



A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- **Acts 4:1**

And as they spake unto the people, the **priests**, and the captain of the temple, and the **Sadducees**, came upon them,

- **4:2** Being **grieved** that they taught the people, **and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.**

- The Sadducees
were

- the wealthy,
aristocratic class.

- There were not many of them
but they were

- rich and of great influence.**

- These authorities were offended because the Apostles taught.
- (1) They considered that the Apostles were not personally qualified to discharge the important duties of public teachers.
 - Human nature is ever the same.
 - The priests are grieved that men who are no scholars should undertake to decide what is truth and what is error.

- (2) The authorities were of opinion that the Apostles were not only disqualified educationally, but that they had no official right to teach.
- The priests claimed an exclusive right to teach.

- The rights to teach had been the responsibility of the prophets.
- So when the prophets died out the priests assumed that right.
 - And, at length, came to look upon themselves as the only rightful teachers.

- **(3)** The authorities were further offended because in teaching the Apostles were undermining the power of the priests.

- (4) The teaching of the Apostles was new and the Pharisees were very much in love with the old.

- The whole matter annoyed them greatly for two reasons.
- First, they did not believe in resurrection from the dead;
 - And it was this very truth that the apostles were proclaiming.

- **Second**, just because they were wealthy aristocrats, the Sadducean party was very friendly with **the Roman government.**
 - In order that they **might retain their wealth** and comfort and prestige and power.

- The Roman government was in general very tolerant;
- But on public disorder it was merciless.

- The Sadducees were sure that, if the apostles were allowed to go on unchecked,
- Riots and civil disorder might follow, with disastrous consequences to their status.

- Here we see very vividly both the enemy's attack and the Christian defense.
- In the enemy's attack there are two characteristics.

- First,
- There is contempt,
- As the Apostles were regarded as unlearned and ignorant men.

- Second,
there are threats.
- But the Christian
knows
that anything man
does to him
is but for a moment
- Whereas the
things of God
last forever.
(Hebrews 11:32)

- In face of this attack
Peter and John
had certain defenses.
- First, they had the defense of
an unanswerable fact.
(**Acts 4:16**)
 - As the man
had been cured
it was impossible to deny.

- Second,
they had the defense of
an utter loyalty to God.

- Acts 4:19

**But Peter and John answered
and said unto them,
Whether it be right
in the sight of God
to hearken unto you
more than unto God, judge you.**

- 4:20 **For we cannot but speak
the things which we
have seen and heard.**

- **H. G. Wells said,**
**"The trouble with
so many people is
that the voice of their
neighbors sounds
louder in their ears
than the voice of God."**

- The real secret of Christianity lies in that great tribute once paid to **John Knox**

- **"He feared God so much that he never feared the face of any man."**

- But the **third** defense **was greatest of all,**
- **A personal experience** of Jesus Christ.
 - Their message **was no idle tale.**
 - And they were so sure of it that **they were willing** **to stake their** **life upon it.**

- In Acts 4
we have
the reaction of
the Christian Church
in the hour of danger.
- And what might
that have been?

- **It might have been thought** that when Peter and John returned with their story
 - **A deep depression** would have fallen on the Church,
 - As they looked ahead **to the troubles** which were now bound to descend upon them.

- The one thing that **never entered their minds** was to obey the Sanhedrin's command to speak no more.
(**Acts 4:18**)
- Into their minds at that moment came certain **great convictions**
- And into their lives came a **tide of strength.**

- Let us now notice three things about the followers of Jesus Christ:

- **# 1 They had the conviction of the power of God.**
 - **Once the papal envoy threatened Martin Luther**
with what would follow
if he persisted in his course
and warned him that
in the end he would be deserted
by all his supporters.
 - **"Where will you be then?"**
demanding the envoy.
 - **"Then as now,"**
Luther answered,
"in the hands of God."

- **# 2 They had the conviction of the futility of man's rebellion.**

- The word translated

“rage”

is used of the
neighing of spirited horses.

(Acts 5:32)

- They may **trample** and **toss** their heads;

- In the end they will have

to accept the discipline of the reins.

- Men may make
defiant gestures against God
but in the end God will prevail.

- **# 3 They prayed for courage.**
 - They did not pretend that they could face this **in their own strength;**
 - They turned **to a power** that was not their own.
 - **Acts 4:24**

They lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

- Let us now note
what the
Apostle Paul said:

- {I am giving the
abbreviated version}

- **Romans 8:31**

What are we to say, then, in the light of all this? If God is on our side, who can there be against us?

- **8:32** **God did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up on behalf of us all; will he not, then, with him, freely give us all things?**

- **8:33** **Who will bring a charge against any of God's People?**

- **8:34** **Who is there to condemn them?**

- **Romans 8:35**

Who is there to separate us from the love of the Christ?

- **Will trouble,**
- **or difficulty,**
- **or persecution,**
 - **or hunger,**
- **or nakedness,**
 - **or danger,**
- **or the sword?**

- **Romans 8:36**

‘For thy sake

**we are being killed
all the day long,**

- **We are regarded**

as sheep to be slaughtered.’

- **8:37** Yet in the middle of all these things we more than conquer through him who loved us!
(See -- Psalms 34:22)

- **Romans 8:38**

For I am persuaded, that neither

- **Death,**
- **Nor life,**
- **Nor angels,**
- **Nor principalities,**
- **Nor powers,**
- **Nor things present,**

- Nor things to come,
 - Nor height,
 - Nor depth,
- Nor any other creature,
- Shall be able to separate us
 - From the love of God,
- Which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- The Apostle Paul lays down three great truths:
 - # 1 God has acquitted us;
therefore no one
can condemn us.
 - # 2 Christ is risen;
therefore nothing can ever
separate us from him.
 - # 3 Since God has acquitted us.
Who then can condemn us?

- **The Apostles and early Christians**
believed that
 - **No afflictions,**
 - **No hardships,**
 - **No peril can separate us.**
(Romans 8:35.)
 - **The disasters of the world**
do not separate us from Christ;
They bring him us closer yet.
 - **Do we believe it?**

- In order to understand the 1st century Christian we must think like a 1st century Christian.
- Therefore the Apostle Paul writes with this in mind.

- Note Paul's comment regarding our enemies:
 - Angels.
 - tribulation, or distress,
 - persecution, or famine,
 - nakedness, or peril, or sword?
 - death, nor life,
 - principalities, nor powers,
 - nor things present, nor things to come,
 - Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,

- The Jews
had a
highly developed belief
in angels.

- Everything
had its angel.

- There was an angel for..
 - winds,
 - clouds,
 - snow and hail and frost,
 - thunder and lightning,
 - cold and heat, and seasons.
- The Rabbis said that there was
nothing in the world,
not even a blade of grass,
that had not its angel.

- A generation brought up under this false doctrine needed release from such superstitions.

- In Romans 8:38

Paul speaks of
“height” and “depth”.

- These are astrological terms.

- The ancient world
was haunted by
the tyranny of the stars.

- They believed that
a man was born under
a certain star and thereby
his destiny was settled.

- There are some
who still believe that.

- The ancient world was haunted by this supposed influence of the stars.

- Height

- (hupsoma, <G5313>)

- was the time when a star

- was at its zenith

- and its influence was greatest;

- Depth

- (bathos, <G899>)

- was the time when a star

- was at its lowest,

- And just waiting to rise and to put

- its influence on some poor soul.

- Paul says to these haunted men of his age:
- The stars cannot hurt you.
- They are powerless to separate you from God's love.

- **Romans 8:39**

“**nor any other**”

- No other

world or thing

can separate us from God.

- The word that Paul uses for “**other**”

(heteros, <G2087>)

has really the meaning of being different.

- He is saying:
Suppose that by our wildest imagination there emerged another and different world,
- You would still be safe;
 - You would still be wrapped in the love of God.

- Here is revealed that God is able to take away all loneliness and all fear.
- All the terrors of this world cannot separate you from the love of God.

- As Jesus Christ is Lord of every terror

- He is Master of every world.

- It is of note that the Holy Scriptures do not include the many superstitions of the 1st century.
- However, the Apostle Paul touches upon them ever so lightly.

- The Apostles and Christians of the 1st century were not to be swayed by superstition
 - But they were to be swayed by an unfaltering faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
(Romans 10:17)

- **Acts 4:19**

But Peter and John answered and said unto them,

- **Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.**
- **4:20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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