**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

**Resurrection Series**

Acts of the Holy Spirit

Peter and John Arrested – Acts 4

June 30th, In the Year of Our Lord 2024

Pastor Matthew Diehl

(All Scripture is from the New American Standard Bible, unless otherwise noted.)

Sermon Audio: roundtopchurch.org / Under Member’s tab

Email questions to Pastor: rtchurch@cvctx.com

 We continue our sermon series and pick up the story when Peter, with John, witnessed the events of the Cross to the Jews at the Jerusalem Temple during the Ninth hour of prayer when the Tamid lamb was sacrificed in an effort for the Jews to draw closer to God in a time of confession. The last sentence in chapter 3 is of note. . . "For you [Jews] first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one *of you* from your wicked ways "(Acts 3:26). At this point, Luke interjects the interruption by the religious rulers.

**Acts 4**:1 As they **[Peter and John**] were speaking to the people,

the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them,

 2 being greatly disturbed because

 they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

 3 And they laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day,

for it was already evening.

 4 **But** many of those who had heard the message believed;

and the number of the men came to be about **five thousand [5000]. [ + 3000 Pentecost]**

 5 On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;

 6 and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander,

and all who were of high-priestly descent.

 7 When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire,

"By what power, or in what name, have you done this?"

 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them,

"**Rulers and elders of the people, [different from verse 12 “men of Israel.”]**

 9 if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man,

as to how this man has been made well,

 10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel,

that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene,

whom you crucified,

whom God raised from the dead—

by this name [Jesus] this man stands here before you in good health.

11 "He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone. (Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6-7)

12 "And there is **salvation in no one else**; for there is **no other name under heaven** that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

 **Exclusive Statement. . . Why?**

Because Jesus is the one who paid the debt for all of fallen humanities sins. There is not any other religious leader who died for the sins of people. All of the man-made false gods demand that people pay them a price or suffer through a series of reincarnations to eventually elevate themselves through their works to a higher life form and eventually blend in to the whole. Wow… no more you. So, all of this individual suffering through countless reincarnated lives is rewarded by . . . wait for it. . . no more you. Can’t wait to experience that…but then. . . how can you experience anything if there is on more you? In these eastern mystic systems, the individual becomes non-existence. This is what I perceive their teaching to say. Hey, with millions of gods in the Hindu system, how can one really determine any truth?

So, it is simple math. . .1 plus 0 = 1. I mean there is only one person (Jesus) in all of human history to achieve the payment for sin. The next obvious question is why do we owe a debt? Because our Creator God ordained a moral code for sustaining life and people violate God’s moral code daily which produces guilt and non-peace in them. God designed us with an innate knowledge of His moral code in order for life to be sustained. Without God’s moral code, life on earth perishes. This is the historical record of humanity as seen in all the wars and crimes committed by fallen humanity.

When Cain murdered Abel there was not any Law code, like God eventually gave Moses. However, there was/is God’s natural law for survival of humanity. America’s founding Fathers knew God’s natural law and appealed to its authority in the Declaration of Independence July 4th 1776. . . by stating. . .*the separate and equal station to which the* ***Laws of Nature and of Nature's God*** *entitle them,. . . .* *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they* ***are endowed by their Creator*** *with certain* ***unalienable Rights****, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,* ***[See Texts on Page 7]***

Cain violated Abel’s unalienable natural rights given by God under His natural law. Cain’s actions were a violation of the natural order of life God created. After Cain murdered Abel, he had punishment and guilt automatically applied to him for violating God’s natural order. Cain found there was not any escape from judgement. Let’s read the account when God confronts Cain. The fact that Cain said he did not know where Abel was. . . shows he had guilt and was attempting to hide his sin from God.

**Genesis 4:9-16**

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?"

 And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

 10 He [God] said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground.

 11 "Now you are cursed from the ground,

which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.

 12 "When you cultivate the ground,

it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth."

 13 Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is too great to bear!

 14 "Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden,

and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

 15 So the LORD said to him,

"Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold."

 And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

 16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

We observe God provided a protection mechanism for Cain in that whoever killed him would have a sevenfold punishment. Cain did not have to pay the price of murdering Abel with his own blood. The Cross is our protection from receiving the penalty due to us for our sins. God provided for us, with the Cross of Christ, as He did for Cain. The end result is that we may live. The Cross of Christ is the only event in human history to atone for the sins of the world. This is how Peter can say, 12 "And there is **salvation in no one else**; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

**Continuing in Acts 4**

**Acts 4**:13 Now as they observed the confidence of **Peter** and **John**

and understood that they were uneducated [without learning in the TANAK ] and untrained [in the TANAK] men, they were amazed,

and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

It is the religious leaders who say Peter and John were not learned and skilled. . .meaning as compared to their self-perceived expertise in the TANAK (Tora, Prophets, Writings) of which Jesus corrected them several times, as He did in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5. . . “*You have been told. . . but I tell you”*. This issue is about the historic and Scriptural knowledge Peter and John possessed. The religious leaders viewed them as not having religious training like a Pharisee or Sadducee. They failed to see or accept that Peter and John had learned for three-and-one-half years from Jesus. We see the high level of knowledge Peter and John possessed when they authored seven New Testament letters. Peter authored two (2) New Testament letters and John authored five (5). Peter and John account for seven (7 or about 25%) of the twenty-seven letters (27 letter/books) of the Greek New Testament. It is true that the learned and highly educated Saul/Paul had an amanuensis (secretary) he dictated to write most of his letters. Peter and John also authored through an amanuensis. This was a common practice in their time to dictate letters much like managers dictate letters to their secretary throughout history. For a good online paper detailing the use of amanuensis, see: <https://taylormarshall.com/2015/01/secretaries-peter-paul.html>

**Continuing in Acts 4, Religious Leaders Deliberate**

**Acts 4**:14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them,

they had nothing to say in reply.

 15 But when they had ordered them to leave the Council,

they began to confer with one another, 16 saying,

"What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

17 "But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name."

**Religious Leaders Deliver Judgement**

 18 And when they had summoned them,

they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

 19 But **Peter** and **John** answered and said to them,

 "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God,

you be the judge; 20 for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

 21 When they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which to punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened;

22 for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. 23 When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

**Peter and John’s Report back to Believers and Pray**

24 And when they heard this, they **lifted their voices to God** with one accord and said,

**Prayer to Recognize God**

**"O Lord,** it is You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, (Psalm 146:6)

**Recognize God’s Work Through His Holy Spirit**

25 who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, 'WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS? (Psalm 2:1) 26 'THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.' (Psalm 2:2)

**Recognize God’s Foreknowledge and Planning through Fallen Human Nature**

27 "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

**Recognizing God’s Will is to Restore His Enemies**

29 "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, 30 while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus."

**AMEN**

**Text of the Declaration of Independence**

**First 2 Paragraphs**

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to **which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God** entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.
          We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are **endowed by their Creator** with certain **unalienable Rights**, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—-That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.