

Boldness, Threats, Prayer
Acts 4:13-31

I. The Council and Their Deliberation

13 Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

- Acts 4:13-31

- No theological education
- They were laymen regarding religion. Men whom much was not to be expected of.
- ++The recognition was not simply that it became clear that they were two of Jesus' followers, but that their close association with Jesus explained their unexpected ability.

- Luke 21:12-15

- "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake. 13 It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. 14 So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; 15 for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute."

14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. 15 But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another,

- Acts 4:13-31

16 saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. 17 But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name."

- Acts 4:13-31

- The Sanhedrin was faced with hard evidence: a man was legitimately healed from paralysis, and no magic was being claimed.
- They were only interested in stopping the spread of the preaching about Jesus.
- Hardness of Heart:
 - ++Not enough to reject their Promised Messiah alone, they wanted to keep all their own people from even hearing about Him.
 - ++Can often become the goal of hard hearted individuals.

18 And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

- Acts 4:13-31

- The command given was an effort to silence the Apostles and exert control as the religious leaders.
- Not a stern warning, implication of severe threats.

II. The Apostles Response, Release

19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; 20 for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

- Acts 4:13-31

- Hebrew Midwives
- Daniel, friends
 - ++Christians are not called to civil disobedience. However, when leaders command people to act outside of God's Will, Christians must stand firm.

21 When they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which to punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened; 22 for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

- Acts 4:13-31

- More threats piled on: likely what could happen if directive is disobeyed.
- Matthew 5:16 lived out in the Apostles
 - "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

III. The Prayer of the Believers

23 When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is You who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them,

- Acts 4:13-31

- The unity of mind in the church
- Prayer is the legitimate heart of everyone present
- Prayer to God, Sovereign Creator

25 who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said,
'Why did the Gentiles rage,

And the peoples devise futile things?

26 'The kings of the earth took their stand,

And the rulers were gathered together

Against the Lord and against His Christ.'

- Acts 4:13-31

27 For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

- Acts 4:13-31

- Psalm 2:
 - David's Psalm as king of Israel about nations failing to acknowledge God's sovereign plan.
 - ++Fulfilled in Christ: Gentiles (Romans), nations (Herod / Jewish leaders), and even the Jewish people all rejected Christ.
- ++All happened as God determined it to happen.
 - Rest in God's sovereign power as the early Christians did.

29 And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, 30 while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus."

- Acts 4:13-31

- Not a prayer for deliverance, revenge, or simplicity.
- Knowing what was beginning, they humbly asked God for boldness to spread the Gospel.

- ++"Continue to work, give us boldness to preach Your Word, all in the Name of Jesus"

IV. God's Swift Response

31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

- Acts 4:13-31

- God's Good News would not be slowed or silenced
- Filled with the Spirit, not for Salvation, but for boldness to proclaim.
- God prepared them with what they would need.

