New Beginnings Christian Fellowship

**Pastor's Bible Study**

Fall 2026

Thursday, November 5th, 2026

7:00p - 8:15p

# THE BOOK OF ACTS:

# The Spread of the Gospel & the Development of the Early Church

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". (Acts 1:8)*

## Study 6: Boldness Under Pressure – November 5th

- **Text:** Acts 4:1-37
- **Focus:** Peter and John face the Jewish Council, get released, and pray for bold courage within the Church
- **Theme:** First opposition and radical internal sharing

**Overview**

Boldness under pressure comes not from human status or confidence, but from being with Jesus and relying on the Holy Spirit.

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

## I The Cost of Proclamation (Acts4:1-4)

a. **The Scene:** Peter and John are preaching the resurrection of Jesus in the temple courts.

b. **The Opposition:** Religious leaders (priests, the temple captain, and Sadducees) arrest them because they are disturbed that the apostles are teaching about the resurrection.

c. **The Growth:** Despite the arrest, the number of believers grows to about 5,000 (men).

Discussion Questions

- Why were the Sadducees specifically upset about the message resurrection?
- How does opposition validate or draw attention to the gospel rather than stopping it?

## II Courage Before the Council (Acts 4:5-22)

a. **The Trial:** Peter and John stand before the Sanhedrin (Annas, Caiaphas, and rulers).

b. **The Defense:** Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter boldly declares that salvation is found in no one else except Jesus Christ, the rejected cornerstone (Acts 4:11-12; cf, Psalm 118:22 and Matthew 21:42).

c. **The Observation:** The leaders notice that Peter and John are *"unlearned and ordinary men,"* yet they realize they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

d. **The verdict:** The council orders them to stop speaking in Jesus' name; Peter and John reply, *"We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"* (Acts 4:20).

Discussion Questions

- What made Peter and John's boldness different from arrogance or stubbornness?
- When do you feel pressure to compromise or stay quiet about your beliefs? How do you respond?

## III Prayer for Greater Boldness (Acts 4:23-31)

a. **The Return:** Peter and John report back to the community of believers.

b. **The Prayer:** Instead of praying for an escape or safety, the church praises God as Creator, cities Psalm 2 regarding hostile rulers, and prays specifically: *"Grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word"* (Acts 4:29).

c. **The Manifestation:** The place shakes, they are filled with the Holy Spirit, and they speak God's word with courage.

Discussion Questions

- Is it significant that they *prayed for boldness* rather than *for the removal* of the threat?
- How does gathering with other believers help refuel your courage during hard times?

## IV Generosity and Unity in the Community (Acts 4:32-37)

a. **The Heart of the Church:** The believers are of one heart and soul; no one claims their possessions as their own, and they share everything in common.

b. **Apostolic Power:** The apostles continue testifying to the resurrection with great grace upon them all.

c. **The Example:** Joseph, whom the apostles call Barnabas (son of encouragement), sells a field and brings the money to the apostles to distribute to those in need.

<u>Discussion Questions</u>

- How does bold witness to the outside world and radical generosity inside the church connect to one another? (cf., 6:10)

- What are some practical ways that members of our congregation can show *"Barnabas-style"* generosity in this time of great economic suffering?