

How Do You React to the Gospel?

Our text this morning reminds us of this great truth and more. In fact, we find here _____ markedly different and powerful reactions to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone in the world is in one of these three categories.

I. The Reaction of the Preachers: They _____ it!

II. The Reaction of the Priests: They _____ it!

III. The Reaction of the People: They _____ it!

I. The Reaction of the Preachers: They Revealed it! “Now as they _____ to the people...they _____ the people and _____ in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” (Acts 4:1–2, NKJV) The God-breathed text here uses _____ different Greek words to describe the way the Apostles Peter and John revealed the Gospel truth to the people, and each of them carries an important lesson for those of us who have the joy of sharing the Gospel with those who need to hear it.

A. They revealed it _____. “And as they _____ (literally “were speaking”) {Greek word λαλεω “la-le-oo”} to the people...” Let's not overlook this little word just because it is simple, plain, and common (323 times in the NT). They spoke. This is a word of _____. It means they communicated simply, plainly, and clearly the good news of the Gospel.

B. They revealed it _____. “...they _____ the people...” (Acts 4:2, NKJV) “Taught” here is from the Greek word {Greek word διδασκω “di-dask-oo”}. It is the same word from which we get our words “_____” and “doctor.” They taught the people.

C. They revealed it _____. There is one other word that the Bible uses here to describe how the disciples revealed the Gospel--- they _____ it. Preaching has fallen on hard times now. Preachers seldom do it, and people do not really want it. Perhaps it is the times in which we live today, but people do not really like men who are sure of anything anymore. You cannot be considered “learned” or “scholarly” if you talk with any certainty about the Scriptures. Too bad Peter and John did not know this.

They spoke with simplicity and Scripturally, but they also spoke with _____. They truly believed what they were saying. They were steeped in the Old Testament, but the words were not some antique relic of the past but were _____ reality for the present. The reality of the resurrection, though spelled out in Isaiah 53 and in the Psalms and in other places, was not something they had merely read about.

II. The Reaction of the Priests: They _____ It! “Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put

Key Words: Gospel, Grace, Reaction, Spoke, Taught, Preached, Religion, Sadducees, Persecution

Key Verses: Acts 2:1-4; Acts 16:30-31; John 7:46; Acts 23:8; Acts 17:5; Acts 16:17-18; Romans 10:17

them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.” (Acts 4:1–3, NKJV) You can tell a great deal about the Gospel by those who _____ it and stand against it. Doesn’t it strike you as odd that our society has become so deeply paranoid _____ the Bible? We can tolerate all sorts of weird ideas in our public discourse. The government can hire New Age gurus to conduct seminars for its employees.

The Gospel is often best perceived by its bitterest enemies. We Christians often fear that the Gospel will not work, but the _____ knows it will. This is why they _____ so hard against it! The "powers that be" in this passage expressed themselves against the Gospel much like the movers and shakers of our present evil world. Note their three reactions:

A. They were anxious. “Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,” (Acts 4:1, NKJV) We find here _____ distinct groups of people who were set against the Gospel and those who presented it:

1. The Priests - Organized _____: “Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,” (Acts 4:1, NKJV) The Greek word for priests {ἱερεύς hiereus hi-er-eus} is equivalent to the Hebrew word {כֹּהֵן } kohen.

Certainly, within the Biblical definition there is nothing inherently _____ with ‘priesthood,’ however this text reminds us of the inherent _____ of what priesthood can become. These men tended to the building, the sacrifices, and the ceremonies associated with first century Judaism. They should have welcomed the message of the Gospel.

After all, every piece of furniture in the _____, every sacrifice at the altar, every bit of burning incense was all originally designed by God to _____ to the coming _____, the Lord Jesus Christ. However, these men had become so obsessed with the forms, the _____, the buildings, and their own place in it that they forgot what they were pointing to!

2. The _____ - Government Officials: “Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,” (Acts 4:1, NKJV)

3. The _____ – Liberal Thinkers: “Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,” (Acts 4:1, NKJV) These {Σαδδουκαῖοι Saddoukaioi} were a religious party of Jews who took the name Sadducees because they claimed to be of the line of _____, the High Priest during the rule of David. The Sadducees were a wealthy, aristocratic religio-political party within first-century Judea. They were important powerbrokers at the center of politics and represented the upper class of the priestly aristocracy.

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Their identity, theology, political standing, and ultimate role in opposing the early Church are defined by several key characteristics:

1. Connection to the _____ and Priesthood:
2. _____ Theological Beliefs: The Sadducees held distinct, highly rigid, and secular theological views that separated them from other Jewish parties like the Pharisees:

_____ of the Resurrection:

Denial of _____ and Spirits:

Torah _____:

Absolute _____ Will:

Additionally, they held a unique messianic view, believing that the messianic age was an _____ process rather than a literal, datable event (like modern liberal Christians and Amillennialists). They believed this age had already dawned under their own supervision during the Maccabean (Hasmonean) supremacy. They were total worldly materialists, basically _____, and irreligious unbelievers masquerading as spiritual men. Their spiritual heirs today mock our Bible, deny the deity of Christ, scoff at prophecy, disdain preaching, object to morality, and in general have attempted to do what they could to bring to nought the Gospel of Christ.

B. They were _____. “being greatly _____ that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” (Acts 4:2, NKJV) These three groups were not content to bask in their own unbelief, but they attempted to make everyone else as spiritually _____ as they were on the inside.

C. They were _____. Acts 4:1-3 Nothing produces more ire in supposedly tolerant people than to teach the Scriptures for truth. They simply cannot abide anyone who believes and teaches the truth. The Scriptures use _____ terms that express the anger of the priests, the soldiers, and the Sadducees. Let’s look briefly at each one and observe something about the time as well.

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“They _____ upon them”

“Being _____ disturbed...”

“And they _____ hands on them...”

“and _____ them in custody...”

“...until the next _____, for it was already evening.”

III. The Reaction of the _____: They Received It! “However, many of those who heard the word _____; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.” (Acts 4:4, NKJV) But thank God there were some that received the truth of the Gospel that day. God is still in the soul saving business. Quickly note _____ things that were true of those who received the truth of the Word of God:

- A. **They _____ the Word:** “However, many of those who heard the _____ believed...”
- B. **They _____ the Word:** “**However**, many of those who heard the word believed...”
- C. **They _____ the Work:** “However, many of those who heard the word believed; **and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.**” (Acts 4:4, NKJV)