

Acts 4 - With all Boldness

Sunday AM 03/07/21

Introduction:

Scripture - **John 7:24** "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." **25** Now some of them from Jerusalem said, "Is this not He whom they seek to kill? **26** "But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ?"

One key word in **Acts 4.23-37** is "boldness". The Sanhedrin threatened the Apostles, **Acts 4:17** "But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." **18** And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. To which Peter responds, **Acts 4:19** But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge."

What's next?

I) Peter and John Tell the Disciples

Acts 4:23 And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.

A) What had happened?

1. A miracle was performed, lame man healed, Peter preached "Jesus", **Acts 3**
2. They were arrested, they testified to the Jewish leaders, threatened, released, and 5,000 people had obeyed the Gospel, **Acts 4**.

B) What had not happened.

1. Peter and John had not denied Jesus.
2. They had not promised to preach anymore.

3. People had not been dissuaded from hearing the word of God.

II) The Disciples Prayer

Acts 4:24 *So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 "who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.'*

A) Unity in prayer

1. How effective is prayer? How effective is prayer when God's children raise their voices to Him in prayer?
2. Notice the number of times people of God simply went to Him in prayer?
 - a. **Acts 6:4** *"but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."*
 - b. **Acts 10:30** *So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 "and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.*
 - c. **Acts 12:5** *Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.*
3. We need more prayers when accompanied by faith.

B) The prayer, **Psalm 2**

Acts 4:25 *"who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.'*

1. To answer the question, it is because they were in darkness, sin.
2. The Roman rulers had condemned Jesus although they knew He was innocent.

Matthew 27:24 *When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."*

3. The Jewish leaders wanted to protect their power and standing.

John 11:47 *Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. 48 "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." 49 And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 "nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish."*

4. God knew this would happen, many prophecies concerning the death of Christ.

Acts 4:27 *"For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate,*

*with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together **28** "to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done."*

a. **Matthew 26:31** *Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' (Zech. 13.7)*

b. **Matthew 27:35** *Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." (Ps. 22.18)*

c. **John 19:36** *For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." **37** And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced." (Ps. 34.20; Zech. 12.10; 13.6)*

5. The point being, these people knew they had a fight ahead of them.
 - a. Persecution was going to intensify
 - b. Jews, Gentiles, more Roman rulers, idolaters, etc.

C) Trusting God in prayer and life

1. Notice what they did not ask for
 - a. to stop the persecution
 - b. or simply a way out of this mess
2. They did pray for boldness.

Acts 4:29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,"

3. The ability to continue doing what they had been doing.

Acts 4:30 "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."

D) We see their boldness

Acts 4:32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. **33** And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. **34** Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, **35** and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

1. They weren't going anywhere, but staying in Jerusalem.
2. They were united in Christ, all a part of the same body, united in doctrine.
3. They were bold in their benevolence to one another, sharing with fellow Christians.

E) Boldness to encourage

Acts 4:36 And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, **37** having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

1. Don't hear any of his words but we do see his actions.
2. Encouragement can be verbal and non-verbal.

III) Application

A) **Boldness starts with faith (trusting God)**

1. God always wins. Never be on the side opposing God.
2. We can either be a friend of God or the world.

James 4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? 6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

B) **Christians must be united**

1. All a part of the same body, all have the same doctrine, which brings us closer together, creates tighter bonds, more love.
2. Road blocks to unity
 - a. Lack of time together-worship --drifting away usually starts with missing services
 - b. Lack of trust- building relationships, takes time and Christ, "team building" etc.
 - c. Lack of desire- happy not being united, fellowship implies closeness which can make us uncomfortable.

C) **We all need to be encouragers and to be encouraged.**

1. To lift each other up and to lift others.
2. Great athletes makes those around them better. Which means they also make sacrifices. About a year ago, ESPN aired "The Last Dance" what I found interesting was Scottie Pippin, he made sacrifices for that team. But so did Steve Kerr and Michael Jordan.