

**When You Consistently
Love Jesus, The Devil Will
Consistently Hate You!**

BETTER

Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 \(Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996\), 424-426.](#)

Acts 5:17–25 (NKJV)

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (*which is the sect of the Sadducees*), and they were filled with indignation,

18 and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison.

19 But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said,

20 “Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.”

21 And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported, 23 saying, “Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside before the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!”

24 Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be.

25 So one came and told them, saying, “Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!”

- This is an amazing story.
- As we see, the more you do for the Lord, the more the enemy is going to do all He can to discredit, discourage, and bring discomfort in our lives as Christians.
- We must be encouraged by the Holy Spirit, and keep speaking the truth about Jesus!

The Reasons For The Arrests

- The high priest and his associates had three reasons for arresting the Apostles (*this time it was all of the Apostles*) and bringing them to trial.
- To begin with, Peter and John had not obeyed the official orders to stop preaching in the name of Jesus Christ. They were guilty of defying the law of the nation.
- Second, the witness of the church was refuting the doctrines held by the Sadducees, giving every evidence that Jesus Christ was alive.

- Third, the religious leaders were filled with envy (“indignation”) because of the great success of these untrained and unauthorized men.

Matthew 27:18 (NKJV)

For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

Acts 13:45 (NKJV)

But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.

- The traditions of the fathers had not attracted that much attention or gained that many followers in such a short time. It is amazing how much envy can be hidden under the disguise of “defending the faith.”

When They Were Arrested...

- The Apostles did not resist arrest or organize a public protest.
- They quietly went along with the temple guard and actually spent a few hours in the public jail.
- But during the night, an angel set them free and told them to return to their witnessing in the temple.

When They Were Arrested...

- (The Sadducees did not believe in angels.)

Acts 23:8 (NKJV)

For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.

The Major Contrast Between The Apostles And The Members Of The Council.

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Consistent Love / Consistent Hate (Acts 5:17–25)

- The council was educated, ordained, and approved. However, they had no ministry of power.
- The Apostles were ordinary laymen, yet God's power was at work in their lives.

- The council was trying desperately to protect themselves and their dead traditions, while the Apostles were risking their lives to share the living Word of God.
- The dynamic church was enjoying the new; the dead council was defending the old.

Believing They Were Right, But Feeling So Wrong

You find a variety of emotions in this section:

- Envy (*Acts 5:17*)
- Bewilderment (*Acts 5:24*)
- and Fear (*Acts 5:26*)

- Yet, when the Apostles came in, the high priest boldly accused them of defying the law and causing trouble.
- He would not even use the name of Jesus Christ, but instead said “this name” and “this Man’s blood,” lest by speaking His name he would defile his lips or bring down the wrath of God.

John 15:21 (NKJV)

But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

Hateful Confirmation Usually Means You Are Doing The Right Thing

- The hateful indictment was an admission that the church was increasing and getting the job done!
- The wrath of man was bringing praise to the Lord.

Hateful Confirmation Usually Means You Are Doing The Right Thing

Psalm 76:10 (NKJV)

Surely the wrath of man shall praise You; With the remainder of wrath You shall gird Yourself.

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Consistent Love / Consistent Hate (Acts 5:17–25)

Hateful Confirmation Usually Means You Are Doing The Right Thing

- The high priest realized that if the Apostles were right, then the Jewish leaders had been wrong in condemning Jesus Christ.
- Indeed, if the Apostles were right, then the council was guilty of His blood.

Hateful Confirmation Usually Means You Are Doing The Right Thing

Matthew 27:25 (NKJV)

And all the people answered and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

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Consistent Love / Consistent Hate (Acts 5:17–25)

1 Thessalonians 2:14–16 (NKJV)

14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans,

15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men,

16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

- As this “trial” progressed, the Apostles became the judges and the council became the accused.

Acts 5:29–32 (NKJV)

29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.

31 Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

32 And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

The Apostles Did Not Change Their Convictions

- The Apostles did not change their convictions.
- They obeyed God and trusted Him to take care of the consequences. They could not serve two masters, and they had already declared whose side they were on.

The Apostles Did Not Change Their Convictions

- Had they been diplomats instead of ambassadors (*2 Cor. 5:20*), they could have pleased everybody and escaped a beating.
- They stood firmly for the Lord, and He honored their courage and faith.

The Apostles Did Not Change Their Convictions

- Neither did they change their message (*Acts 5:30–32*).
- Peter charged the leaders for the death of Jesus, and boldly affirmed once again that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead.
- Not only was Jesus raised from the dead, but He was also exalted by God to heaven.

The Apostles Did Not Change Their Convictions

- The work of the Holy Spirit in recent days was evidence that Jesus had returned to heaven and sent His Spirit as He promised.
- The Sadducees certainly did not rejoice to hear the Apostles speak about resurrection from the dead.

1 Corinthians 1:18–19 (NKJV)

18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”

That Jesus Christ Is At God's Right Hand Is A Key Theme In The Scriptures

- The right hand is, of course, the place of honor, power, and authority.
- Psalm 110:1 is the basic prophecy.

That Jesus Christ Is At God's Right Hand Is A Key Theme In The Scriptures

Psalm 110:1 (NKJV)

The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

- Matthew 22:44; Mark 14:62; 16:19; Acts 2:33–34; 5:31; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1;

That Jesus Christ Is At God's Right Hand Is A Key Theme In The Scriptures

- Hebrews 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; and 1 Peter 3:22.
- Stephen would see Jesus standing at God's right hand (*Acts 7:55*).

- In his second sermon, Peter had called Jesus “the Prince of life” (*Acts 3:15*); and here he called Him “a Prince and a Saviour.”
- The word Prince means “a pioneer, one who leads the way, an originator.”
- The Sanhedrin was not interested in pioneering anything; all they wanted to do was protect their vested interests and keep things exactly as they were (*see John 11:47–52*).

John 11:47–52 (NKJV)

47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs.

48 If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

49 And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, 50 nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.”

51 Now this he did not say on his own authority;
but being high priest that year he prophesied
that Jesus would die for the nation,
52 and not for that nation only, but also that He
would gather together in one the children of God
who were scattered abroad.

- As the “Pioneer of life,” Jesus saves us and leads us into exciting experiences as we walk “in newness of life. ”

Romans 6:4 (NKJV)

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

- There are always new trails to blaze

- Hebrews 2:10 calls Him “the Pioneer [captain] of their salvation,” for our salvation experience must never become static.
- The Christian life is not a parking lot; it is a launching pad!
- It is not enough just to be born again; we must also grow spiritually (*2 Peter 3:18*) and make progress in our walk.

- In Hebrews 12:2, Jesus is called “the Pioneer [author] ... of our faith,” which suggests that He leads us into new experiences that test our faith and help it to grow.
- One of the major themes of Hebrews is “let us press on to maturity” (*Heb. 6:1, NASB*), and we cannot mature unless we follow Christ, the Pioneer, into new areas of faith and ministry.

- The title Savior was not new to the members of the council, for the word was used for physicians (who save people's lives), philosophers (who solve people's problems), and statesmen (who save people from danger and war).
- It was even applied to the Emperor.
- But only Jesus Christ is the true and living Saviour who rescues from sin, death, and judgment all who will trust Him.

- Peter again called the nation to repentance (*Acts 2:36; 3:19–26; 4:10–12*) and promised that the gift of the Spirit would be given to all who “obey Him.”
- This does not imply that the gift of the Spirit is a reward for obedience, for a gift can be received only by faith.
- The phrase “obey Him” is the same as “obedient to the faith” in *Acts 6:7*, and means “to obey God’s call and trust God’s Son.”

- God does not suggest that sinners repent and believe; He commands it.

Acts 17:30 (NKJV)

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,

- It was a bold witness that the Apostles gave before the highest Jewish religious court.
- The Spirit of God enabled them and they were not afraid.
- After all, Jesus had promised to be with them and, through His Holy Spirit, empower them for witness and service.

- They were His witnesses of His resurrection (*Acts 1:22; 2:24, 32; 3:15, 26; 4:10*), and He would see them through.
- We as the church must believe He will see us through as well!