

Introduction- HERE THE CHURCH MEETS TO CONSIDER THE FIRST GREAT PROBLEM THAT FACED IT

1. There are internal and external problems- the easiest is to face an outside enemy
 2. We see some surprising maturity here in this young church- even the prayer covers almost all
 3. The power that they recieved shook the kingdom, and gave them real victory
- We will face persecution- will it draw us together for power- or split us?

I.- THE PROBLEM * Vers# 23" THE REPORT OF THE FIRST CONFESSORS

A. TO WHOM THE REPORT WAS DELIVERED* TO THE CHURCH

1. They went to thier own company- the disciples and apostles - the other ones to be affected.
2. The scripture tells us to "bear ye oneanother's burdens-" Gal 6:2, and these people shared.
3. The Church should be more interested in what is going on than in just saying thier beads!

B. THE REPORT OF ALL THAT THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND ELDERS HAD SAID

1. This report if it was exactly as described here was an unusual report-
2. Generally we tell everyone- what I said and did- boasting of how we faced the problem.
3. They had been threatened, this they told, and did not show animosity, or add to the tale.

C. THE PROBLEM THAT THE EARLY GROUP FACED

1. The Lord had not directed them in any "peaceful civil riots" or fought against Rome or Israel
2. "Render unto Ceasar" was the Gospel account, Romans 13 carries in the epistles- Civil law.
3. How far should they yeald? This civil law was reaching out against them, and they had no assurance the authorities wouldn't just kill them,-

II.-THE PRAYER v. 24b- AN UNUSUAL PRAYER FOR A GROUP UNDER PSECUTION

The outlook was dark, They could all loose thier lives, or have thier faith seriously blighted.

A. THE MANNER OF THE PRAYER

1. V. 24 speaks of One Accord, V. 32 talks of one heart- They were unified supporting each other
2. They lifted up thier voices - perhaps in reciting the 2nd Psalm together-
3. There was no anger, spirit of revenge or animosity toward the leaders - this left with God.

B. THE PRAYER WAS ADDRESSED TO GOD THE FATHER, FOR THE SAKE OF THE SON, IN POWER OF SPIRIT

1. God is seen as the maker of the universe ²⁴ greater than the Sanhedrian
2. God is seen as the inspirer of the Scriptures- ^{v.25} that warned ahead of time about this.
3. God is seen as the Lord and Father of Jesus ^{v.27}, /determined

B. God is seen as the controller of destinies 27b & 28, Herod, Pilate, etc did what God had pre-

81. THE PRAYER SHOWED NO ANIMOSITY, BUT ASKED FOR GRACE TO BE BOLD IN SPEAKING THE WORD

2. God was reminded of the threatenings ^{v.29}, and was asked to help them be bold to speak
 3. God was asked to prove his will by signs of healing and wonders ^{v.30}, in name of Jesus
- They had such a clear purpose they did not have time to stop and argue on politics.

III.- THE POWER v. 31-33 GOD SHOWED EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL PROOF OF HIS PRESENCE AND POWER

A. GOD SHOWED HIS PRESENCE AND POWER AROUND THEM 31v.

1. The chamber was shaken where they were assembled- a sign of powerful presence
2. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost- a fresh infilling for each hard job.
3. They spake the word of God with Boldness- - "Thus saith the Lord" Authority- we need this.

B. GOD SHOWED HIS PRESENCE AND POWER THROUGH THEM AND THIER ACTIONS V. 32, 33

1. They had a great unity- One heart and soul- drawn by external threats/ we desert each other
2. They had a great sharing- 32b, those who suffered were aided by others- cost shared-
3. They had a great power- ^{v.33}, witness with boldness, power, and grace. ^{We need great \$ for Supreme Court.}

C. THE ISSUE WAS CLEAR, THE BLESSINGS WERE PRESENT, THE PEOPLE WERE UNITED

1. We can share the great power, grace, and blessing if we would have thier clear cut purpose.
 2. The devil persecute us with hidden persuaders, and we don't stand together- Pastor here was once arrested- molestation.
 3. We had better learn to stand together- for a great persecution large number deserted.
- is coming, it will be slow, cunning, but destructive.

Concl. WILL YOU DRAW CLOSE TO THE LORD AND HIS CHURCH IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULTIES?

1. Some even desert the Lord over the difficulties of normal life- what will be like when gets rough
2. I want to make sure that I am as right with the Lord as possible- saved, surrendered, serving-
3. I want to make sure that I have as many friends as possible- a church, knit together in love.