

***Here I Stand!
I Can Do No Other***

“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. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20).

When the Jewish leaders relayed their decision to Peter and John it was a blessing of God. When told not to preach or teach in the name of Jesus they made a bold decision they would rather obey God than man. Because of opposition, the convictions of the Apostles and the church were strengthened. Acts 4:29-33 reveals what happened as a result of their decision. Lloyd Ogilvie said, “Problems are only a prelude to a fresh discovery of the Spirit’s potential.” The Psalmist David said, “Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word” (Psalm 119:67). “I will...transform her Valley of Troubles into a Door of Hope” (Hosea 2:15, TLB).

Eugene Peterson, in *The Message* sites 2 Corinthians 4 and translates it, “Since God has so generously let us in on what he is doing, we’re not about to throw up our hands and walk off the job just because we run into occasional hard times...We’re not keeping this quiet, not on your life. Just like the psalmist who wrote, ‘I believed it, so I said it,’ we say what we believe...Do you suppose that a few ruts in the road or rocks in the path are going to stop us?...People are watching us as we stay at our post, alertly, unswervingly...in hard times, tough times, bad times; when we’re beaten up, jailed, and mobbed: working hard, working late, working without eating; with pure heart, clear head, steady hand; in gentleness, holiness, and

honest love; when we’re telling the truth, and when God’s showing His power; when we’re doing our best setting things right; when we’re praised; and when we’re blamed, slandered, and honored; true to our word, though distrusted; ignored by the world, but recognized by God; terrifically alive, though rumored to be dead; beaten within an inch of our lives, but refusing to die; immersed in tears, yet always filled with deep joy; living on handouts, yet enriching man; having nothing, having it all.”

“When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don’t resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realize that they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become men of mature character, men of integrity with no weak spots” (James 1:2-4, *Phillips*).

“We are handicapped on all sides, but we are never frustrated; we are puzzled, but never in despair. We are persecuted, but never have to stand it alone. We may be knocked down but not knocked out!” (2 Corinthians 4:8-10).

God uses Satan’s weapons of persecution as a means of moving the church into action.

At times we enter into problems, trials and temptations. We are tempted to quit. At times like these, we need to remember the words in this lesson, “Whether it’s right in God’s eyes to listen to you rather than God, you decide. As for us, there’s no question- we can’t keep quiet about what we’ve seen and heard” (*The Message*). This response sounds throughout all time for those who are encountering opposition and persecution.

Characteristics of a Minister

Like Luther, "Here I stand, I can do no other!" "If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small" (Proverbs 24:10).

What the Apostles were able to see and hear about Jesus forced them to make such a statement. They knew their God was real.

- Micah 2:13 - God is before His people.
- Psalm 139:5 - God is behind His people.
- Deuteronomy 33:12 - God is above His people.
- Isaiah 40:11 - God is beneath His people.
- Psalm 125:2 - God is around His people.
- Matthew 1:23 - God is with His people.
- Isaiah 12:6 - God is in the midst of His people.
- 1 Corinthians 3:16 - God is in His people.

He's the God in my past protecting me. He's the God in my present leading me. He's the God in my future, waiting on me, yet He's never moved. He created all things and He owns everything yet He purchased you and me.

- Deuteronomy 32:39 - None like Him.
- Isaiah 46:9 - No God like Him.
- 2 Samuel 7:22 - No God beside Him.
- Joshua 2:11 - No God above Him nor is there any beneath.
- Isaiah 43:10 - None before Him and none after Him.
- Mark 12:32 - None other than Him.
- 1 Kings 8:60 - The Lord He is God and there is none else.

We serve a Mighty God who is able to take us through every problem and situation we encounter in life. We have courage because we know Who we serve.

The three Hebrew boys were charged with not bowing down to an idol. They were also challenged with a question, "Who is that God

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that shall deliver you out of my hands?" (Daniel 3:15). They were threatened to be thrown in the fiery furnace. They thought about it and answered, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Daniel 3:17, 18). Put simply, "Big man, you will receive no compromise from us!"

What happens to good people when bad things happen to them? Answer: They become better people!

Research for You:

What was the outcome of the bad things that happened in the lives of the following people?

Peter and John _____

Joseph _____

Job _____

Esther _____

Daniel _____

Hebrew Children _____

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1. Exodus 14:13
2. Ezekiel 2:1-2; 3:24
3. Ephesians 6:10-14

Study Questions

1. James said we should welcome temptations as "friends." Why? _____

Additional Notes

2. God uses Satan's weapon of persecution as a means to what? _____

3. What did Luther say? _____

4. What was the result of the decision Peter and John made that they would obey God rather than men? _____

5. Give three Scriptures that tell us we should stand (Hint: The three Scriptures are found in books of the Bible that start with the letter "E"). _____
