevent it.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:30, *The God of our fathers **raised up** Jesus, whom ye **slew** and **hanged** on a tree.*

Thought 1. Just another verse proving Father God and Jesus are two separate persons.

Hebrews 1:8, But unto the **Son** he (*God the Father* saith, Thy throne, **O God**, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

NOTE: It was well to introduce this, that the council might at once see that they preached no strange God; and that he who so highly honored the patriarchs, Moses, and the prophets, had yet more **highly honored Jesus Christ** in **raising him** from the **dead** and seating him at his right hand, and proclaiming him as the only giver of salvation and the repentance which leads to it.

Whom ye slew - They charge them again with the murder of Christ, as they had done before, Acts 4:10-12, where see the notes.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:31, *Him hath **God exalted** with his right hand to be a **Prince (author)** and a SAVIOUR, for to give **repentance** to Israel, and **forgiveness of sins**.*

NOTE: This statement that Israel needed to REPENT was totally unacceptable to the Sanhedrin. That they, the religious leaders of the people, needed to repent was preposterous in their eyes. As Walker said: They were as much incensed as a body of bishops would be today, if the same charge should be made against them. They had absolute **confidence** that their descent from Abraham guaranteed them complete possession of every promise of the Old Testament.

Prince and a Saviour ... The word "**prince**" has the meaning of "**Author**," as in the "Author of eternal Life," being the same word as in Acts 3:15.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:32, *And we are **HIS witnesses** of these things; and so is also the **Holy Ghost**, whom God hath given to them that OBEY HIM.*

NOTE: For this purpose they had been **appointed**, Acts 1:8, Acts 1:21-22; Acts 2:32; Acts 3:15; Luke 24:48.

Of these things - Particularly of the **resurrection** of the Lord Jesus, and of the events which had followed it. Perhaps, however, he meant to include everything pertaining to the life, teachings, and death of the Lord Jesus.

And so is also ... - The descent of the Holy Spirit to **endow them** with remarkable **gifts** Acts 2:1-4, to awaken and convert such a multitude Acts 2:41; Acts 4:4; Acts 5:14, was an unanswerable attestation (**witness**) of the **truth** of these **doctrines** and of the Christian religion. So manifest and decided was the presence of God attending them, That "they" could have no doubt that what they said was true; and so open and public was this attestation (**witness**), that it was an evidence to all the people of the TRUTH of their doctrine.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Romans 8:8-9, So then they that are IN the **flesh** (*the old nature from Adam*) cannot please God. But ye are NOT IN the flesh, but **IN the Spirit**, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Now if any man have not the **Spirit of Christ**, he is none of his.

Acts 5:33, When they **heard** that, they were **cut** to the **heart**, and took counsel to **slay** them.

NOTE: The sermon the apostles had just given was identical in all essentials to the one delivered on Pentecost; but the results produced by the declaration of the gospel were opposite in kind. On Pentecost the people were **pricked in the heart**, which means they **believed**; and here the priests were **CUT** to the **heart**, which means they were **infuriated** and **filled** with murderous thoughts. Even the apostles seemed to marvel at such a thing; for it was made the subject of Paul's comment that the gospel saved some and destroyed others, was an **odor of life** to some and an **odor of death** to others (2 Corinthians 2:15,16). "It is the set of the sail, and not the gale, that determines the way we go."

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

2 Corinthians 2:15-17, For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the **savour of death unto death**; and to the other the **savour of life** unto **life**. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of **sincerity**, but as of God, in the sight of God **speak we** IN Christ.

Acts 5:34-39, Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named **Gamaliel**, a doctor of the law, had in **reputation** among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, **take heed** to yourselves what ye intend to do as **touching** these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, **boasting** himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; **and all**, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, **Refrain from these men**, and let them alone: for IF this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But IF **it be of God**, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to **fight against God**.

NOTE: Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law - "This," says Dr. Lightfoot, "was Rabban Gamaliel the first; commonly, by way of distinction, called Rabban Gamaliel the elder. He was president of the council after the death of his own father, Rabban Simeon, who was the son of Hillel. He was **St. Paul's master** (teacher), and the 35th receiver of the traditions, and on this account might not be improperly termed νομοδιδασκαλος, a **doctor** of the LAW, because he was one that **kept** and **handed down** the **Cabala** received from **Mount Sinai**.

CABALA, It is from the sense of reception.] Tradition, or a mysterious kind of science among Jewish Rabbins, pretended to have been delivered to the ancient Jews by revelation, and transmitted by oral tradition; serving for the interpretation of difficult passages of scripture. This science consists chiefly in understanding the combination of certain letters, words and numbers, which are alleged to be significant. Every letter, word, number and accent of the law is supposed to contain a mystery, and the cabalists pretend even to foretell future events...

He **died** eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem, his son Simeon succeeding him in the chair, who perished in the ruins of the city." Though probably no favourer of Christianity, yet, for a **Pharisee**, he seems to have possessed a more liberal mind than most of his brethren; the following advice was at once humane, sensible, candid, and **enlightened**.

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:40, And to him they **agreed**: and when they had called the apostles, and **beaten**

them, they **commanded** that they **should not speak** in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

NOTE: To him they agreed - That is, **not to slay the apostles**, nor to attempt any farther to imprison them; but their malevolence could not be thus easily satisfied; and therefore **they beat them** - probably gave each of them **thirty-nine stripes**; and, having commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, they let them go. It was of Jesus they were afraid: not of the apostles. They plainly saw that, if the doctrine of Christ was preached, it must prevail; and, if it prevailed, they must come to nought. It was a wise saying of the popish bishops in the time of Queen Mary - If we do not **put down** this **Printing**, it will put us down: They labored to put down the printing, but they could not; and, under God, the printing, by exposing the wickedness of their doctrine and practices, and especially by multiplying copies of the **New Testament**, did most effectually put them down.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

Acts 5:41, And they departed from the presence of the council, **rejoicing** that they were counted **WORTHY** to **suffer shame** for his **name**.

NOTE: Rejoicing - Nothing to most people would seem more **disgraceful** than a public whipping. It is a punishment inflicted usually not so much because it gives "pain," as because it is esteemed to be attended with DISGRACE. The **Jewish rulers** doubtless **desired** that the apostles might be **so affected** with the sense of this disgrace as to be unwilling to appear again in public, or to preach the gospel anymore. Yet in this they were disappointed. The effect was just the reverse. If it be asked why they rejoiced in this manner, we may reply: **(1)** Because they were permitted thus to **imitate** the **example** of the Lord Jesus. He had been scourged and reviled, and they were glad that they were permitted to be treated as he was. Compare Philemon 3:10; Col. 1:24; 1 Peter 4:13, "**Rejoice** inasmuch as ye are **partakers of Christ's sufferings.**" **(2)** because, by this, they had **evidence** that they were the friends and followers of Christ. It was clear they were engaged in the same cause that he was. They were enduring the same sufferings, and striving to advance the same interests. As they loved the "cause," they would rejoice in enduring even the shame and sufferings which the cause, of necessity, involved. **Counted worthy** - Esteemed to be deserving. That is, esteemed "**fit**" for it "by the Sanhedrin." It does not mean that "God" esteemed them worthy, but that the Jewish council **judged** them **fit** to suffer **shame** in this cause. They evinced (made evident) so much **ZEAL** and **DETERMINATION** of purpose that they were judged **fit** objects to be **treated AS** (like) the Lord Jesus had himself been. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)

1 Peter 4:12-16, Beloved, **think it not strange** concerning the **fiery trial** which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But **REJOICE**, inasmuch as ye are **partakers of Christ's sufferings**; that, when **his glory** shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding **JOY**. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, **happy (fortunate)** are ye; for the **spirit of glory** and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is **glorified**. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man **suffer** as a Christian, **let him not be ashamed**; but let him **glorify God** on this behalf.

Acts 5:42, And **daily** in the **temple**, and in every house, they **ceased not to TEACH** and PREACH Jesus Christ.

NOTE: Preachers of the Gospel, **look at those men**, and **learn** at once **your duty**, your employment, and your interest.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=5#1>)