

Acts: *The Spirit, the Church and the Spread of God's Word*

The Boldness of His People

Acts 4:1-31

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, June 23, 2019

Our vision is to be a generation of Christians who have the courage to stand, the confidence to speak up, and a heart that's willing to sacrifice to see more people come to Christ

What could we learn from this chapter in Acts that could help us navigate the choppy waters of our culture today?

I. The Message of Jesus Has Always Been Radical and Unsettling to Our World

A. The Message of Jesus Exposes the Sinful Prejudice of the Human Heart

Acts 4:16-17 "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name."

Evidence alone will never change a person's mind. God, by His Spirit, has to touch and change their heart first.

B. The Message of Jesus Threatens the Existing Power Structures

Acts 4:7 "And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, 'By what power or by what name have you done this?'"

C. The Message of Jesus Threatens the Prevailing and Personal Foundations

Acts 4:11 "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'"

People feel threatened by the message of Jesus because it goes after the foundation or cornerstone they've been building their life upon.

Jesus is the only trustworthy and all-sufficient cornerstone that will never fail you!

D. The Message of Jesus Threatens the So-Called Balance of Religious Pluralism

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Every other religion shows us what we need to do to save ourselves, while Christianity shows us what Christ has already done to save us.

II. The Response to Jesus Has Always Been both Unifying and Polarizing

A. Unbelievers Will Be United to Resist this Message of Jesus v. 1-3

B. Unbelievers Will Be Converted to Embrace this Message of Jesus

Acts 4:4 “However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.”

III. The Followers of Jesus Have Been Consistently Courageous and Relentless in the Face of Persecution for Centuries Now

How can we have this same courage today?

A. You’ll Never Be Courageous for Jesus Until You’re First Intimate with Jesus

Acts 4:13 “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.”

B. You’ll Never Be Courageous for Jesus Until You’re Reading and Praying God’s Word about Jesus v. 24-29

Prayer is more than talking to God. It’s a conversation in which we hear from God through His Word and then respond back to Him in prayer.

We see the result of this kind of prayer in **v. 31**

Acts 4:31 “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”