

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

Text: Acts 5:34-40

INTRO: Fighting against God--a very interesting & arresting thought. For the next few minutes, let us consider some thoughts along this line.

I. IT IS POSSIBLE TO FIGHT AGAINST GOD.

A. Some have held that everything that happens, small & great, is predetermined by the will of God & that in reality, nothing has ever been done except those things God is well pleased with.

1. Those who hold the Calvinistic concept of predestination do not believe it is possible for any person to behave contrary to the will of God. Even when they sin, it is because God wanted them to sin.

NOTE: There are 2 Greek words for God's will & God's plan. A study of the Scriptures will show that God's will can be disobeyed & His plan can be rejected by men.

a. God's will, THELO.

God... desires all men to be saved & to come to the knowledge of the truth.
(1 Tim 2:3-4). MATT 7:21-23

b. God's plan, BOULOMAI.

LK 7:30; 2 Pet 3:9

c. Tho no one can thwart the eternal purpose of God, each person is free to reject his part in the blessings & privileges that could be his if he would do God's will.

2. Those who believe in & practice astrology attempt to relieve themselves of responsibility for their mistakes & shortcomings by blaming it on the stars. Thus says the Lord, "Do not learn the way of the Gentiles [heathen, KJV]. Do not be dismay-

ed at the signs of heaven; for the [heathen] are dismayed at them. (Jer 10:2). See also Deut 18:10 and Isa 47:13-14.

3. The truth of the matter is that we are free to cooperate with God, or to fight against Him, as we so choose.

II. SOME WAYS MEN FIGHT AGAINST GOD.

A. Persecuting God's people, TEXT, vs. 38-39.

B. By refusing to hear, believe & obey His word.

1. Atheists, infidels, unbelievers fight against God. But so do most religious people, who are willing to accept only as much of His word as is personally appealing to them. Heb 2:3.

2. Even many among God's own people often fight against Him by neglecting the blessings & privileges that could otherwise be theirs.
MT 6:33; JS 4:2.

But this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, & he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. (2 Cor 9:6).

3. In short, we fight against God every time we fail to obey His revealed will.

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF FIGHTING AGAINST GOD.

A. Every time we fight against God we are attacking our own well-being, our own best interests.

& the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good always. (Deut. 6:24).

Then Paul & Barnabas grew bold & said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first, but since you reject it & judge yourselves un-

worthy of everlasting life, behold we turn to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:46).

B. Every time a person fights against God, he works against his own inner peace & tranquillity.

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God.
Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. (Rom 14:22). READ ROMANS 7:23-25

C. And no sooner does one lose inner peace than he begins to jeopardize his peace with others. We live in a world where almost everyone talks about peace--but world peace will continue to elude us so long as the vast majority of human beings do not possess peace with themselves and peace with God.

D. But the most drastic, far-reaching consequence of fighting against God is the certainty of eternal ruin.

READ REVELATION 21:8; 20:10, 15

IV. HOW MAY WE AVOID FIGHTING AGAINST GOD?

A. Gamaliel was one of the most respected & best educated teachers in Israel, & he was right about some things, but the advice he gave his fellow councilors was not wise. In effect, he had said, "Don't take sides."

B. Gamaliel did not realize that failing to take a stand for the truth is just another of many ways of fighting against God. He thought they could avoid fighting against God by neutrality, but such has never been the case.
Matt. 12:30. READ REVELATION 3:14-17

C. Many of Jesus' parables were directed against those who try to be neutral--& do nothing.

1. The one talent man, MT 25, was condemned, not for what he did, but for what he failed to do.

2. The priest & Levite, LK 10 failed not because of

what they did, but because of what they failed to do

3. In the parable of the house swept & garnished, the evil spirits returned in greater numbers than before because no desirable tenant moved in.
4. It is not enough to quit a sinful practice. That practice needs to be replaced by some desirable practice.
5. Every gardener knows it is not enough to pull some weeds. He must also plant some seeds.
6. What a staggering loss it would have been to the world & to the cause of Christ if Paul's conversion had included nothing more than ceasing to be a persecutor.
7. The only way to avoid fighting against God is to actively work for Him.

CONCLUSION: In closing, we say as Moses said in the long ago, Ex 32:26, "Whoever is on the Lord's side, let him come to me..."

La Porte, TX, April 1, 1979

Highway 29, Liberty Hill, TX, August 11, 1980 (meeting)

Exton, PA, June 9, 1985

Exton, PA, October 14, 1990

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, July 18, 1993

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, August 15, 1999