

a sermon from ACTS 5:29:

WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN!

Robert Baral  
11/03/2005 AD, r-7/17/2007 AD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. A PRAYER

II. A PROPOSITION

III. A SCRIPTURE - ACTS 5:29

IV. INTRODUCTION

V. ACTS 5:17-18 - OPPRESSED FOR BEING FAITHFUL TO THE LORD

VI. ACTS 5:19-21 – THE LORD LEADS US TO SPEAK THE WORDS OF LIFE

VII. ACTS 5:22-25 – HE SETS THE PRISONERS FREE TO SERVE HIM

VIII. ACTS 5:28-29 – HIS BLOOD IS UPON ALL OUR HEADS FOR OUR SINS

IX. ACTS 5:30-32 – WE SLEW THE SAVIOUR ON A CURSED TREE

X. ACTS 5:34-39 - GOD FORBID THAT WE SHOULD FIGHT AGAINST GOD

XI. ACTS 5:40 – GOD FORBID THAT WE CEASE TO SPEAK IN HIS NAME

XII. ACTS 5:41-42 – CEASE NOT TO REJOICE, TEACH AND PREACH CHRIST

XIII. IN CONCLUSION - WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD OVER MAN

XIV. REFERENCES

## I. A PRAYER

“Confer, O Lord [GOD], on us, who serve beneath... [Thy faithful Church], that fullness of faith in Thee and trust in her, to which it is given to conquer the world. Grant us a lively faith, animated by charity, which will enable us to perform all our actions from the motive of pure love of Thee, and ever to see Thee in our neighbour; a faith, firm and immovable as a rock, through which we shall rest tranquil and steadfast amid the crosses, toils and disappointments of life; a courageous faith which will inspire us to undertake and carry out without hesitation great things for [Thee, O] GOD and for the salvation of souls!

[Grant us, O Divine Saviour,] a faith which will be... [as unto us a Pillar of Cloud by day and a] Pillar of Fire [by night of Your mighty Presence] - to lead us forth united [as The faithful Church militant, The Body of CHRIST on earth] - to kindle everywhere the fires of Divine Love – to enlighten those who are in darkness and in the shadow of death – to inflame those who are lukewarm – to bring back life to those who are dead in sin.

[Give us, O Mighty Comforter, a faith] ...which will guide our feet in The Way of Peace; so that – [when] the battle of life over – [we, the resolute soldiers of The blessed Cross,] ...may reassemble, without the loss of any one [of our ranks], in The Kingdom of Thy Love and Glory [Eternal].”<sup>1</sup> All this we humbly ask in The Name of GOD The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost. Amen!

## II. A PROPOSITION

When the two conflict, the faithful Christian man is called to obey GOD rather than man, to be faithful servants of The Cross, to bear witness in word and deed to The Words of Life of The holy Gospel, to show forth both The victorious CHRIST and The Suffering Servant CHRIST for the sake of the broken lives and lost souls of others, even to bear persecution and oppression in CHRIST, to obey The Lord over men! For when evil commands that we remain silent of JESUS The Messiah in this lost and suffering world, as it is written, “We ought to obey GOD rather than men!”

---

<sup>1</sup> 1, Adapted from a pamphlet, “The Legion of Mary,” a prayer for Christian faith, page 4.

### III. A SCRIPTURE - ACTS 5:29

Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, We ought to obey GOD rather than men.<sup>2</sup>

### IV. INTRODUCTION

In this most difficult age, the faithful Christian man and woman increasingly find themselves being persecuted for being faithful to The Lord JESUS CHRIST. But this should not take us by surprise. Faithful people of GOD down through the ages have many times found this to be so in this fallen world. For if we love The Almighty and His Word - seeking to live righteously in His Commandments - the world, the flesh and the devil will most certainly hate us. Recall The Lord gives us This Commandment in JOHN 15:17, “These things I command you, that ye love one another.”<sup>3</sup> But immediately after CHRIST tells us in JOHN 15:18, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.”<sup>4</sup>

But should this dissuade us from obeying GOD, even when we are commanded by men to refrain from righteousness, to keep silent in word and deed of The Gospel of CHRIST, to condone and in fact do evil ourselves – even upon pain of persecution? GOD forbid! For our Saviour commands us in JOHN 14:15, “If ye love Me, keep My Commandments.”<sup>5</sup> Let us walk together through The Divine Record which surrounds our chosen Passage of ACTS 5:29. And we shall see that, when man and GOD clearly conflict in telling us what to do in life’s daily battles, the faithful Christian man is called to obey GOD rather than man! Here is our lesson, as Saint Luke records for us, “Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, We ought to obey GOD rather than men.”<sup>6</sup>

Let us consider the early apostolic Church and how they, when faced with persecution for preaching The Gospel, none the less continued to do so with boldness and fearlessness. In ACTS we find the Apostles constantly being commanded by the then religious authorities to refrain from declaring The risen CHRIST to the children of Israel.

---

<sup>2</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:29.

<sup>3</sup> 2, KJV, JOHN 15:17.

<sup>4</sup> 2, KJV, JOHN 15:18.

<sup>5</sup> 2, KJV, JOHN 14:15.

<sup>6</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:29.

For when they were brought before the reigning religious authorities, they were ordered by hard hearted men to keep silent about CHRIST The Messiah, on pain of persecution, and even worse! But what did The Apostles do? They obeyed GOD rather than men! As Saint Luke writes in ACTS 5:29, this was their bold reply, "...we ought to obey GOD rather than men!"<sup>7</sup> My friends, what are we willing to suffer for the broken lives and suffering souls of others in CHRIST?

#### V. ACTS 5:17-18 - OPPRESSED FOR BEING FAITHFUL TO THE LORD

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

18 And laid their hands on the Apostles, and put them in the common prison.

We as true Christian servants can expect to be oppressed for being faithful to The LORD. Here in ACTS 5, we find the Apostles having been arrested and thrown in prison for declaring CHRIST to the people. The high priest and the Sadducees - who denied that there is a resurrection of men after physical death - were raging with haughty indignation against the testimony of the Apostles. These hard hearted men in places of authority over GOD's people had refused to heed The Words of our Lord when, after Peter had confessed JESUS as The Messiah and promised Saviour, CHRIST proclaimed in MATTHEW 16:16-18, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against..." The Church!<sup>8</sup> Thus, when they chose to oppress the Apostles for preaching CHRIST, they in fact placed themselves in opposition to The Almighty!

Even so, the Apostles no doubt trembled under the hand of persecution for the sake of their faith in CHRIST. But they were faithful warriors of The Gospel, for they knew GOD would deliver them in some way. Saint Padre Pio echoes this trust in CHRIST, most especially in the face of trials for the sake of faith and righteousness, "In spirit, cling tightly all the time, to The Divine will, then be at peace and serve The Lord with a joyful heart, for Divine Love will never grow less in your soul... Continue to have boundless trust in The Divine Mercy!"<sup>9</sup> Saint Peter and the Apostles knew that, if they would but remain faithful to JESUS The Saviour, He would in fact uphold them in their

---

<sup>7</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:29.

<sup>8</sup> 2, KJV, MATTHEW 16:16-18.

<sup>9</sup> 3, The PSALMS with Saint Padre Pio, PSALM 33, p 49, paragraph 2.

appointed work!

Perhaps they may have prayed according to the words of PSALMS 33:20-22, “Our soul waiteth for The LORD: He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy Name. Let Thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee.”<sup>10</sup> For then GOD sent an angel to free the imprisoned Apostles, commanding them to proceed to The Temple and resume their teaching and preaching of The Gospel to the people! The Apostles had received once again their marching orders from the hand of The very King of the universe! And having been shaken free from their physical bonds in man’s prison, they charged again into battle with CHRIST risen as their banner!

CHRIST being their Divine Master and The One Who suffered and died for them so that they might live in Him – as He is for us – the Apostles in their faith could but obey as they were called. And that is what they did. Such is the faithful example set before us, that we also are called to likewise obey! As Knecht observes, “JESUS is King and Lord of all, and The Supreme Head of The Church, Militant, Suffering and Triumphant [both on earth down through the ages and in Heaven for all eternity]. JESUS being our Lord and King, it follows that we ought to serve Him, do His will in all things, and follow His example” in all things.<sup>11</sup>

It matters not therefore if corrupt and apostate religious leaders or cruel and oppressive secular authorities command us to remain silent of CHRIST and cover our Christian faith in their darkness. JESUS The Messiah commands and we are given the privilege to obey as His witnesses and servants before GOD and man where ever and in what ever He places before us every day of our lives. What does Saint Matthew write of The risen Lord’s Great Commission to us His Church in MATTHEW 28:18-20? JESUS declares, “...All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in The Name of The Father, and of The Son, and of The Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> 2, KJV, PSALMS 33:20-22.

<sup>11</sup> 4, Knecht, Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture, ACTS 5:12-42, p 751. “JESUS is King and Lord of all the redeemed.”

<sup>12</sup> 2, KJV, MATTHEW 28:18-20.

VI. ACTS 5:19-21 – THE LORD LEADS US TO SPEAK THE WORDS OF LIFE

19 But the angel of The Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all The Words of This Life [in CHRIST JESUS].

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

The Lord leads us to speak The Words of Life. We next observe in ACTS 5 that, when the high priest and his blind minions had assembled in the congress of the Jews - the Sanhedrin - they sent officers to collect Peter and the other Apostles and bring them before them. But the officers returned to the assembled Sanhedrin, declaring the prisoners to be absent, although the prison itself was secure in all respects and the on-duty guards were still vigilantly standing guard at their posts. As this was being reported to the Jewish rulers, another officer came and reported the Apostles to be once again in The Temple and freely teaching the people about CHRIST! And not only this, but recall also the sword of the brutal pagan Roman political and military powers hung threateningly over all of their very lives, ready to fill the streets with the blood of GOD's people under any pretext!

And yet the Apostles were ready to obey and suffer for the sake of others in CHRIST! For if we are truly in CHRIST, we indeed share in His victory over the world, the flesh, the devil, sin and death. But if we are truly in CHRIST, we must then also share in His suffering that won that victory. So Saint Augustine reminds us, "JESUS CHRIST has suffered all that He had to suffer. No more is anything wanting to the measure of His sufferings. His Passion then is finished? Yes! In The head, but there remains the Passion of His Body [The Church]. With good reason therefore does CHRIST, still suffering in His Body, desire to see us share in His expiation [of sin wiped away from our souls in Him]. Our very union with Him demands that we should do so. For as we are The Body of CHRIST and members, one of the other, all that The Head suffers, the members ought to endure with it."<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> 5, Handbook of The Legion of Mary, Saint Augustine, p 58, paragraph 2. On the suffering of CHRIST and His Body The Church on earth.

VII. ACTS 5:22-25 – HE SETS THE PRISONERS FREE TO SERVE HIM

22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told,  
23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing  
without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard  
these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are  
standing in The Temple, and teaching the people.

JESUS CHRIST sets the prisoners free to serve Him. The religious leaders of the day, not seeing that they were opposing The Almighty's very hand in all these events, are now dumbfounded and stand in disbelief that Saint Peter and his band are at liberty and again preaching The Gospel of Life to the people in The Temple! So here we have the faithful Apostles publicly testifying of CHRIST and preaching The blessed Gospel, knowing that they would bear persecution for doing so. They could have kept silent and to themselves, but they instead obeyed The Lord and went forth as His servants in the strength of The HOLY SPIRIT. And when they then suffered for obeying GOD over man, they did so with gladness! As Knecht comments, "The Apostles did not merely suffer patiently, for the sake of JESUS, but they suffered joyfully. [Such] Sufferings were a joy to them, and they esteemed ignominy an honour!"<sup>14</sup>

The world, the flesh and the devil are ever demanding that we as Christians not testify to salvation in CHRIST. They are always seeking to cause us to remain silent in the face of evil, even commanding that we give wickedness our passive ascent and active endorsement! Evil men, whose dark souls are seared by the very presence of the godly man, would that we be destroyed, that they might continue on in their rebellion against GOD without their consciences being convicted by those who bear The Cross of CHRIST. So it should not surprise us that, as we become more obedient to The Almighty Incarnate, we come to share more and more in both His victory and in His pain that secured for us His victory.

What does Saint Paul say of this? He declares in PHILIPPIANS 1:29, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of CHRIST, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for

---

<sup>14</sup> 4, Knecht, Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture, ACTS 5:12-42, p 752. "How a Christian ought to regard sufferings."



His sake.”<sup>15</sup> Saint Paul says further in II TIMOTHY 2:11-12, “Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in CHRIST JESUS with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him.”<sup>16</sup> This is what The Lord called Saint Paul to endure, and what He calls all His saints to endure, even you and me. Why? For this reason, as Saint Paul says in II TIMOTHY 2:10, “Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in CHRIST JESUS with eternal glory.”<sup>17</sup> The best plans of hard hearted men, standing against the arm of The LORD, fall into the dust when faithful Christians obediently stand in The Spirit of CHRIST and bear witness to The Truth of The blessed Cross! As CHRIST endured suffering on The Cross for us, so we are called to bear The blessed Cross for the sake of others in CHRIST!

#### VIII. ACTS 5:26-29 – HIS BLOOD IS UPON ALL OUR HEADS FOR OUR SINS

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in This Name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring This Man's Blood upon us.

29 Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, We ought to obey GOD rather than men.

The Blood of CHRIST is upon the heads of all men for our sins. Now we arrive at the crux of the matter before us! Saint Peter and the Apostles had been commanded by the same religious authorities who had lobbied the brutal pagan Roman military governor – Pontius Pilate – for the execution of GOD Incarnate to now remain silent about CHRIST! But the Apostles had been charged by The Lord Himself, Whom they loved, and they could only but gladly obey, no matter the fearful cost! And so Saint Peter and his band of saints boldly replied back - before GOD and man - as here in ACTS 5:29, “No, we can not keep silent about JESUS The Messiah, for ‘...We ought to obey GOD rather than men!’<sup>18</sup> Do what you will to us, but we must be true to The Great

---

<sup>15</sup> 2, KJV, PHILIPPIANS 1:29.

<sup>16</sup> 2, KJV, II TIMOTHY 2:11-12.

<sup>17</sup> 2, KJV, II TIMOTHY 2:10.

<sup>18</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:29.

Commission which The blessed Saviour has charged us with!”

So too we as faithful Christians, following our Lord in the daily fight to rescue men from sin, suffering, sorrow and death in The precious Grace From Above, are called to work, to serve, to endure, to suffer, to be as little CHRISTs to all men - to both the saints and the unredeemed - as were the Apostles here before us! This is what The Lord called Saint Paul to, and this is what He calls all of us His saints to as well. So Saint Paul proclaims in COLOSSIANS 1:23-24, “If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of The Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of CHRIST in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is The Church!”<sup>19</sup>

So Saint John Eudes so rightly observes, “As Saint Paul assures us that he fills up the sufferings of CHRIST, so we may say in truth that a true Christian, who is a member of JESUS CHRIST and united with Him by Grace, continues and carries to completion, by every action performed in The Spirit of JESUS CHRIST, the actions which JESUS CHRIST Himself performed... So that when a Christian prays, he continues the prayer of JESUS during His life on earth. When he works, he... [carries on as part of The Body of CHRIST – The Church on earth – the works of JESUS.] We must be like so many CHRISTs upon earth, continuing His life and His actions, doing and [when necessary] suffering [for the sake of others] all in The Spirit of JESUS...!”<sup>20</sup>

#### IX. ACTS 5:30-32 – WE SLEW THE SAVIOUR ON THAT CURSED TREE

30 The GOD of our fathers raised up JESUS, Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

31 Him hath GOD exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

32 And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also The Holy Ghost, Whom GOD hath given to them that obey Him.

All men being sinners, have a part in the slaying of The Saviour on That Cursed Tree, which is now for us The blessed Cross. Let us imagine ourselves here being GOD fearing and pious minority Jewish leaders sitting among our fellow members of the

---

<sup>19</sup> 2, KJV, COLOSSIANS 1:23-24.

<sup>20</sup> 5, Handbook of The Legion of Mary, Saint John Eudes, p 56, paragraph 2. On the need for Christians to carry on the work of CHRIST on earth as The Church for the service and salvation

Sanhedrin who, having been convicted by The HOLY SPIRIT and The Word of GOD, know that JESUS CHRIST is indeed The Messiah! The words of Saint Peter here would then cut deep into our very hearts and souls, for we have taken part in the execution of The promised Messiah and in the continued oppression of the Apostles! What waves of fear and sorrow we would feel as we come to realize that we had taken part in the execution of The Savior Himself! Picture ourselves seated there among our fellow ruling religious Jews and seeing for the first time how stiff-necked and self-righteous these men were, and how we ourselves had been as well! And worse yet, that we had taken part in opposing The Almighty! So the Apostles are dragged from The very Temple to stand before us in the Sanhedrin. And there we are - sitting anxiously among our fellow assembled religious rulers. Can we not taste that overwhelming wave of shock and horror engulfing us as the high priest chastises the Apostles for being obedient to GOD?

But now here is Saint Peter - the very Apostle who had not long ago denied that he ever even knew CHRIST as events had lead so quickly to The Lord's crucifixion - now testifies boldly to us of The Saviour! He preaches The blessed Gospel of CHRIST crucified and risen again to us who sit in the very seat of Moses! To us whose hands are shamefully stained - yet according to the purposes of The Almighty - with the precious innocent Blood of The CHRIST! Picture then the Apostles standing there before the Sanhedrin and in the power of The HOLY SPIRIT proclaiming that CHRIST is The promised Messiah of Scripture, Whom we as the leaders of GOD's people slew and hanged on a tree! Perhaps here we might, as the Apostles standing before us in the Sanhedrin, recall with awe and trembling ISAIAH 53:5, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed!"<sup>21</sup>

So there we sit in the Sanhedrin, reviewing the evidence before us: Saint Peter and the other Apostles were forbidden to preach The Gospel, yet they did so, knowing that they would suffer. The corrupt Jewish religious authorities and the occupying secular Roman political power structure held their heavy hands of oppression, persecution and punishment even unto death over the heads of these faithful servants of

---

of others.

<sup>21</sup> 2, KJV, ISAIAH 53:5.

GOD. Yet these saints went forth and obeyed CHRIST, none the less! They had been commissioned by The risen Saviour Himself. They had been filled with The HOLY SPIRIT. They had been miraculously freed from prison by an angel of The LORD. They had been threatened with further oppression and their very lives were in jeopardy. Yet, as Knecht observes, The Almighty had ordained "...that they should be free to preach The Gospel, and that no human power was to interfere. The Church... is instituted by GOD, and is independent of all human authority" to carry out what The Lord has commanded her.<sup>22</sup> Therefore Saint Peter boldly proclaims in ACTS 5:29, "...We ought to obey GOD rather than men!"<sup>23</sup>

X. ACTS 5:34-39 - GOD FORBID THAT WE SHOULD FIGHT AGAINST GOD

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of The Law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the Apostles forth a little space;

35 And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

39 But if it be of GOD, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against GOD.

GOD forbid that we should fight against GOD! At hearing The Gospel from the Apostles standing before them, a pious teacher of The Jewish Law named Gamaliel stood up and sought to restrain the Sanhedrin from offending GOD. Gamaliel was, as a Pharisee, a believer in the resurrection of man after physical death. And he was not willing to condemn the Apostles for fear of risking condemning The Creator Himself! For he counseled that, if the Apostles were correct that CHRIST is The promised Messiah, no human efforts to suppress The Gospel would succeed. So the high priest and the gathered Jewish leaders were restrained from seeking to slay the Apostles of CHRIST for a time, although the darkness of murder remained in the hearts of many of these learned but blind leaders of GOD's people. Their rebellious hearts still sought to do evil against the Apostles however, and so the Apostles suffered further injury for the sake of

---

<sup>22</sup> 4, Knecht, Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture, ACTS 5:12-42, p 752. "The Liberty of The Church."

<sup>23</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:29.

GOD's Word before being freed.

So the religious leaders agreed with the wisdom of Gamaliel, sparing the lives of the Apostles at that time. Yet they were ridiculed, denounced and beaten for the sake of CHRIST, then being "...commanded that they should not speak in The Name of JESUS" and were then let go.<sup>24</sup> But what does Saint Luke then record? The Apostles rejoiced. Why? Because "...they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name!"<sup>25</sup> Perhaps here the Apostles recalled the words of CHRIST as recorded in MATTHEW 5:10-12, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is The Kingdom of Heaven. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you!"<sup>26</sup>

We see how these saints of The Lord were willing to suffer for righteousness' sake and in obedience to The Gospel. How so? Knecht offers these answers as to why these faithful servants and witnesses of The Messiah rejoiced in their suffering and persecution for the sake of others in The Cross: First, they knew "...that CHRIST would reward their present sufferings with eternal happiness." Second, "Because their love of JESUS made all suffering sweet to them." Such is the Biblical example set before us – we who today sit so comfortably in the affluent modern Western Churches – free for the present of such overt persecution and oppression for the sake of CHRIST! "As their Lord had suffered so much shame and pain for them, they were willing to suffer something for Him, in order to return love for love, and to be like their Master even in His sufferings!"<sup>27</sup> Do we love GOD and our neighbour enough to suffer for others in CHRIST?

#### XI. ACTS 5:40 – GOD FORBID THAT WE CEASE TO SPEAK IN HIS NAME

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in The Name of JESUS, and let them go.

GOD forbid that we, the saints of GOD in CHRIST, should ever cease to speak faithfully in His Name! So the Apostles continued in the works assigned to them by The Lord, everywhere teaching, preaching, praying, rejoicing and sometimes suffering for

---

<sup>24</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:40.

<sup>25</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:41.

<sup>26</sup> 2, KJV, MATTHEW 5:10-12.

<sup>27</sup> 4, Knecht, Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture, ACTS 5:12-42, p 752. "How a Christian

The Gospel of CHRIST. For as they were faithful to CHRIST in evangelizing all who would hear, perhaps they took comfort and strength in the words of David from PSALMS 33:8-11, “Let all the earth fear The LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of The LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations!”<sup>28</sup>

How can we The Church minister to and testify of CHRIST to the lost, the suffering, the sorrowful, if we obey the men rather than GOD? Men are always at every moment in need of CHRIST, but they are generally most open to receiving The Divine Grace of The blessed Cross when they are most oppressed and most without hope – when all the false idols of the world have failed and have fallen back into the dust! It is then that The Church, if she will preach and live out to those lost in darkness the entire CHRIST – The Saviour Victorious and The Saviour Suffering for us - that hearts are most eager and souls most ready to cry out as Saint Peter did when he was sinking into the depths of the deep as in MATTHEW 14:30, “...Lord, save me!”<sup>29</sup>

We can not pick and choose which parts of CHRIST we wish to follow, embracing the convenient and easy, while ignoring the inconvenient and difficult. If we are truly CHRIST's, then as Frank Duff reminds us so forcefully, we are to be joined together in His entirety: “...that union with The Heart and Blood of CHRIST is not to be found in a phase of His life, but in the life entire [of our Lord]. It is as futile, as it is unworthy, to welcome The King of Glory and to repulse The Man of Sorrows, for the two are but The one CHRIST. He who will not walk with The Man of Sorrows has no part in His mission to souls, nor share in its sequel of glory!”<sup>30</sup>

## XII. ACTS 5:41-42 – CEASE NOT TO REJOICE, TEACH AND PREACH CHRIST

41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name.

42 And daily in The Temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach

---

ought to regard sufferings.”

<sup>28</sup> 2, KJV, PSALMS 33:8-11.

<sup>29</sup> 2, KJV, MATTHEW 14:30.

<sup>30</sup> 5, Handbook of The Legion of Mary, Frank Duff, p 57, paragraph 1. On the suffering of The mystical Body of CHRIST. Frank Duff was the founder of “The Legion of Mary” and the author of its rule book, “The Official Handbook of The Legion of Mary.”

JESUS CHRIST.

Let us then cease not to rejoice in, teach and preach CHRIST! And so the Apostles continued in their faithful works of the will of GOD by proclaiming our Lord JESUS CHRIST to all that would hear. And as is recorded earlier in ACTS 2:37, the people were again and again “pricked in their heart,” asking, “What shall we do” to be saved?<sup>31</sup> The Apostles taught them to turn from their sins in repentance, calling upon CHRIST as The Saviour, and receive baptism in The Name of JESUS The Messiah. This is The Word of Life proclaimed by the Apostles, even against persecution and oppression! It is the same faithful message that the Church militant and suffering has preached since then down through the ages even into our present time. And it is The same blessed Gospel message that she shall continue to proclaim until The Lord’s Second Coming, and then will preach forever on earth forever as in Heaven. She preaches CHRIST as is recorded in ACTS 2:38-39, “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in The Name of JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of The HOLY GHOST. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as The Lord our GOD shall call!”<sup>32</sup>

Shall we then, if we be true and faithful servants of CHRIST and His Church on earth, remain silent and keep in the face of so many suffering and lost lives and souls all around us? GOD forbid! When Saint Faustina was commanded to proclaim with the same boldness The Divine Mercy of CHRIST to men in her time and place, she confessed, “...I will not only have to answer [to GOD] for myself on The Day of Judgment, but also for [the lives and] the souls of others” if I remain silent and do not proclaim CHRIST’s Mercy! And so Saint Faustina prayed for the strength and guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT needed to preach The Cross to a hard hearted and hostile world: Lord JESUS CHRIST, “I will do everything in my power, but I beg You to be always with me and to give me strength to do Your holy will; for You can do everything, while I can do nothing of myself!”<sup>33</sup>

As the Apostles refused to keep silent at the vain empty commands of corrupt men, but instead were faithful to obey GOD by proclaiming His Word of salvation in

---

<sup>31</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 2:37.

<sup>32</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 2:38-39.

CHRIST everywhere they went to all who would listen, so we are likewise commanded! They preached The Gospel, drove out demons, healed the infirmed and blessed the sorrowful. They called all men to repent of their sins, confess CHRIST as Lord, receive the baptism of new life in The Savoiur and be reborn in JESUS CHRIST. IF we love our Lord, can we do any less? As CHRIST commanded His Apostles then in The Great Commission, so He calls all Christians to live daily This Commandment as in MATTHEW 28:18-20: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in The Name of The Father, and of The Son, and of The Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you!”<sup>34</sup> And so we read in HEBREWS 13:5-6, “...for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me!”<sup>35</sup>

### XIII. IN CONCLUSION - WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD OVER MAN

What may we say from all these things? That CHRIST calls us, as His faithful saints, servants and soldiers, to testify to The Truth of The Gospel where ever we might find ourselves – in both word and deed - to all that we encounter in life’s daily walk! And while we may well expect resistance - even persecution and oppression from a hard hearted and hateful world which has been in rebellion against The Creator since The Fall - we are not alone! CHRIST is with us, as He has promised! And if we are truly His, we are called to embrace both His victory and the suffering which procured that victory for us at The Cross! We are called to live both The victorious CHRIST and The Suffering Servant for the sake of broken and lost lives and souls which The Lord forever sends us to minister to!

How much then do we really love CHRIST? Let us ask ourselves some questions, keeping in mind the examples of how our Lord suffered for us, and how much the Apostles suffered in CHRIST for the sake of others - even for people such as ourselves: Is JESUS The King of our hearts, minds and souls? Do we do the will of The Lord in all things? Does The Spirit of CHRIST reign in our lives in every way?<sup>36</sup> Or is

---

<sup>33</sup> 6, Saint Faustina, Diary of Divine Mercy, # 154, p 87.

<sup>34</sup> 2, KJV, MATTHEW 28:18-20.

<sup>35</sup> 2, KJV, HEBREWS 13:5-6.

<sup>36</sup> 4, Knecht, Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture, ACTS 5:12-42, p 752-753. Adapted from “Application.”



the spirit of worldliness, pleasure and pride the master of who we are and what we live?  
Do we rather give mere lip service to The Commandments of The Lord on Sunday morning, but live the rest of the week as servants of the world, the flesh and the devil?  
My friends, how much do we really love CHRIST? Let us repent, and seek daily to love Him with all our hearts, minds and souls, in all our thoughts, words and deeds every moment of our lives!

As Saint Faustina neared the end of her faithful but difficult life on earth, standing on the edge of her eternal reward of joy with CHRIST in Heaven for eternity, she confessed to The blessed Saviour:

“I would not know how to suffer without You, O CHRIST.  
Of myself, I would not be able to brave adversities.  
Alone, I would not have the courage to drink from Your cup;  
But You, Lord, are always with me, and You lead me along mysterious paths.

A weak child, I have begun the battle in Your Name  
I have fought bravely, though often [seemingly] without success.  
...[I pray that] my efforts have pleased You..  
And I know that it is the effort alone which You eternally reward.

My heart will not rest from its efforts and struggle  
Until You Yourself call me from the field of battle.  
I will [then] stand before You, not to receive a reward,  
But to be drowned in You[r loving eternal arms], in [Your] peace forever!”<sup>37</sup>

My friends, what are we willing to suffer for the broken lives and lost souls of others in CHRIST? When the two are in conflict, the faithful Christian is called to obey GOD rather than man. We are to be ever faithful servants of The Cross, to bear witness in word and deed to The Words of Life in The Gospel, to show forth both The victorious CHRIST and The Suffering Servant for the sake of the broken lives and suffering souls of others, even to bear persecution and oppression in CHRIST. In all things, we are to obey The Lord over men! For when evil commands that we remain silent of JESUS The Messiah in this lost and grief stricken world, as Saint Luke records for us in ACTS 5:29, “...We ought to obey GOD rather than men.”<sup>38</sup> In The Name of GOD The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost. AMEN!

---

<sup>37</sup> 6, Saint Faustina, Diary of Divine Mercy, # 1654, p 586, paragraph 2,3,5.

<sup>38</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 5:29.

XIV. REFERENCES

1. "The Legion of Mary," a pamphlet. The Legion of Mary. 5109 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Not dated.
2. "King James Version [Bible]." Bible Works 6. Bible Works, LLC. Norfolk, Virginia. 2003.
3. "Praying The PSALMS with Saint Padre Pio." Eileen Dunn Bertanzetti. Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. Huntington, Indiana. 2006.
4. "A Practical Commentary on Holy Scripture." The Most Reverend Frederick Justus Knecht, DD. Tan Books and Publishers, Inc. Rockford, Illinois. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2003.
5. "The Official Handbook of The Legion of Mary." The Legion of Mary. Magnificat House, 49 North Great Georges Street, Dublin, Ireland. 1993.
6. "Divine Mercy in My Soul - Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska." Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska. Congregation of Marians. Stockbridge, Massachusetts. 3<sup>rd</sup> printing, 2006.