

Sermon Discussion (7/20/2025)

The church is growing. The more it grows the more it threatens the power structure in place. The religious leaders and the Jewish government are the same thing. This causes a conflict between their allegiance to “Israel” and their way of life and the will of God. They can preserve their current way of life, or they can follow the will of God, but they cannot do both. God wants to change things not stay the same.

Title: Government Against God (Preferences)

The Main Question: How do we navigate between our allegiance to our government and following Jesus?

or

How do we avoid fighting against God?

Points to Consider

1. Be careful.
2. Consider the past.
3. Don't fight against God.

Scripture References:

Acts 5:33–40 NIV

³³ When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. ³⁴ But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. ³⁵ Then he addressed the Sanhedrin: “Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. ³⁶ Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. ³⁷ After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. ³⁸ Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. ³⁹ But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.” ⁴⁰ His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

Application Questions

Do you ever feel tension between your faithfulness to God and your faithfulness to the government? (*Examples could be abortion, the debt, truth telling, foreign policy, etc.*)

Love God / Invitation / Relationship

We experience the love of God when we invite Him into our lives.

- Read [Acts 5:33-40](#).
- Do you see the Sanhedrin inviting God into their conversation?
- What is the consequence of failing to invite God into the subject?

Find Freedom / Learning / Clarity

Freedom is found when we learn a new way to think.

- In this passage God is teaching the people to think differently. Describe the way Gamaliel wants them to think?
- How are they currently thinking?
- Why is there such hatred if the threat is so small?

See God / Prayer / Affirmation

It is much easier for us to “see” God when we are communicating with God. Prayer is how we communicate with God.

- Who can see God in this passage?
- What can you do to more clearly see God in your circumstances?

Experience Healing / Serve Others / Opportunities

The brokenness in our hearts begins to heal as we serve other people.

- Can you spot the brokenness in this passage?
- What relationships are being hurt?
- Why are they being hurt?
- Should we care when relationships are hurt in our lives? Why?
- Is this sin?

Discover Joy / Gratitude / Community

The more grateful we are the more joy we feel.

- I see no joy in this passage. Why is that the case?
- What does this tell you about your life?