

“Stand Firm When Met With Resistance!”

“Early Church” Series
Sunday Morning
July 10, 2022

We praise God when life is good, how do we respond when facing opposition? But what about when times get tough?

John 15:18-21

“If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first.¹⁹ The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.²⁰ Do you remember what I told you? ‘A slave is not greater than the master.’ Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you.²¹ They will do all this to you because of me, for they have rejected the one who sent me.” (NLT)

What will happen to the church when it experiences resistance and persecution?

We have a need to be bold in a world of unbelievers. What do we do when we experience resistance concerning our Christian faith?

1. The Good News Of Jesus Will Be Met By Opposition Because It Is Counterculture.

Vs 1-4- “...While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees.² These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead.³ They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning.⁴ But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of men who believed now totaled about 5,000.” (NLT)

Not only were the Apostles teaching that salvation is only through Jesus but they were also teaching about the resurrection, something the Sadducees adamantly opposed.

2. Man’s Rejection Could Not Stop God’s Plan.

Vs 5-12- “...The next day the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law met in Jerusalem.⁶ Annas the high priest was there, along with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and other relatives of the high priest.⁷ They brought in the two disciples and demanded, “By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?”⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of our people,⁹ are we being questioned today because we’ve done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed?¹⁰ Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene,¹¹ the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead.¹¹ For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says, ‘The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.’¹² There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.” (NLT)

Peter's Boldness... So, where did this change take place? What is different with Peter?...⁸ ***Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them.***

They rejected the stone and God has made Jesus the cornerstone...

¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

Everyone who comes to God will come to Him through Jesus Christ.

3. Be Bold & Stand.

Vs 13-22- "...The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.¹⁴ But since they could see the man who had been healed standing right there among them, there was nothing the council could say. ¹⁵ So they ordered Peter and John out of the council chamber^[c] and conferred among themselves. ¹⁶ "What should we do with these men?" they asked each other. "We can't deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it. ¹⁷ But to keep them from spreading their propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus' name again."¹⁸ So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, "Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? ²⁰ We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard." ²¹ The council then threatened them further, but they finally let them go because they didn't know how to punish them without starting a riot. For everyone was praising God ²² for this miraculous sign—the healing of a man who had been lame for more than forty years." (NLT)

In the end, Peter and John were not going to stop speaking about Jesus. Regardless what the religious and local authorities said or did.

No matter what the level of resistance is, we will experience it.