Acts 4:23-37

• Bold for Jesus

- o Persecuted for Jesus...
 - After the healing of the Lame man Peter shared Jesus with the crowd that had gathered...
 - But while he was still giving [present] the MESSAGE to the people...
 - The SADDUCEES came to arrest them did NOT like them teaching about the RESURRECTION....
 - But before they could be stopped FIVE thousand people had already been saved!
- o Bold for Jesus...
 - Peter and John where taken before the SANHEDRIN [same men who crucified Christ]
 - They demanded to know in what NAME and POWER the miracle had been done...
 - PETER full [aorist] of the HOLY Spirit did not hesitate to answer...
 - It was in the name of Jesus whom they CRUCIFIED but God raised from the DEAD...
 - And there is NO other name given by which WE must be saved!
- o Seeing Jesus...
 - The SANHEDRIN saw Peter and John as UNEDUCATED and IGNORANT men...
 - But seeing their BOLDNESS they understood they had been with Jesus...
 - And they could NOT argue the man who had been healed had been lame for FORTY years!

• 1st - Prayer for boldness... vs. 23-30

- o 1st Shaken... vs. 23
 - The report...
 - Being let go they went to their own companions.
 - And reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them!
 - As soon as the SANHEDRIN let Peter and John go they went back to the CHURCH...
 - The gave them the report [απαγγέλλω] from the HIGH priests [plural] and ELDERS...
 - There should have been only ONE High Priest [ἀρχιερεύς]
 - But the political nature of ISRAEL had compromised the ROLE...
 - Leaving it open to debate WHO the HIGH priest was [Annas Caiaphas Jonathan]
 - But Peter and John told the church EVERYTHING [ὅσος] they had said...
 - Why tell the CHURCH because they were SHAKEN by the experience...
 - And they had a FAMILY that was there to help COMFORT them!
 - When the AMALEKITES attacked Israel as they came out of Egypt...
 - God gave Israel VICTORY so long as MOSES kept his hands up but he got TIRED...
 - So two MEN to came along side to help LIFT him up and Israel was VICTORIOUS!
 - Exodus 17:12 "Aaron and Hur supported his hands!"
 - Life is challenging and it is a guarantee we will have difficult days John 16:33
 - But we are NEVER called to face them alone God has given us a FAMILY...
 - We are STRONGER together we are called to support each other!
 - Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 "Two are better than one... if one person falls the other can reach out and help but people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble." [NLT]
 - Excited...
 - It is also likely that Peter and John were EXCITED...
 - By the power of the Spirit they had just stood up to the SANHEDRIN...
 - Not only did they want to be COMFORTED by their church FAMILY...
 - They also wanted to share with them they JOY of what God had done!
 - Sharing with others is NOT just about looking for COMFORT in a time of need...
 - It is also about sharing the JOYS of what Jesus is doing in our life...
 - So when we have a great day TELL someone so they can get EXCITED too!

- o 2nd The Perspective ... vs. 24
 - One Accord...
 - So when they heard that they raised their voice to God with one accord!
 - When the CHURCH heard all that the SANHEDRIN has said...
 - THREATENING Peter and John demanding they NEVER speak in the name of Jesus again...
 - The CHURCH lifted up their VOICES [prayer] to God in ONE accord...
 - ONE accord [ὁμοθυμαδόν] to rush [θυμός] together [ὁμοῦ]
 - A unique word used TWELVE times in the NT ELEVEN of them in the Book of Acts...
 - Describing a great orchestra with many instruments different sounds...
 - But as they follow one CONDUCTOR then they blend together in beautiful harmony!
 - When TRIALS come we often are left to ask the Lord WHY...
 - But it is in those TRIALS that we RUN to the Lord make the time to PRAY...
 - Not just individually we come together corporately as a FAMILY...
 - And that brings UNITY because rather than trying to figure things out on our own...
 - We come in BROKENNESS and DEPENDENCE looking to Jesus for the answers!
 - **Romans 5:3-5** "We also glory in tribulations knowing that tribulation produces perseverance and perseverance character and character hope."
 - Looking to God...
 - Lord You are God who made heaven and earth and the sea and all that is in them!
 - When they came together in UNITY to PRAY their PERSPECTIVE changed...
 - They saw the LORD [δεσπότης] 10x in NT emphasizes the one in ULTIMATE control...
 - They saw the [\dot{o}] GOD [$\theta \dot{e} \dot{o} \dot{o}$] who created the HEAVENS and EARTH...
 - And EVERYTHING $[\pi \tilde{\alpha} \zeta]$ that is in them [including the men who were threatening them]
 - Rather than seeing the PROBLEM they saw the SOLUTION...
 - The God who was the BOSS over EVERYONE because He made EVERYTHING!
 - When we come together in UNITY looking to God for the answer...
 - It may NOT change our CIRCUMSTANCES but it will CHANGE us...
 - Because rather than seeing whatever LITTLE problem we might be facing...
 - We see our PROBLEM in the light of an INFINITE God who is GREATER than all!
- o 3rd The Word... vs. 25-28
 - Remember... vs. 25
 - Who by the mouth of Your servant David have said:
 - Because the CHURCH was looking to the Lord [δεσπότης] who is God [θεός]
 - That brought them back to the WORD of God...
 - As the SPIRIT reminded them what God had said through King David **Psalms 2:1-2**
 - The Lord will speak to us through His Word the Spirit cause us to remember...
 - But we first need to be in the WORD so He can REMIND us!
 - John 14:26 "[The helper] will... bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."
 - Against the Lord... vs. 26
 - Why did the nations rage and the people plot vain things.
 - The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers were gathered together.
 - Against the LORD and against His Christ!
 - When David asked WHY [$iv\alpha\tau i$] are the NATIONS [$\xi\theta vo\zeta$] so ARROGANT...
 - ARROGANT [φρυάσσω] used to describe horses when the lift their head and snort...
 - And WHY do the people IMAGINE [μελετάω] they are the ones in CONTROL [vanity]
 - Which as a result caused [passive]the KINGS and RULERS of the earth to gather...
 - Against [κατά] the LORD [יְהֹוֶה] and against His MESSIAH [מְשִׁיה]!

- The whole world... vs. 27
 - For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus whom You anointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate.
 - With the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together!
 - For what David wrote was the TRUTH [ἀλήθεια]
 - Because God had gathered [passive] the whole world against Jesus [His anointed]
 - HEROD the Great who had tried to kill him as a child Matthew 2:16
 - And PILATE who was the one that ultimately put Him on the cross Matthew 27:24
 - But they were NOT alone there were ROMAN soldiers [gentiles]
 - As well as the people of Israel who stood by as Jesus was on the cross...
 - EVERYONE rulers and slaves [thieves] Jews and Gentiles were AGAINST Jesus!
- Plan of God... vs. 28
 - To do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done!
 - But do NOT miss everything they did was guided by the HAND of God...
 - They ARROGANTLY thought they were the ones in CONTROL...
 - But all of their CHOICES only managed to accomplish the PURPOSE of God...
 - It had been DETERMINED forehand [προορίζω] to DECIDE [ὁρίζω] BEFORE [πρό]!
 - Like a little child plotting to get forbidden candy thinking they can outsmart their parents...
 - God is amused by the tantrum men throw as if they have power over God!
 - **Psalm 2:4 -** "He who sits in the heavens shall laugh!"
 - EVERYTHING that took place happened EXACTLY as God intended it...
 - Jesus had NOTHING to fear from HEROD and PILATE was NEVER in control...
 - It was NOT Roman soldiers who put Jesus on the cross Jewish priests that kept Him there...
 - It was the PLAN of God from the beginning to DIE for the sins of ALL men...
 - Because God is SOVEREIGN He is in CONTROL He is the LORD and He WINS...
 - If we get our eyes off of whatever PROBLEM we are facing...
 - And remember that then we will NOT longer be AFRAID instead we will be INSPIRED!
 - Ephesians 1:11 "[By the God] who works ALL things according to the counsel of His will."
- o 4^{th} The Request... vs. 29-30
 - Boldness... vs. 29
 - Now Lord look on their threats.
 - And grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word!
 - With their change of PERSPECTIVE came a REQUEST...
 - Since God was the LORD [δεσπότης] and EVERYTHING happened according to His will...
 - They pleaded [imperative] with God to look at the THREATS [ἀπειλή] of the SANHEDRIN...
 - And GIVE [imperative] to His SERVANTS [δοῦλος] BOLDNESS [παρρησία]
 - So that rather than being SILENT they would SPEAK about His WORD...
 - WORD [λόγος] one of the TITLES given to Jesus **John 1:1**
 - During COVID the government made the LAW kids were NOT allowed to come to CHURCH...
 - But the Bible says we are NOT to forbid the LITTLE children Matthew 19:14
 - We are called to OBEY the GOVERNMENT Romans 13:1
 - But when the GOVERNMENT contradicts the BIBLE we are called to DISOBEY!
 - Signs and wonders... vs. 30
 - By stretching out Your hand to heal.
 - And that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus!
 - Not just SHARING about Jesus showing people Jesus...
 - As He stretched out HIS hand to HEAL [as he did with the Lame man]
 - As God continued to do [present] MIRACLES [$\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\tilde{\imath}$ ov] and WONDERS [$\tau\epsilon\rho\alpha\varsigma$] in Jesus name...
 - The believers were NOT asking the Lord to take them out of the trial...

- They were NOT asking for God to change the GOVERNMENT...
- They demanded BOLDNESS so they could DISOBEY it...
- They wanted God to do MORE amazing MIRACLES heal more LAME men...
- So they could get in more TROUBLE and more people could hear about Jesus!
- I have to wonder what would happen if the CHURCH prayed like that today...
- NOT for everyone to get along but for God to cause more TROUBLE...
- Lord stir things up get us ARRESTED again...
- Because we know that YOU are the one in control [not men]
- And no matter what the COST we want an ARROGANT world to see YOU!
- 2^{ND} Result of the prayer... vs. 31-37
 - o 1st Boldness... vs. 31
 - Filled with the Spirit...
 - And when they had prayed the place where they were assembled together was shaken.
 - And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit!
 - When they had FINISHED their PRAYER [not the typical word προσεύχομαι]
 - PRAYER [δέομαι] meaning what we NEED or LACK...
 - They were PRAYING to the LORD because they knew they could NOT be BOLD on their own...
 - God responded by SHAKING the place where they were meeting...
 - SHAKING [σαλεύω] describes a strong WIND Acts 2:2
 - Then they were ALL $[\pi\alpha\varsigma]$ FILLED [aorist] with the HOLY Spirit!
 - When Elijah ran from Jezebel to Mount Sinai because he was SHAKEN...
 - There was a great EARTHQUAKE but the Lord was NOT in it...
 - Instead God spoke to him in a still small voice a WHISPER!
 - **I Kings 19:11-12** "The LORD passed by and [there was an] earthquake but the LORD was not in the earthquake... and after [that] a still small voice."
 - Often when we pray we are look for the God to SHAKE the foundations...
 - God does NOT often speak in the thunders of mount Sinai or great earthquakes...
 - What does God sound like a WHISPER gentile guidance...
 - We have to learn to sit wait and listen or we will miss the voice of the Lord...
 - But if we are willing to listen it is the world that begins to tremble...
 - Because when the Lord leads us there is nothing that can stop us!
 - Speak the Word...
 - And they spoke the word of God with boldness!
 - Because they were FILLED with the SPIRIT...
 - They continued [imperfect] to SPEAK about WORD [$\lambda \acute{o} \gamma o \varsigma$] of God with BOLDNESS!
 - The number one RESULTS of being FILLED with the SPIRIT is BOLDNESS...
 - If we feel TIMID or UNSURE about sharing our FAITH...
 - IF we have DOUBTS about our ability to stand up for the LORD...
 - The answer is simple we NEED [δέομαι] to be FILLED!
 - Acts 1:8 "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."
 - o 2nd Unity... vs. 32, 34-37
 - One heart... vs. 32
 - [Also] the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul!
 - It was NOT just BOLDNESS towards those who were NOT believers...
 - Also $[\delta \hat{\mathbf{\xi}}]$ all those who had FAITH $[\pi \iota \sigma \tau \epsilon \dot{\upsilon} \omega]$ were [imperfect] of ONE $[\epsilon \tilde{i} \varsigma]$ heart and soul...
 - As the SPIRIT filled them He also UNIFIED them!
 - That does NOT mean they all liked the same color wore the same clothes [Mormons]
 - But they were united on the essential doctrines of the Bible salvation in Jesus...

- On non-essential issues they could agree to disagree NOT cause division!
- Because the SECOND results of being filled with the SPIRIT is UNITY...
- Rather than seeking what we WANT or NEED...
- We instead are moved by the SPIRIT to consider the NEEDS of others!
- **Philippians 2:2-3** "Being like-minded having the same love being of one accord... in [humility] let each esteem others better than himself."
- All things... vs. 32
 - Neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own.
 - But they had all things in common!
 - Their UNITY was seen practically in how they treated each other...
 - No one said [imperfect] that what they had was [present] theirs...
 - Instead they had ALL [$\pi\alpha\varsigma$] things as COMMON [κοινός]!
 - It is not MY car MY house MY money...
 - They understood ALL things were from the LORD and should be used for the LORD!
 - I Corinthians 4:7 "What do you have that you did not receive?"
- No lack... vs. 34-35
 - Nor was there anyone among them who lacked. For all who were possessors...
 - Of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold.
 - And laid them at the apostles feet and they distributed to each as anyone had need!
 - As a RESULT there was NO one who LACKED [imperfect] among them...
 - Because those who had PROPERTY sold them and gave the HONOR [τιμή] to God...
 - Then they APOSTLES took the MONEY and gave it out as there was [imperfect] NEED...
 - The idea was to have no RICH or POOR in the church share the wealth!
 - This did cause THREE problems before too long...
 - FIRST some people gave with the WRONG motive [Ananias and Saphira] Acts 5:1
 - SECOND the widows were not given food equally [partiality] Acts 6:1
 - THIRD before long no one had any possessions and the money was GONE...
 - Everyone was POOR and the church was in in need of help I Corinthians 16:1-4
 - COMMUNISM and SOCIALISM are a doomed system of government...
 - They sounds good share the wealth take from the rich and give to the poor...
 - But the system fails because of the GREED and SELFISH nature of man!
 - The problem is when people start looking to MEN rather than the Lord...
 - Looking to the CHURCH rather than the God of the CHURCH...
 - We are NOT called to be the PROVISION the SOLUTION...
 - We are ONLY supposed to point others to the ONE who is the ONLY answer!
- Barnabas... vs. 36-37
 - Joses who was also named Barnabas by the apostles.
 - [which is translated Son of Encouragement] a Levite of the country of Cyprus.
 - Having land sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles feet!
 - There was ONE believer in particular who sold his LAND...
 - Joseph [יוֹמֵף] who was given the name BARNABAS son [בַר] of a prophet [נְבִיא]
 - A name we are told is INTERPRETED [έρμηνεύω] as SON of ENCOURAGEMENT...
 - ENCOURAGEMENT [παράκλησις] the feminine form of [παράκλητος] **John 14:16**
 - Put together and it would suggest his Father was a PROPHET his Mother full of the SPIRIT...
 - He was a LEVITE [his tribe] from the Island of Cyprus [diaspora]!
 - LEVITES were the ONE tribe that was NOT given land **Joshua 14:4**
 - Their inheritance was the LORD they were called to SERVE God...
 - Because of the threats of the SANHEDRIN because of the PRAYER of the CHURCH...

- A man who was called to SERVE God walked away from this world to follow Jesus!
- The HARDEST people to reach with the Gospel are the ones who THINK they are GOOD...
- They have a GOOD family raised up with GOOD parents...
- They have a GOOD reputation and are VERY religious [Levite]
- But when the CHURCH is FILLED with the SPIRIT...
- Even those who are GOOD see the truth they are NOT good enough...
- And they also see their need to come to Jesus!
- o 3rd Greatness... vs. 33
 - Great power...
 - And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus!
 - The conclusion of being FILLED with the SPIRIT...
 - Was God gave GREAT [μέγας] power [δύναμις] to those He SENT out [ἀπόστολος]
 - So that they could be a WITNESS [μαρτύριον] to the resurrection of Jesus...
 - This was the day a group of fishermen from Galilee began to SHAKE the world...
 - FULL of the Spirit given GREAT power they were unstoppable!
 - Great Grace...
 - Great grace was upon them all!
 - GRACE [χάρις] that was GREAT [μέγας] was continually [imperfect] on them ALL [π αζ]
 - All because Peter and John simply went up to the Temple to PRAY...
 - Chapter THREE and FOUR of Acts take places in less than 48 HOURS...
 - By stepping out in FAITH Peter and John got into TROUBLE...
 - When they got in TROUBLE with the SANHEDRIN God filled them with His SPIRIT...
 - When they were AFRAID they told the CHURCH and they PRAYED...
 - They were given BOLDNESS UNITY great POWER and great GRACE!
 - A lot of people ask why the church has no POWER today...
 - Where is the witness for Jesus where are the men who SHAKE the world...
 - The answer is we just need step out in FAITH and follow the Lord...
 - As we follow Him we will get in TROUBLE end up in various TRIALS...
 - If we take those TRIALS as opportunities to go to the Lord in PRAYER...
 - He will grant us Great POWER and Great GRACE to shine for Him!