

Text: Acts 4:1-22, Title: Holy Boldness, Date/Place: The Road, 10.9.16, AM

- A. **Opening illustration:** One of the commentaries that I read was written by a man named Adjith Fernando. He told a story of a Methodist missionary from 1813, who as a 66-year old man announced that he felt led of God to go to Ceylon, which is not Sri Lanka. Everyone thought that Thomas Coke was too old, senile, and out to build his own kingdom. But he made arrangements and went anyway with a small band of young ministers. He never made it ashore dying along the way. However, the young ministers, so inspired by his vision, went on and preached the gospel. The one of the fruits of their labor was the author of the commentary, a native of Sri Lanka. Thomas Coke's holy boldness wore off upon the young men.
- B. **Background to passage:** Following Pentecost, the early church began to make gathering at the temple for prayer, teaching, and worship a pattern. So, on the way one day, Peter healed a man who couldn't walk. Leaping and running, the people knew that a miracle had been done, and so they listened to the teaching of the ones who did the miracle. Mosaic law taught that if anyone did a miracle, and was teaching the people from it, they were to be examined to know if they were leading them away from God. Additionally, the Sanhedrin was made up of wealthy, trained, educated, land owners, and the thought of these untrained Galilean fishermen assuming a teaching ministry in the temple courts as teachers. Therefore, arrest, holding cell, trial, very similar to Jesus was due to jealousy and indignation, rather than concern for the people of God. That indignation was also fueled by the following being built, and the main teaching about the resurrection of Jesus. Of, course the display of a body would have squelched the whole thing...
- C. **Main thought:** Looking at three things exemplified by Peter in his witness, that will be a pattern for ours
- A. **We should be filled with the Spirit (v. 8)**
1. So even though they were arrested the message of Christ was still drawing people to God. The time of their arrest must have not been enough time to convene the Sanhedrin. Note the names used in this passage, just another indicator of the authenticity of the historical accuracy of Luke's piece. Afterward, they were questioned about the power by which they did the miracle in chapter three. Luke records that Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit. This is a detail that we should not look over, nor take lightly.
 2. The filling of the Spirit **IS NOT** 1) a second blessing to an advanced state of spirituality, 2) the same as being indwelt by the Spirit, 3) not a progressive process of receiving Him in degrees, 4) not the same thing as being baptized by the Holy Spirit, 5) not the same as being sealed by the Spirit. **IT IS** the constant moment by moment yielding to the Spirit's control of your life.
 3. Matt 10:19-20, Luke 12:11-12, 21:13-15, Eph 5:18,
 4. **Illustration:** Wind filling a sail, dominating control of emotion, wine controlling the mind, hand filling a glove. "To be filled with the Spirit involves confession of sin, surrender of the will, intellect, body, time, talent, possessions, and desires. It requires the death of selfishness and the slaying of self-will. When we die to self, the Lord fills us with His Spirit." -JM, "most of our mindsets are geared to "do your best" or "try real hard" and God understands the rest. And we spend most of our Christian life trying to serve in our own power, vowing to try harder, do better, kill sin ourselves, and feeling terrible when we fail again and again. But the power to have victory in your Christian life lies in being filled with the Spirit. He is not a power to be harnessed; He is the life of Christ, the Spirit of the Living God who dwells in you. So we are to seeking the filling of the spirit, but not work it up. There is nothing that the sail can do, but wait on the wind, but it is hoisted in faith. Stop trying, and start trusting, depending, abiding in Him to work through you."
 5. Training, knowledge, and disciplines are fine and good, but, when you are faced with a situation in life, suffering, evangelism, discernment, pain, relationship, sin, you must be prepared to surrender to the Spirit, and that means a commitment now. Don't decide in the moment. Let God give you words or action in the moment, but decide now. Are we going to surrender to the Spirit daily? Are you walking in obedience moment by moment to the promptings of the Spirit? Am I going to share Christ today with that person God brings? Am I going to allow the Spirit to give me the words to comfort another? Don't think this is restricting God, but this is a surrender of your will. This is not about doing more, but about believing more.

B. **We should contend for the gospel (v. 9-12)**

1. Peter wasn't shy about the message of Jesus and the resurrection. That message was part of what annoyed the religious leaders before jail. Now brought before the council, he doesn't sway, mince words, nor beat around the bush; he goes right for the jugular. Jesus Christ, Christ meaning the anointed one, or chosen one, being the Greek equivalent to the Messiah, YOU crucified, and God raised up. He brings some OT reference about them rejecting their own Chief Cornerstone just to drive it right down their throats. And as if that wasn't enough, he further stated that there is no other name by which salvation could be attained. BOOM! And even though the story is about the rejection of the Cornerstone, there are some that believe according the last verse in our passage.
2. Mark 16:16, John 3:36, 14:6, Rom 1:18-21, 1 Tim 2:5, 1 John 5:11-12,
3. **Illustration:** The exclusivism of Christianity goes against the grain of our religiously pluralistic society. A chapel built at the North Pole in February 1959 by the men of Operation Deep Freeze 4 typifies the prevalent attitude today toward religious belief. The structure contained an altar, over which was hung a picture of Jesus, a crucifix, a star of David, and a lotus leaf (representing the Buddha). On the wall of the chapel was an inscription that read "Now it can be said that the earth turns on the point of faith."
4. What about...the bible teaches exclusivity. Jesus taught exclusivity. A man that can heal the lame, give sight to the blind, calm the seas, and predict his own resurrection multiple times, is the person that I want to believe. Now, the real question is: are we going to contend for it? Are we going to proclaim it? Are you going to share it in its fullness? It contains a message of sin and the justice of God, but it also contains a great message of hope for all those that put their trust completely in the one who bore that wrath for them. There is salvation in no other name, but there is salvation in a name! This alone should compel us to go to them that have no hope; to go to them that have no witness; to have broken hearts for those that trust in themselves, works, money, happiness, religion, education, relationships, philosophy, or anything else in the whole of creation. There IS something infinitely better!! You don't have to be an experienced apologist; these men were never trained. They had only been believers a short time, because they didn't believe the whole three years they spent with Jesus. You just have to be filled, willing, and surrendered.

C. **We should stand firm (v. 19-20)**

1. So, the religious leaders are astonished, unholy huddle. They know the miracle is undeniable. The man is standing there, is at least 40 years old, and known by half of Jerusalem as the beggar at the gate. Their concern, though, was that the Jesus movement didn't spread. So they threatened them, the word used means to put terror in the heart of, not that the apostles were afraid. Their response is such an example. They let the authorities know right then that they could not, would not obey their order. Not only that, they did it in such a way that it put the leaders as opposing God. All this was done through the power of the filling of the Spirit of God.
2. **Illustration:** "It is better by noble boldness to run the risk of being subject to half the evils we anticipate than to remain in cowardly listlessness for fear of what might happen." "My hunch is that most of you reading this book have basic knowledge about the Holy Spirit, but when it comes to experiencing the Holy Spirit in your life, it's a different story..." "I want nothing more than to live in total surrender and abandonment to the Spirit every moment I have left on this earth.... I don't want my life to be explainable apart from the Spirit"-Francis Chan
3. When we are with Jesus, we develop this radical commitment to obedience to our Master, regardless of government regulations, company policy, social politeness, political correctness, regardless of persecution, shame, consequences, etc., because we know to whom we have sold out. What an amazing testimony, we can't help it! The quota for sissified Christians is filled. We have no more need for spineless, self-absorbed, self-comforting, lavish-living, peacemakers with the world and with sin within. The world, the flesh, and the devil push at us, and we are supposed to do all to stand firm. We are to resist the devil and he will flee. Greater is he that is within you. We are more than conquerors. Now let us go with him outside the gate bearing his reproach for we know that we have an everlasting city to come. Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. Life, death, angels, principalities, things present, nor things to come shall separate us from the love of Christ. To live is Christ, and to die is gain. **2 Samuel 10:11-12** And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. (12) Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which seems him good

- A. Closing illustration: Hugh Latimer once preached before King Henry VIII. Henry was greatly displeased by the boldness in the sermon and ordered Latimer to preach again on the following Sunday and apologize for the offense he had given. The next Sunday, after reading his text, he thus began his sermon: “Hugh Latimer, dost thou know before whom thou are this day to speak? To the high and mighty monarch, the king’s most excellent majesty, who can take away thy life, if thou offendest. Therefore, take heed that thou speakest not a word that may displease. But then consider well, Hugh, dost thou not know from whence thou comest--upon Whose message thou are sent? Even by the great and mighty God, Who is all-present and Who beholdeth all thy ways and Who is able to cast thy soul into hell! Therefore, take care that thou deliverest thy message faithfully.” He then preached the same sermon he had preached the preceding Sunday--and with considerably more energy.
- B. Recap
- C. Invitation to commitment

Additional Notes

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