

MOVING FORWARD

SESSION 3

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READ

Take some time in advance to read and consider the Bible study questions and come up with personal examples to encourage discussion.

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

DISCUSS

We hope those who participate in the study walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of amazing discussion.

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TROUBLED TIMES

OPEN

As you open up tonight, let's think about this past week. What was the most fearful experience you ever had? When was the last time you felt intimidated by an individual or group of people?

What jumped out at you from the message this week? What led you to really think or even better, to change your actions?

WATCH THE VIDEO

What jumped out at you from the video?

INTRODUCTION

Why did the Jewish leaders of the day so desperately long to see everything about Jesus erased from existence?

As we learned through the Gospel of Luke, the Jewish leaders had the desire to be looked up to. They prayed long prayers and wore long robes for the purpose of notoriety.

What do you think were some of the motivations of the jewish leaders of the day? Why did they want the authority of the church so much?

If they could be seen as the authority when it came to religion, then they could make up the rules. They could then enslave the people with multitudes of laws, and statutes created by man, not by God. By doing so, they ensured their own prosperity and power.

READ

READ ACTS 5:17-23

What was the response of the Jewish leaders of the day when the disciples began preaching and teaching about Jesus in the temple?

The disciples came along with a NEW covenant that completely pulls the rug out from under

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their old way of life. So, to maintain their authority, they must rid Jerusalem of this teaching, so they drug them into the council and then throw them into prison.

What lesson can we learn from the disciples in this passage?

When the church is faithful to its calling, worldly people AND Satan will retaliate with persecution. What we must remember is we have only one option in those circumstances: We must obey God rather than men!

Where is the true authority in this situation?

No matter what authorities we may have in this life, whether it is our government, parents, teachers, bosses, or any other human authority, we must realize that all true authority belongs to God and we must obey Him over all others.

When given the choice between earthly authority and heavenly authority, which should we choose?

Even though there may be some earthly power that seems to be the authority, always remember the true authority is always God. This passage reminds us that when earthly power and heavenly power are in conflict, our allegiance MUST be to God.

Why were the Sadducees filled with Jealousy?

The main issue here is that the Sadducees' authority is being severely challenged. The disciples were continuing to disobey them and preached Jesus Christ, healing in His name, and it was the disciples who were getting more and more popular with the people as the disciples were increasing greatly in and around the city.

What was the Sadducees thought process in arresting the disciples?

To help curb the opinion of the people toward the disciples, the Sadducees have them arrested

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publicly and placed in a public prison. It was their purpose in the arrest was to make sure everyone knew they had been arrested so that public opinion would turn.

What did this misstep reveal about the Sadducees?

That these Jewish leaders were nothing more than cheap politicians who thrive on popularity and polls.

Did the Jewish leader's plans succeed?

God's plan would not be spoiled. In fact, it would be this public arrest that would come back on the Sadducees to haunt them.

What should this situation remind us about our God?

Our sovereign God accomplishes His purposes, again and again, no matter who looks to have authority, God always has ultimate authority.

What is the irony of this situation for the disciples?

The disciples, who were more concerned about what God desired and less concerned with what the Jewish rulers desired, were freed -both physically and spiritually - to do the will of God. There is great freedom when we fear God and not man.

LET'S PRAY

Consider the following questions as you pray together as a LifeGroup.

- Who do you fear more? God or man?
- Are you swayed by appearances or opinions?
- What determines what you do or how you live your life?
- Do you act based on what you perceive will make others like you, or do you act based on what is in line with God?
- Do you need man's approval or God's?

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BIG IDEA

When the church is faithful to its calling, worldly people AND Satan will retaliate with persecution. What we must remember is we have only one option in those circumstances: We must obey God rather than men! There is great freedom when we fear God and not man. To fear God brings freedom AND blessing. The disciples are a perfect example of a group of men who care more about what God wants than anything else. They were driven by a deep-seated desire to please God rather than men. They did what was right in God's eyes regardless of what or who wanted something else and they experienced freedom.

BIBLE STUDY NOTES

READ ACTS 5:17-23

PERSONAL REFLECTION

What forms of opposition do Christians experience today?

For what principles should a Christian stand at all costs?

If the government told you that you could not pray, show your Bible, or talk about God in public, what would you do?



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