

Acts 4:23-37

- **BOLD FOR JESUS**
 - 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!
 - Bold for Jesus...
 - Peter and John were 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!
 - 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**
 - 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...
 - They gave them the report [ἀπαγγέλλω] 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 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 the 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 [ὁ] GOD [θεός] - who created the HEAVENS and EARTH...
 - And EVERYTHING [πάντα] 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 [ινατί] are the NATIONS [ἔθνος] so ARROGANT...
 - ARROGANT [φρυάσσω] used to describe horses when they 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 [יהוה] and against His MESSIAH [משיח]!

- 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 beforehand [προορίζω] - to DECIDE [ὀρίζω] 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 4th - 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 [σημεῖον] and WONDERS [τέρας] 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!

● **2ND - 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 [πας] 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 - gentle 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 [λόγος] 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 [ὅτι] - all those who had FAITH [πιστεύω] - were [imperfect] of ONE [εἷς] 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 [πας] 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 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 [Ἰωσήφ] - who was given the name BARNABAS - son [ἱῶν] of a prophet [προφήτης]
 - A name we are told is INTERPRETED [ἐρμηνεύω] 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 [πᾶς]
 - 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!