

**TELECAST SERMON
FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2020
"THE SPIRIT OF DETERMINATION"
HEAD PASTOR BILLY HAN, JR.**

Thank you Melvin,

Some of you in our viewing audience are undoubtedly wondering if the participants in our telecasts are compensated in any way to perform in the Choir, Band, or special vocal and instrumental groups. My answer is an emphatic: NO! Let me reassure you all, that every person you see in our telecasts are bonafide members of The Apostolic Faith Church, who give of their total rehearsal and performance times, as well as their talents, willingly from the heart, for the glory of God, and for absolutely no monetary gains of any kind. Contributions from our TV viewers are used, in fact, to help maintain these weekly telecasts; and through your generosity and financial help, I am able to bring forth such sermons as the one I have prepared for today and entitled: "THE SPIRIT OF DETERMINATION."

In the previous chapters of Acts we saw the marvelous way in which God blessed the First Church. The Spirit filled believers had witnessed many things and with great boldness the people turned to Jesus and His salvation. If Satan hates anything in this world, it is to see the Church prosper and souls baptized and filled with His spirit. Thus, he stirred up the religious leaders of that day to bring persecution upon the church.

And isn't that true today? When God begins to bless the church, when the multitudes of souls are coming in, when there is a great spiritual revival among the people, what does the devil do? He often begins to work his mischief through church members. When trouble is stirred up, God's work is hurt. As the Saints go out to witness for Jesus, a great work is done, but, then, the enemies of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God begin to persecute them. As true born again Christians, we must stand with Jesus. Whatever happens we must stand true to Christ.

Jesus tells us in Matt. 28:20, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Peter and John, through the name of Jesus, had performed a miracle in the healing of the lame man. The religious leaders became very angry. Can you imagine that? Here is a poor homeless person, lame from his birth, panhandling for a living. He is made every withhold and well, to live a godly life, take his place in the community, and probably support a family. These leaders were more than just angry; their hearts were filled with jealousy and malice toward the disciples.

The Bible tells us in Jer. 17:9-10, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it. I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." Here we see the first opposition to the preaching of the Gospel, it is not the last. And they laid hold of Peter and John and cast into prison as we read in Acts 4:3-4, "And they laid hands on them, and put

them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about 5000."

What's their crime? It was simply preaching the Gospel and administering Divine healing of the lame man. Today there is still much opposition to the Gospel that Jesus preached in power and demonstration of His Holy Spirit. We read in Mark 1:14, 15, "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. And saying, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Yes, the world is at enmity against God and the preaching of the Gospel. Listen to Psalms 2:1-4, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth, set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." Actually, the devil is behind all opposition to the Gospel. He began his opposition through forces outside the church. Later we see this opposition arising inside the church. Satan began to cover up Christianity by ritualism and ceremony; then he incited a wave of infidelity and agnosticism, which was followed by evolution, and eventually modernism and the social gospel.

There is a teaching going about, which maintains all men are brothers, therefore, no man needs salvation, that is, to be born again of water and of the spirit. Satan hates the name of Jesus, the blood of Jesus, the resurrection, the forgiveness of sin and the salvation of souls. There is no question where ever the Gospel is preached Satan is going to oppose it. We are told that these religious leaders were angered over what the apostles had preached. What had they preached? We read in Acts 4:1-2, "And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead."

Thus, we see that the Sadducees were the leading force of the opposition, their belief being that there is no resurrection. Here we see Peter preaching that Jesus was raised from the dead. The Sadducees would have given all they had, if they could have gone to the tomb and shown that it was occupied, but they could not do it; the tomb was empty and Jesus Christ was alive and well! This is the cornerstone of our faith. If Jesus died as a man and remained dead, we would not be worshipping Him or God. But when He arose triumphantly over death, hell and the grave, He proved that He was the Son of God, and that every word He said and every claim He made was true.

We celebrate the resurrection, not merely on Easter morn, but every day of the year. Thank God, our Redeemer liveth. We find that all authors or founders of various religions, including: Buddha, Mohammed, Bahai, Confucious and others have died. Only Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, exalted and made a High Priest. Yes, Peter preached Jesus and His crucifixion. He had no other message.. The death, burial, and resurrection, and ascension of Jesus were fresh in his heart. Thus, that message which

was preached almost 2000 years ago is just as fresh today. Any message without Jesus is like a fountain without water, a garden without flowers, a heaven without stars and a life without love. It is good for nothing and helps no one.

Yes, they put Peter and John in prison. But what happened? In spite of their imprisonment, the number of believers increased to 5000. Yes, the church was growing, with the 3000 saved on the day of Pentecost which made a grand total of 8000. The number 8 signifies a new beginning. The beginning of the true church is mentioned for the first time in Matt. 6:18, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock (Himself) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Therefore, despite all the persecutions, the true church founded upon the rock Christ Jesus, has prevailed, despite the onslaught of the devil.

Today, many people say, "I don't like your sermons or your way, but (nevertheless, without them) souls are still being saved." Let the devil fight; let the world laugh; let men criticize. As long as we continue to preach the Gospel and snatch souls from this sin-sick world, we can rejoice and know that Jesus is well pleased. Jesus tells us, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

Nicodemus, a secret believer in the Lord, came to Jesus by night, hoping to learn about the way. He was a man of position, of prominence, of power and probably of great wealth. But Nicodemus was not satisfied with what he had. There was a hunger in his heart. The things of the earth did not satisfy him. He was always searching for something that would bring him happiness. However, joy, happiness, and peace seemed always to elude him. Then he heard about Jesus and the wonderful work He was doing, healing all manner of sickness and diseases. Thus, under the cover of darkness, Nicodemus slipped out to see Jesus, and when he had found the Master said, "No man can do these miracles, except God be with him."

Yes, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance. Nicodemus poured out his heart to Jesus. And Jesus looked into the soul of this hungry hearted Pharisees and said, "Nicodemus, you must be born again. You have many things that the world can give you, but you'll never, never, find peace and joy until you have been born again."

The world is full of men who are trying to find happiness upon this earth. They go everywhere and do everything to find some zest in life, but their search is in vain. To them Jesus would say, "You are seeking satisfaction in the wrong places. Come unto me and be born again and all the joys of earth and heaven will be yours. Jesus said, as we find in John 3:3, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Now, you may see many wonderful things in this world. You may see the Grand Canyon, but you'll never see the Tree of Life in heaven, unless you have been born again. You may see the great cities of the world, but you'll never see the Holy City of the New

Jerusalem, unless you have been born again. You may see the great countries of the world in all their splendor, but you'll never see the land that is fairer than day, unless you've been born again. You may live in the finest mansions, that money can buy, but you'll never see the Father's house of many mansions, unless you've been born again."

He emphasized the "Must." This is one of His divine imperatives. Listen to John 3:5, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

To be "born of water" is to be baptized by immersion and in the name of Jesus Christ, according to Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." To be "born of the Spirit" is to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, speaking in an "unknown tongue" or language. According to the Bible this is the only evidence, which can be used to verify and confirm that one has received the Holy Ghost, according to Acts 2:4, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (120 in the upper room) and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance."

Do you recall Mary who was praying in the upper room. On the day of Pentecost, Mary, too, received the gift of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues. Consequently, if Mary, the Mother of Jesus needed the Holy Ghost, how much more then, do we need the Holy Spirit to withstand the endless waves of satan's fiery darts.

Peter informs us in Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is no name in this world comparable to the name: JESUS! And my friends in the viewing audience this is the Gospel that Peter and John were preaching and for which they both had been cast into prison. They had chosen to obey Jesus rather than men.

Now, let's focus upon Peter and John who were in prison. It was morning; the high priest and his family were all gathered together. They formed a council to try Peter and John. Jesus once instructed his disciples. We read John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." How could Peter and John be extremely cool and unafraid in such an hour? They remembered the words of Jesus and commented, the Lord said this would happen to us." They remembered that Jesus had once been in this place, which they now occupied, and this thought gave them courage.

You and I have many rough roads before us. If we remember that Jesus has been down every road that we must travel and if we listen hard, we may hear Him say, "I will never leave nor forsake thee," This, we need never fear, what men will do to us. He will cause all things to work out all right. The council asked the apostles this question, as we read in Acts 4:7, "And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power or by what name, have ye done this?" Now this was a great opportunity for Peter to preach the Gospel. The last time he was in the judgment hall, someone asked him if he were a follower of Jesus. He claimed he did not even know Jesus. But now, he stood before

them, and without a tremor in his voice he preached to those prominent and influential leaders, accusing them of killing the Prince of Glory.

From whence did this great power come from? We read in verse 8, "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel." Today every preacher of the Gospel must be filled with the Spirit. We read in Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Listen to Peter as he convicted the sinners, who had come together to accuse them of a crime. Suddenly he was the accuser and they were the criminals. We read in verse 10, "Be it known unto you all, and to all people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye have crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole." He then speaks about the rejected cornerstone. Salvation was a very important word in Israel. For years they had longed for deliverance of their nation and for themselves, as individuals. Here they made a major mistake. In erecting the building of salvation they needed a chief cornerstone and when God sent this stone, the Lord Jesus Christ, they rejected Him and crucified Him.

God made Him the center of salvation, as we read in I Cor. 3:11, "For other foundation, can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." You and I are building on that foundation. There are many things we need to include in this life, such as good health, education, making a living, having friends and a home. However unless we have Jesus in our lives, we can't do anything. He must be the head of all things or life will be empty and hopeless. One of the greatest statements in the Bible was stated earlier, that of Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

"What's in a name?" you ask, Everything, if that name is Jesus. Because of it the lame man donned a new body. There was sight for the blind Bartimaeus in that name. There was life for the dead Lazarus in that name. There was forgiveness for the sinful woman in that name. And for you and I, who have been truly born of water and of spirit, there is salvation.

Our names are written in Heaven's Book of Life, There is adoption in God's family, there is comfort, strength and peace, and at last a home in heaven reserved in the Name of Jesus! Paul tells us in Philippians 2:9-11, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee would bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

This has not yet come to pass, but it will surely happen when Christ comes again to rule and reign. In salvation, Jesus' Name is the only saving Name. God has never given us any other saving name nor two ways of salvation. Jesus tells us in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." His name is first

and last, and always the central theme in salvation. I call upon every other name in the world, and there is no response, no answer, no help for the soul. But when I call upon the Name of Jesus I hear Him say: "Here am I, ready, willing and able to save unto the uttermost and give you all the help that you need."

When Peter ended his sermon, these men noted all that had transpired. They noted his boldness which came through the power of the Holy Spirit. We read in the 13th verse of Acts, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." And that is what the world needs to see today--to see Jesus in us. We ought to live today in such a way that those we come in contact with will say, "He is different." Listen to Matt. 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

We see here that the preacher's power is not dependent upon education or training. These men had no worldly advantages, but they had spiritual power. There are certain denominations which will not permit anyone to preach in their church, unless they have had college and seminary training. (I John 2:27) reads, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not any man teach you but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

Therefore, the believer in Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit Himself is the anointing by which the born again person is set apart for service unto the Lord. He is not chosen by man, nor by a college seminary. Some of the greatest preachers who preached the Gospel were uneducated men. The apostles, except Paul, were all uneducated men; their education and knowledge came from Christ Jesus. When they saw the lame man who had been miraculously healed standing before them, they could say nothing against him. They saw a man, no longer crippled and begging; he was standing and walking. They could say nothing of the power of Christ Jesus.

Today people look at the hypocrites and back sliders around them and declare that there is nothing following Jesus. But when you and I are changed and live as we should, they cannot lift their voices against our faith. Paul admonishes in Titus 1:10-11: "For they are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Thus, they commanded the apostles. We read in Acts 4:18-20, "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When the apostles were freed they went to their own companies.

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Until our next telecast, this is your host, Pastor Billy Han, Jr., expressing my sincerest appreciation to each of you, who have allowed us to come into your homes. May the good Lord bless and keep you all in the hollow of His hands.

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