



Grant Us Boldness

Acts 4:13-31

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May 10, 2020

In Acts 4:13-31, the early Christian church provides a model for proclaiming Jesus Christ in the face of hostile opposition by uniting together to acknowledge God's rule and to plead for Him to give boldness to His servants through His Spirit.

The miracle of healing the lame man was evident for all to see; it triggered threats of persecution that would become the experience of generations of believers in Jesus Christ.

The apostles spoke with boldness (freedom in speaking), despite their lack of specific rabbinical training.

Peter and John had two things that believers today possess:

1. A record of the life and teaching of Jesus
2. The empowering presence of Jesus through the indwelling Holy Spirit

In their response to the Jewish Council, Peter and John made it clear that it was not they who were on trial for their beliefs or their preaching, but that it was the members of the council who would be accountable to God for what they did with the truth of the Gospel.

With one mind/devotion/accord, they all (plural) lifted their voice (singular) toward God, and said, "Sovereign one, you who made heaven, and earth, and sea, and all who are in them." Acts 4:24

When threatened and told to keep quiet by the highest Jewish governing body in the land at that time, the believers cried out to God, acknowledging that:

1. God rules.
2. These threats were precisely what God said would happen.

Having acknowledged the truths that they confessed about God and His rule, the believers were now enabled to lift up two requests to God:

1. Take note of the threats of the opponents.
2. Grant your servants boldness in speaking truth.

Questions to Consider

1. What does it take to silence you? What sort of threat – real or imagined – causes you to get quiet, even if speaking up might be the right thing to do?
2. Read Acts 3:13. Do people who hear you speak, recognize that you are a follower of Jesus? What can you do to make that more evident?
3. What is something you've learned from the early church about the reading of the Old Testament?
4. Consider memorizing Peter and John's answer to the council in verses 19 and 20.
5. Read Acts 4:23-24. What was the community's immediate response to threats of violence from the religious leaders? How can we better apply that response? What did they confess about God and His character?
6. How can you apply the early church's example to your own praying, both as an individual believer and as part of a body of believers?