

**Acts- Church Afire! “Unschooling and Ordinary,” Acts 4:8-31”**  
Sermon Summary & 5-Day Devotional Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 By Rev. Paul Hudson

**Sermon Summary**

This sermon centers on Acts 4:13, where the religious leaders observe the courage of Peter and John and recognize that they were “unschooled, ordinary men” who had been with Jesus. After healing the lame man and being arrested, Peter boldly proclaims that the miracle was done in the name of Jesus Christ—the one they crucified and whom God raised from the dead. The apostles’ courage and clarity were not the result of formal education, eloquence, or status, but the power of the Holy Spirit at work in them.

The message contrasts worldly measures of influence—education, charisma, entertainment, institutional strength—with the true foundation of spiritual power: intimacy with Jesus and reliance on the Spirit. The early church did not grow because of polished delivery or strategic programming; it grew because God’s power transformed lives. Peter and John understood that Jesus is the cornerstone, salvation is found in Him alone, obedience to God outweighs obedience to men, and bold prayer invites the Spirit’s empowering presence.

The sermon calls the church today to prioritize relationship with Christ over impressing the world, to build faith on God’s power rather than human performance, and to pray for boldness rather than comfort. Ordinary believers who spend time with Jesus become extraordinary instruments in God’s hands.

**Key Takeaways**

**1. Spiritual Power Comes from Being with Jesus**

Peter and John’s boldness did not come from education or status but from their relationship with Christ. The most defining characteristic of a believer is not skill or sophistication, but intimacy with Jesus. Time spent with Him produces courage and clarity.

**2. Faith Must Be Rooted in God’s Power, Not Human Performance**

The early church grew because of the demonstration of the Spirit’s power, not eloquence or entertainment. When faith rests on personality or programs, it becomes fragile. When it rests on God’s power, it becomes unshakable.

**3. Jesus Is the Cornerstone of Life and Salvation**

The apostles boldly proclaimed that Jesus—the rejected stone—is the cornerstone and the only source of salvation. A life aligned with Christ stands firm when everything else collapses. There is no substitute foundation.

**4. Obedience to God Overrides Fear of Man**

When commanded to stop preaching, Peter and John chose obedience to God over compliance with authority. Those who have been with Jesus develop a God-centered conviction that silences the fear of public opinion.

**5. Bold Prayer Invites Fresh Filling of the Holy Spirit**

Instead of praying for safety, the believers prayed for boldness. God responded by shaking the place and filling them again with the Spirit. A praying church becomes a powerful church when it asks not for comfort, but for courage to proclaim Christ.

## 5-Day Devotional

### Day 1: Spiritual Power Comes from Being with Jesus

**Scripture:** *Acts 4:13*

Peter and John were described as “unschooled, ordinary men,” yet their courage astonished the religious leaders. What set them apart was simple but profound: they had been with Jesus. Time in Christ’s presence reshapes us from the inside out. It gives us confidence not rooted in personality but in relationship. The world prizes credentials and charisma, but heaven recognizes relationship. When we consistently sit at Jesus’ feet—through prayer, Scripture, and obedience—we begin to carry His character, His peace, and His authority into every situation.

**Reflection:**

*Am I prioritizing daily time with Jesus in a way that truly shapes how I live and respond to others?*

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### Day 2: Faith Must Be Rooted in God’s Power, Not Human Performance

**Scripture:** *1 Corinthians 2:4–5*

Paul reminds the church that faith should not rest on human wisdom but on God’s power. It is easy to lean on what impresses people—strong communication, organization, creativity, or emotion. While those things can serve God’s purposes, they cannot replace the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. Faith built on personality or performance will crumble under pressure. But faith grounded in the power of God endures suffering, doubt, and opposition. When God moves in undeniable ways—changing hearts, healing wounds, restoring hope—that is the foundation that lasts.

**Reflection:**

*What is my faith resting on right now—human influence or the demonstrated power of God in my life?*

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### Day 3: Jesus Is the Cornerstone of Life and Salvation

**Scripture:** *Acts 4:11–12*

Peter boldly declared that Jesus is the rejected stone who became the cornerstone, and that salvation is found in no one else. A cornerstone determines the alignment of the entire structure. If Christ is not central, everything else in life will eventually shift out of place. Careers, relationships, achievements, and even religious activity cannot bear the weight of our souls. Only Jesus provides a foundation strong enough for eternity. When He becomes our reference point for truth, identity, and hope, our lives are built on solid ground.

## 5-Day Devotional

### **Reflection:**

*Is Jesus truly the cornerstone of my decisions, priorities, and identity?*

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## Day 4: Obedience to God Overrides Fear of Man

**Scripture:** *Acts 4:19–20*

When commanded to stop speaking in Jesus' name, Peter and John responded, "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." They chose obedience to God over approval from people. Fear of man is subtle—it can silence our witness, dilute our convictions, and shape our behavior. But those who have been with Jesus learn to value God's opinion above all else. Obedience may bring discomfort, misunderstanding, or resistance, but it also brings freedom and joy. Living for God's approval liberates us from the exhausting pursuit of human praise.

### **Reflection:**

Where might fear of others be keeping me from obeying or speaking boldly for Christ?

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## Day 5: Bold Prayer Invites a Fresh Filling of the Holy Spirit

**Supporting Scripture:** *Acts 4:29–31*

After being threatened, the believers did not pray for protection or ease—they prayed for boldness. They asked God to stretch out His hand to heal and to empower them to speak His Word fearlessly. In response, the place was shaken and they were filled anew with the Holy Spirit. Bold prayer aligns us with God's mission and invites His power into our weakness. When we ask for courage rather than comfort, we position ourselves to see God move in extraordinary ways through ordinary lives.

### **Reflection:**

*What would change if I began praying daily for boldness and a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit?*

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