

**SUBJECT : THE CHURCH IS BOLD**

**BIBLE BASIS:**

**Lesson Scripture:**

**Acts 4:1-4, 23-31**

**BIBLE TRUTH:**

**Peter and John had boldness to proclaim the  
gospel.**

**MEMORY VERSE: READ Acts 4:29**

**LESSON AIM:**

**That you will learn to speak boldly for the Lord.**

# Introduction

- Remember that the cripple man that was begging at the entrance to the temple had walked through the temple leaping and praising God for the miracle he received at the hands of Peter and John. (Acts 3:8-11). A huge crowd of thousands had rushed to see the cripple who had been healed and to hear the message being proclaimed by Peter and John. The best proof that Jesus is alive is a living miracle, like the healing of the beggar in this lesson.
- The temple was a massive building which could hold thousands (Acts 4:4). The excitement and noise attracted the attention of the temple authorities. What they saw and heard disturbed them to no end.
- They thought they had eliminated the “Jesus movement” eight weeks earlier when they had crucified Jesus. They had heard about the preaching incident several days earlier and how excited the people had become (Acts 2:5). Now these two men, Peter and John, were publicly preaching that God had raised Jesus from the dead. And they were preaching, of all places, in the temple precincts.

# The Opposition

- Acts 4:1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them.
- Peter and John were arrested and tried. They were arrested “as they spoke,” that is, while they were preaching the word of God. The Jewish leaders showed no respect for the message nor the messengers.
- This is the beginning of religious persecution. The priest, of course, did not want to be indicted for the crucifixion of Christ. This is the same group that had taken part in the Crucifixion of Christ.
- The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead and were opposed to Peters preaching. The leadership of the Jewish community felt it was time to nip the movement in the bud before it could spread. Note those who came to arrest them. As mentioned above, they stopped Peter right in the middle of his message.
- However, the plan didn’t work all of Jerusalem heard the word of the Lord. Acts. 5:28

# Wrong Response

- [2] Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. [3] And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.
- The word of God will either make you happy glad or fighting mad.. In this case the Jewish leaders were grieved that Peter and John preached and taught the people through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead and were opposed to Peters preaching. The Priest , of course, did not want to be indicted for the crucifixion of Christ
- The officials were threatened by the preaching of Jesus being raised from the dead. They feared the loss of the people—their loyalty, recognition, and esteem.
- They feared the loss of position, authority, and livelihood. If they lost the loyalty of the people or allowed a disturbance, the Romans would replace them with other officials...They feared the people might begin to think that *their doctrine* was wrong...They feared acknowledging they were wrong in crucifying Jesus.
- The authorities arrested Peter and John. It was late afternoon, too late for a trial, so they jailed them for the night

# Faith Cometh By Hearing

- [4] Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.
- . But note a significant fact: before Peter was arrested, he had shared enough of the gospel for the crowd to respond. Five thousand men (not counting women and children) made decisions for Christ. Rom. 10:17
- Persecution did not stop the Word and the Spirit of God from working. Souls (fruit) were saved despite the abuse and opposition. What a lesson for believers to *keep on* in their preaching and witnessing no matter the opposition. 1John 4:4
- “My Word shall not return to me void” (Isaiah 55:11).
- “The Word of God is not bound” (2 Tim. 2:9).

# Warning Of Coming Persecution

- Acts 4:23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.
- Peter and John were released and sought out their fellow believers, the church. They reported and shared their experience with the church.
- Note several striking facts. Peter and John were not depressed, discouraged, or downcast. Neither were they stricken with fear and trembling. They were not suggesting the church withdraw into a hole and keep its message to itself. They had been imprisoned and tried by the Supreme Court itself, threatened and warned, but they were not defeated and silenced.
- Peter and John were not puffed up. They had suffered undue strain and pressure in serving Christ, and God had marvelously used them as witnesses to the highest rulers of the land. Yet there is no mention, no suggestion, not even a tinge...of boasting...of being God's special servants...of being more used by God...of self-glorying...of conceit...of being exalted above fellow believers The concern of Peter and John was to encourage and edify (build up) the church and to warn them of the coming persecution that lay over the horizon. Acts 8:1-4

# All Thing Are Of God

- [24] And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that is in them.
- There was a conviction of God's power. God is the One who created the universe in all its massiveness. God alone is the One who has such omnipotent power to create. Therefore, there is no one—no person, no being, no ruling body, no nation—not even a world that can stand and stop His will and power. This was the church's great conviction of God's power.
- All things, whether visible or invisible, have been created by the Sovereign Lord of the universe. He and He alone is God; He is the One who possesses all power, the One whose will and purpose will be victorious. And more immediate, more at hand, He is the One who cares for and loves and oversees those who serve Him. He is the One who stands against the evil of lost and mean men, men who abuse and persecute other human beings.

# Pray The Word Of God

- [25] Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? [26] The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ..
- These 2 verses refer to Psalm 2, which speaks about the day when Christ shall return to rule with power.
- Christians today ought to imitate their praying, for they tied their praying to the word of God. John 15:7
- The heathen, that is, the *lost* of the world, “rage” to neigh, stomp the ground like a fierce horse; to act untamed, haughty, unruly.
- The people, that is, the *worldly*, “imagine vain things”: to be anxious over *empty* things; to focus one’s life, time and energy upon *meaningless* possessions and *material things*, the empty, unsatisfying things of the world.
- The *kings and rulers* stand up and gather together against God and His Christ, the Messiah. They stand against; stand in an opposite direction; stand in opposition and hostility to God and Christ.



# The Greater One Is Within You

- [27] For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, [28] For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. [29] And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, [30] By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus
- God planned and overruled man's opposition. God's *counsel determined* what was to be done.
- The prophecy was primarily fulfilled in the death of Christ. Men stood against God's "holy child Jesus"; they gathered together against Him and killed Him. But God overruled and raised Him from the dead. God took the events—all the evil of men—and worked it all out for good. His will to save the world is still marching on. God's counsel—His deliberation, His knowing all things and His possessing all power—worked everything out for good. Acts 2:23, Acts 3:13-15

# Powerful Prayer

- [31] And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.
- The results of the church's prayer were threefold.
- The place was shaken. The shaking was a miracle, a sign showing that God controlled the physical universe, just as they had prayed. This is the life of prayer the Lord would have for every believer. Mark 16:16, Acts 4:24.
- They were filled with the Holy Spirit Acts 2:1-4. They needed a very special manifestation, a fresh anointing. It is the anointing that destroy the yoke.
- They received the boldness for which they had asked. They bore strong testimony, speaking the Word of God with boldness and courage. Acts 1:8. Acts 4:13.
- We may have boldness on earth because Christ gives us boldness in heaven. Heb. 4:16, Heb. 10:19