

## Rebellion and Redemption – Part 9

### The Great Controversy and the early church

Welcome to Hope Sabbath School--an in-depth interactive study of the Word of God. We are continuing a series of studies on Rebellion and Redemption, studying the theme of the Great Controversy between good and evil. Our topic today: The great controversy and the early church.

Scripture Theme Song: I will praise You, O LORD (Ps. 9:1-2)

- 1) A new perspective for the disciples
  - a) Acts 1:1-6 – What important lesson do the disciples still need to learn?
  - b) How will their mission be accomplished? Acts 1:8
  - c) What essential preparation was needed? Acts 1:14 (contrast with Mark 9:33-34; Matthew 20:20-24)
- 2) The Day of Pentecost
  - a) Acts 2:1-12 (the reversal of Genesis 11:1-9)
  - b) Acts 2:36-41 (compare with Matthew 26:69-75)
  - c) What is necessary in order for each one of us to experience the same transformation and empowerment today?
- 3) Opposition from the Sadducees
  - a) Acts 4:1-4 – Why were the Sadducees so hostile toward the disciples?
  - b) Acts 4:5-13 – the witness of the disciples
  - c) Acts 4:18-31 – response to opposition
- 4) The Stoning of Stephen
  - a) Acts 6:8-10 – Why was Stephen such a powerful witness? (see Acts 6:3)
  - b) Acts 6:11-15 – false accusations
  - c) Acts 7:54-60 – response to the witness of Stephen
  - d) Both this group of leaders and those converted in Acts 2 were “cut to the heart”. Why are their responses so drastically different?
  - e) What lesson can we learn from their experience?
  - f) How did God work good in spite of this terrible tragedy?
- 5) Breaking down prejudice
  - a) What examples do we see of prejudice among the disciples during the ministry of Jesus? Luke 9:51-54, John 4:27
  - b) Acts 10:1-8, 9-16, 17-23, 24-33, 34-43, 44-48 How do you see God at work in this story?
  - c) What testimony does Peter give to the Christian leaders in Jerusalem? Acts 11:15-18
  - d) Where do we see lingering prejudice among followers of Jesus today?
- 6) Blessings in the midst of persecution
  - a) Acts 11:19 – Why are the enemies of Jesus so relentless in their persecution of Christians?
  - b) How does God work good in this bad situation?
  - c) Acts 11:20 – moving beyond the Jews
  - d) Acts 11:21 – which ones was the Lord with? Those described in v.19 who preached to the Jews, or those described in v. 20 who preached to the Hellenists?
  - e) Share a time when you saw God work good even in the midst of very difficult circumstances.