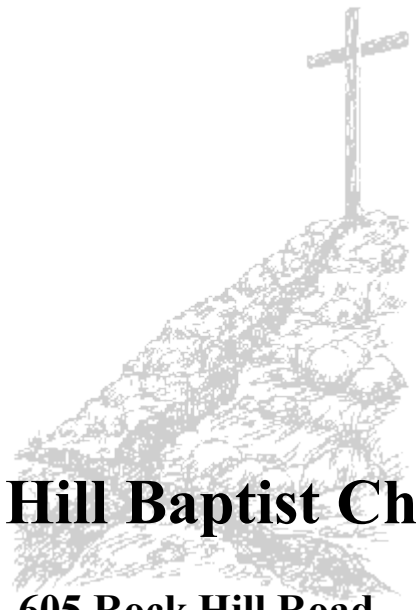


We Must

Acts 5:27-29



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Though we will cover much text today, we will focus on the text, as God empowers us, which states:

Acts 5:27-29 "And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, {28} 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 intend⁶ to bring this man's blood upon¹² us. {29} Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought¹ to obey God rather than men."

Why is this true? The Apostles said, "**We ought¹ to obey God rather than men**". That word "**ought**" is a word that conveys a sense of *duty*, an *obligation*, a *necessity* and not an option. We *must obey God* above man - but WHY?

1. I Must Obey God If I Want To Live An Extraordinary Life

Two options were put before the Apostles. The first option was *the command of men*. The Apostles had been warned earlier that they needed to stop preaching

⁶ Present Middle Indicative boulomai {pronounced boo'-lom-ah-ee}, are deliberately trying to

¹² The confusion of sin is evident in the fact that the Sanhedrin would not *own up* to what they did in crucifying Jesus.

¹ Present Indicative dei {pronounced die}, it is duty, obligation, that which is required

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salvation through faith in Christ alone. In fact, as we studied last week, the Apostles were handled very roughly for preaching that salvation and eternal life can only come by faith in Jesus Christ. In our previous chapter we saw how the Apostles were received:

Acts 4:1-3 (KJV) "And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, {2} Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. {3} And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide."

The Apostles spent a night in jail for preaching the Gospel. They were given orders and threatened by the religious but lost leaders of Israel,

Acts 4:21 (KJV) "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."

The Apostles could have stopped at this point, if they willed to do so, and nothing more would have been said. They could have returned to their fishing vessels, their daily activities, the own homes, and life would continue along its normal pace. They would have lived out their lives like so many other *nobodies* who waited on *somebody* to do something. They would not have moved

into their greater potentials, their greater calling, their greater lives. The only thing left to mark their passing from this life would have been a tombstone on a lonely grave.

But praise be to God that **these faithful men did not obey the thoughts of mankind instead of God! They went on and continued to obey God rather than men, and in so doing lived extraordinary lives, unforgettable lives, lives that were foundational to Christ's Church.** Yes, they were thrown in prison, mocked, beaten. These men, faithful believers, would continue to step out on faith, and though all but one (John the Revelator) would suffer death at the hands of unbelievers, their names will stand forever as *heroes of the faith*.

1. These faithful men did not obey the thoughts of mankind instead of God! They went on and continued to obey God rather than men, and in so doing lived _____ lives, _____ lives, lives that were _____ to Christ's Church.

How do you want to live you life? As someone who is *ordinary*, or someone who is known as a *world changer*? Do you want to be one of the faceless crowd, or do you want to stand out as one of God's Blessed? Do you want your legacy to be *shame*, or do you want your legacy to be *fame*?

Just prior to the Apostle's second imprisonment we read about three people. One of these people, Joses Barnabas,

obeyed God rather than man. His name is fondly mentioned in the Scripture:

Acts 4:36-37 (KJV) "And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas¹³, (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."

That *surname* the Apostles gave him, **Barnabas**, actually means *son of encouragement*. Joses was an encourager. He was obviously a thrifty man who gave his land to God's work.

The Bible makes a point of recognizing Joses as "a Levite". Most people read over this text without asking the obvious question. Why was it important that Joses was a "Levite"? Those of you who know about the Levites know that this tribe in Israel *never received* a portion of the Promised Land. God told the Levites that their portion was *God Himself* (**Numbers 3:35; 18:20; Deuteronomy 10:9**). This did not mean that Levites *couldn't* own land, it just meant that they weren't *given*

2. The Bible makes a point of recognizing Joses as "a Levite". Most people read over this text without asking the obvious question. Why was it important that Joses was a "Levite"? _____

land in Canaan. Joses was a landowner, a Levite who had purchased land. Oh Beloved, this is *so important* that you understand. You see, if I give you a thing, it is *no great sacrifice* if you give it away. Something freely given, picked up, or inherited without the *toil of sweat* that came with it is of little value. The *found apple* on the ground is not as precious to you as the apple from the tree you *planted, fertilized, and watered* for many years. A thing lightly received is often a thing lightly regarded. What Joses gave the Apostles was not *inherited land*, but it was land that he had to strive for, to work for, land he earned by the sweat of his brow. That's why its important that Joses was a Levite - and why it is so much more blessed that Joses sold his land and gave that money to the work of God. Joses was a giver. I want you to notice that Joses was not the only one who gave to the work of God, for we read:

Acts 4:34-35 (KJV) "Neither was there any among them [the Christians] that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, {35} And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

God honored all that these early Christians brought, but I want you to notice that the only name listed in God's Holy Scripture is *Joses' name*. These unnamed others, though their works were worthy of mention - for anything you give to God for Christ's sake, is blessed by our Creator. He praises those who give freely and cheerfully, for the Scripture says:

¹³ actually means *son of encouragement*

2 Corinthians 9:7 (KJV) "... for God loveth a cheerful giver."

There were many in the early Church who gave. They gave of their time, their talents, and their tithe, and God loved them for it. But Joses gave *in an extraordinary* way, so he was rewarded above all of those other legitimate givers. "**We ought¹ to obey God rather than men**" if we want to live extraordinary lives. "**We ought¹ to obey God rather than men**" if we want to live memorial lives, to live a life that will be remembered long after we leave this earth. I am certain that Joses had no idea his name would be recorded in this Holy Bible, a supernatural work of God. I am certain that Joses had no idea that his name would be read aloud two thousand years after he went to be with Jesus. "**We ought¹ to obey God rather than men**" if we want to be remembered and held up as an example for all the generations of people yet to come.

We see the extraordinary life of Joses, but we also see in our immediate context of **Ananias and Sapphira**. These two Christians - and I do believe they were Christians, though you are free to disagree with me - saw what Joses did, and how much it pleased the Apostles. So Ananias and Sapphira *pretended* to do the same thing Joses did. They sold their land and gave a *portion* of the sales to God's work. Now listen up, Beloved! Ananias and Sapphira were under *no obligation* to give all of the money to the Apostles. They could have told the Apostles, "We sold our land, and here's ten percent of the

sale", or fifty percent, or any percent at all. What Ananias and Sapphira did was sell this land, then they *lied to God* and pretended to give *all the money* to Christ's work (**Acts 5:2-4**). They wanted to be like Joses. They wanted Joses' name and fame, but were trying to gain that name and fame by *lying to God*.

What happened that day was so sad, but oh so avoidable! By the way, Ananias' name in the Hebrew means "God is Gracious", and Sapphira's name in the Aramaic means "Beautiful". God was gracious to these people, just as He is gracious to us all. You need to know, Beloved, when you begin to *obey men rather than God*, then you miss out on blessings from God. Ananias [God is Gracious] and Sapphira [Beautiful] had so much potential in life. Joses honored God by remembering "**We ought¹ to obey God rather than men**", and because of that he was able


3. Ananias' name in the Hebrew means _____, and Sapphira's name in the Aramaic means _____. God was gracious to these people, just as He is gracious to us all. You need to know, Beloved, when you begin to *obey men rather than God*, then you miss out on blessings from God.

to lay his offering down at the feet of the Apostles. Dear "God is Gracious" and "Beautiful" forgot that "**We ought¹ to obey God rather than men**", and instead of laying a worthy offering at the Apostle's feet, they themselves lay dead at the Apostle's feet (**Acts 5:5, 10**). Ananias and Sapphira found out the truth of the Scripture:

Proverbs 14:12 (KJV) "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

You must obey God if you want to live an extraordinary life!

2. I Must Obey God If I Want To See God In A Good and Pleasing Way

 **Acts 5:17-20 "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect⁷ of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,⁴ {18} And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common⁵ prison. {19} But the angel of the Lord⁹ by night opened the prison doors⁸, and brought them forth, and said, {20} Go, stand¹⁰ and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life³. "**

7 hairesis {pronounced hah'-ee-res-is}, party, sect. This word is used for Sadducees, Pharisees, Christians, and other divisions. Which "party" do you belong to?

4 Aorist Passive Indicative pletho {pronounced play'-tho} + zelos {pronounced dzay'-los} = were filled with excitement, envy, zeal

5 demosios {pronounced day-mos'ee-os}, public

9 A reference to God walking among man. Though not in every instance a reference to God, it was clearly God when He spoke to Moses from the burning bush (Exodus 3:2, 4, 7).

8 One of three "door-miracles" found in the Book of Acts. See Acts 12:6-11, where Peter was released; and Acts 16:26, where Paul was rescued.

10 Aorist Passive Participle histemi {pronounced his'-tay-mee}, hold your ground, stand firm.

3 Weymouth translation, "Go and stand in the Temple, and go on proclaiming to the people all this Message of Life."

Why must I remember "**We ought**¹ to obey God rather than men"? Because, Beloved of God, until you *obey God* you will never *see God* in a good and pleasing way. You can be disobedient to God's Will for your life and *hear about* God, but you will not see His *supernatural loving kindness* work out in your life.

The Apostles were obedient to the Lord, and walked as He ordered them to walk. They were sensitive to His leading, to His direction. You see, dear friend, they knew that the rulers of their world ordered them to stay silent about Jesus. They knew that the message of salvation by faith in Christ was an unpopular message, and knew that there would be repercussions if they followed the path of obedience. But they also knew this.

4. Why must I remember "**We ought to obey God rather than men**"? Because, Beloved of God, until you *obey God* _____. You can be disobedient to God's Will for your life and *hear about* God, but you will not see His *supernatural loving kindness* work out in your life.

The God Who saved them with His Blood on the tree was the same God Who sent them out to:

Matthew 28:19-20 (KJV) "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

1 Present Indicative dei {pronounced die}, it is duty, obligation, that which is required

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: {20} Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen¹³."

I love that word "amen" that comes at the end of our Great Commission. "Amen" is a word "it is true" or "I believe it". Amen is the very last word *in our Bible*, for we read:

Revelation 22:21 (KJV) "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Amen is a *God Word*, a power word, a holy word, a true word. It was Jesus Christ our Lord Who reminded the lukewarm Church at Laodicea that **Amen is one of His names**:

5. Amen is a _____, a power word, a holy word, a true word. It was Jesus Christ our Lord Who reminded the lukewarm Church at Laodicea that _____.

Revelation 3:14 (KJV) "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning

¹³ amen {pronounced am-ane'}. The word "amen" is a most remarkable word. It was transliterated directly from the Hebrew into the Greek of the New Testament, then into Latin and into English and many other languages, so that it is practically a universal word. It has been called the best known word in human speech. The word is directly related—in fact, almost identical—to the Hebrew word for "believe" (amam), or faithful. Thus, it came to mean "sure" or "truly", an expression of absolute trust and confidence.

of the creation of God;"

and since Jesus Christ is the *Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last* (**Revelation 1:8, 11; 21:6, 13**) we can say that **Amen** existed *before we were ever created*, and **Amen** will be with us throughout *all eternity*. I want you to know this, Beloved of God, that I try to get you to say **Amen** because its the same as saying *Jesus!*

I must obey God if I want to see God!

6. Since Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last (Revelation 1:8, 11; 21:6, 13) we can say that _____ existed before we were ever created, and _____ will be with us throughout all eternity

The Apostles knew that *man* had ordered them to stop preaching Christ, and they knew that they would suffer for walking in Jesus. But they preached Christ anyway. That Faithful and True Witness, the **Great Amen** gave the Apostles a **Great Commission**. They had no choice, they had to preach and tell others about Jesus. And as they told others about Jesus they got what they expected. They were taken, and tossed in the prison with common criminals. "Let's hold them in jail until tomorrow, then we'll fix them!" But that's not what happened. My Bible says:

Acts 5:19-20 "But the angel of the Lord⁹ by night opened the prison doors⁸, and brought them forth, and said, {20} Go, stand¹⁰ and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life³. "

That phrase "Angel of the Lord" is found all through Scripture. In **Exodus 3:2, 4, 7** we see that the **Angel of the Lord** came to Moses in the burning bush:

Exodus 3:2-4 (KJV) "And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. {3} And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. {4} And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I."

We see that the **Angel of the Lord** is **God Himself intervening for His people**. God intervened for Israel His Chosen while they were held in bondage. God intervenes for His Apostles and His New Testament

⁹ A reference to God walking among man. Though not in every instance a reference to God, it was clearly God when He spoke to Moses from the burning bush (Exodus 3:2, 4, 7).

⁸ One of three "door-miracles" found in the Book of Acts. See Acts 12:6-11, where Peter was released; and Acts 16:26, where Paul was rescued.

¹⁰ Aorist Passive Participle histemi {pronounced his'-tay-mee}, hold your ground, stand firm.

³ Weymouth translation, "Go and stand in the Temple, and go on proclaiming to the people all this Message of Life."

Church when we do as He has called us to do.

Listen Beloved, you will never see God at work *blessing your life* unless you act on the true words "**We ought**¹ **to obey God rather than men**". That old patriarch **Abraham** received a great blessing from God when **he obeyed God rather than men**, and offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice:

Genesis 22:15-17 (KJV) "And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, {16} And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: {17} That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;"

7. Listen Beloved, you will never see God at work _____ unless you act on the true words "**We ought to obey God rather than men**". That old patriarch **Abraham** received a great blessing from God when **he obeyed God rather than men**, and offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice.

Elijah, that mighty prophet of God, was protected by God when evil King Ahaz sent one hundred seasoned warriors to kill him.

2 Kings 1:14-15 (KJV) "Behold, there came fire

¹ Present Indicative dei {pronounced die}, it is duty, obligation, that which is required

down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. {15} And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king."



These one hundred men were burned up by the Angel of the Lord, protecting faithful Elijah from certain death. I have told you before how the Angel of the Lord went to the Assyrian army, killing 185,000 of King Sennacherib's troops:

2 Kings 19:35 (KJV) "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."

There is a curse that come on us when we heed man's word and deny God's direction. There is a blessing that comes on us when we "**obey God rather than man**". The Apostles obeyed God rather than man, and the **Angel of the Lord**, God Himself, came and took them out of prison. Listen my friends: they came out of prison, my Bible tells me, *past locked doors* and *past armed guards*.

Acts 5: 22-23 "But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, {23}

Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within."

Oh, how this puzzled the hearts of unsaved man! How is it possible that men, locked behind stout, closed prison bars, and guarded by an elite fighting force, how is it possible that these people escaped? It is not possible, but as the Scripture says:

Matthew 19:26 (KJV) "... With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

We who are saved serve the God of the Impossible. The world is surprised at how God makes the impossible possible, but we who believe in Jesus are not astounded. The Jesus Who rose from the dead, Who came out of a solid granite tomb, Who rolled a massive stone to the side, who removed a Roman seal and guard from a place of death - this same Jesus is more than able to take His obedient Apostles from a locked and guarded cell. The

8. The world is surprised at how God makes the impossible possible, but we who believe in Jesus are not astounded. The Jesus Who rose from the dead, Who came out of a solid granite tomb, Who rolled a massive stone to the side, who removed a Roman seal and guard from a place of death - this same Jesus is


God Who cloaked Himself in life so He could take on

death so He could pay for our sins, this God is never limited by locked doors or prison guards. As a matter of fact, the **Great Amen Who is Christ** has promised the faithful that He *sets up camp* in their life when we **obey God rather than men**. The Scripture promises:

Psalms 34:7-9 (KJV) "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. {8} O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. {9} O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him."

Do you want to see God in a good and pleasing way?
Then you must obey God rather than men!

3. Finally, If I Want To See God In The Next Life, I Must Obey God Rather Than Man

 **Acts 5:19-20 "But the angel of the Lord⁹ by night opened the prison doors⁸, and brought them forth, and said, {20} Go, stand¹⁰ and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life³. "**

9 A reference to God walking among man. Though not in every instance a reference to God, it was clearly God when He spoke to Moses from the burning bush (Exodus 3:2, 4, 7).

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I want you to notice what God told the Apostles to do when He made their guards comatose, when He opened their cell doors, when He allowed them to walk out of that bad place unharmed. The Lord didn't tell them to *run and hide*. He didn't tell them to go home. Many of these men, like Peter, had wives that were worried about them (**1 Corinthians 9:5**). The Lord didn't say, "Now you go home to your wives - let them know you're fine". No, the Lord told them to do three things.

Go, return to the *scene of the crime*, so to speak. Go back to the Temple where you were arrested for *inciting to riot* in the first place. This is very illogical, from man's perspective, but very smart from God's perspective. You see, God has a message that He wants everyone to hear - and everyone can't hear it if you hide your message at home. The Lord told the Apostles to ...

Stand. This is a word that means *hold your ground*. It's a military term, and it means to *dig in, and stay right where I've told you to stay*. This isn't a safety word, nor is it a comfort word, but it is a word that recognizes that the Word of God often *uncomfortably* runs contrary to the word of man. Stand anyway! You hold your ground, do what God told you to do, and you will succeed, for God stands with you. Moses had to stand before Pharaoh (**Exodus 9:13**), David had to stand before Goliath, Job had to stand before a cursing wife, and we who live in

the people all this Message of Life."

America today must stand in an evil day:

Ephesians 6:13 (KJV) "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

You have to stand! Go, Stand, and very important

Speak. We are told:

Acts 5:20 "...speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life³"

You see, there is only one way to have Eternal Life, and that is by believing on Jesus Christ, believing that He died and rose again for *all the people*. The words that we have been given are the *very words of life*. The Apostle said that the Gospel we have been given is something we should be *holding forth*, presenting to everyone.

Philippians 2:16 (KJV) "Holding forth the word of life ... "

That's another of the names our Jesus has: **The Word of Life**.

1 John 1:1 (KJV) "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;"

and unless an individual has called in Him for salvation, he or she will leave this life cursed and eternally separated from God. We are to **go, stand, speak**, and continue to do so - for only through Jesus Christ can you ever be saved!

9. Unless an individual has called of Him for salvation, he or she will leave this life cursed and eternally separated from God. We are to _____, _____, _____, and continue to do so - for only through Jesus Christ can you ever be saved!

May God the Holy Spirit anoint this message, and touch your hearts with its truths! **AMEN**.

³ Weymouth translation, "Go and stand in the Temple, and go on proclaiming to the people all this Message of Life."