

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Part 12 – Raging and Shaking

Acts 4.23-31

Released – they turned to the church and the church turned to prayer

- Why? BECAUSE THEY KNEW GOD
 - Your spiritual pulse and mine – who do you turn to and what do they do?
 - Despot – unchallenged, uncontrollable One
 - Creator – owner of all
 - Communicator – I put my faith and shape my view by what God says

Raging: because of what God had done

- The pride and foolishness it takes to align against the Lord – worst part is their own deceit because they thought they were winning by killing Jesus
- What had God done? (Jesus predicted death 3x)
 - He had provided a sacrifice (John 10.17-18)
 - He had paid for sin (Rom. 3.25-26)
 - He had purchased forgiveness (Colossians 2.13-14)
 - He had demonstrated His love (1 John 4.10)
 - He had reconciled us to Himself (2 Cor. 5.18-20)

Shaking: because of what God was doing (physical environment could not handle spiritual dynamic)

- Keep watch – because of who He is and they knew God, they prayed like this
 - Not take them out, not curse them, not make them lose – just keep an eye on them
- Supply boldness
 - Not comfort, security, safety, wisdom – boldness
 - Boldness doesn't mean argumentative but winsome witness to Jesus
- Grab attention – keep doing the kinds of things You do to make the world notice You
 - Temptation: make the world notice me (John 3.30) instead of staying humble
 - God is too good to entrust great power to people it will destroy

Questions for Discussion:

1. In v.23, Peter and John turn to the church as soon as they're released. What would be your level of comfort in doing that when a big event happened in your life? Why? How have you seen the church do well in moments like that? How have you seen the church struggle (or even fail) in moments like that?
2. In understanding the plan of God to bring salvation to the world, Trent covered several aspects of the death of Jesus. Reread John 10.17-18. Why is it important

that Jesus laid down His life voluntarily? What does it say about Him? What does it say about God's bigger plan? What does it say about how we can / should approach the world around us?

3. In the sermon, we stated that Jesus paid for sin and purchased forgiveness as two separate statements. The first has to do with God's righteousness / justice and the second with His mercy toward us. Reread Romans 3.23-26 and Colossians 2.13-14. Why is it important that God remain just in the process of saving His people? How did He do that? How then does it relate to His mercy / forgiveness?
4. In the sermon, Trent talked about how the cross is the answer to the question of God's love for us and how that love brings us into relationship with Him. Reread 1 John 4.10 and 2 Corinthians 5.18-20. In what circumstances are you tempted to question God's love for you? Read Romans 8.37-39. What promises do you find there that steady you when that temptation comes?
5. What situation is in your life right now that you would pray like the early church, "Now, Lord, take note of their threats" (a.k.a. "Keep an eye on them")? How does praying like this shape how you view the situation?
6. The church closed the prayer with a petition for boldness. In what area of your life do you need boldness right now? How would your life be different if God answered your prayer for that kind of winsome witness? Would it come in word or in action?