

## “Jesus People Are Bold in their Witness” Acts 4:1-31

Acts 4 provides **three understandings** that will help believers become bolder witnesses for Christ.

- **First Understanding: IT’S BECAUSE THE WORLD IS THREATENED BY JESUS THAT THE WORLD TRIES TO INTIMIDATE JESUS PEOPLE.**

*And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, <sup>2</sup>greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. <sup>3</sup>And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. <sup>4</sup>But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand. <sup>5</sup>On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup>with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. <sup>7</sup>And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” <sup>8</sup>Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup>if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, <sup>10</sup>let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. <sup>11</sup>This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. <sup>12</sup>And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:1-12 (ESV)*

### Two Reasons for the Leaders’ Anger

- Because Peter was proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah; the only way to salvation.

*Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6 (English Standard Version)*

“salvation” = Greek = *soteria* = deliverance from God’s judgment by the forgiveness of sin through the work of Jesus Christ

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16 (ESV)*

- Because Jesus’ authority threatened their power. (See Psalm 118 and Isaiah 28:16)

*But he looked directly at them and said, “What then is this that is written: “ ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone?’” Luke 20:17 (ESV)*

- **Second Understanding: BELIEVERS OVERCOME INTIMIDATION WHEN THEY MAKE PLEASING GOD MORE IMPORTANT THAN PLEASING MEN.**

*Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. <sup>14</sup>But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. <sup>15</sup>But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, <sup>16</sup>saying, “What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. <sup>17</sup>But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.” <sup>18</sup>So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup>But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, <sup>20</sup>for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.” <sup>21</sup>And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened. <sup>22</sup>For the man on whom this sign of healing as performed was more than forty years old. Acts 4:13-22 (ESV)*

*So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. 2 Corinthians 5:9 (New Living Translation)*

*But all those things that I might count as profit I now reckon as loss for Christ’s sake. <sup>9</sup>Not only those things; I reckon everything as complete loss for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have thrown everything away; I consider it all as mere refuse, so that I may gain Christ. Philippians 3:7-8 (Good News Bible)*

*Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. <sup>16</sup>But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. . . . 1 Peter 3:15-16 (NLT)*

- **Third Understanding: BELIEVERS MUST ASK GOD IN PRAYER TO: 1) HELP THEM SPEAK BOLDLY AND, 2) TO WORK POWERFULLY IN PEOPLE’S LIVES.**

*As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said. <sup>24</sup>When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God . . . <sup>29</sup>“And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. <sup>30</sup>Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” <sup>31</sup>After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:23-24a; 29-31 (NLT)*

*When I came to you, my brothers and sisters, to preach God’s secret truth, I did not use big words and great learning. <sup>2</sup>For while I was with you, I made up my mind to forget everything except Jesus Christ and especially his death on the cross. <sup>3</sup>So when I came to you, I was weak and trembled all over with fear, <sup>4</sup>and my teaching and message were not delivered with skillful words of human wisdom, but with convincing proof of the power of God’s Spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:1-4 (GNB)*