

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 22ND, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

## ARRESTED (ACTS 4:1-4)

### PICKING UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF

The start of Chapter 4 is a direct continuation of what is contained in Chapter 3. A miraculous healing had just taken place, and Peter and John are facing jail time for what happened.

- The chief priests and the Sadducees see no other choice but to arrest these men for what they deem to be civil disobedience.

### THE EARLY CHURCH WAS MET WITH OPPOSITION

This is certainly not the first time—and will not be the last time—that we will read about followers of Jesus facing persecution. Their obedience in sharing the gospel may have been met with aggression from the elders and scribes, **but it also led to thousands being saved.**

- We must not be surprised when the world hates us (1 John 3:13).

### PERSECUTION USUALLY BREEDS REVIVAL

About 3,000 people were added to the Church following Peter's sermon in Chapter 2, and in Acts 4:4, we see 5,000 more come to believe.

- **All over the world, we are seeing people persecuted and even executed for their faith.** In places where Christian persecution is most prevalent (Sub-Saharan Africa, North Korea, China), growth is at the highest rate.

### "MANY OF THOSE WHO HEARD... BELIEVED"

Uncertainty in response to the gospel should not deter us from sharing it. **Evangelism must be at the heart of what we do as Believers.**

- The growth of the Church and the advancement of the gospel was, and still is, **miraculous and dependent on the Spirit.** Here were a few "uneducated" men leading a movement against an experienced institution.

### UNEDUCATED MEN (ACTS 4:5-22)

#### SOME FAMILIAR FACES

Annas and Caiaphas were members of the Sanhedrin and were part of Jesus' trial that took place the evening before His crucifixion (John 18:12-14).

- They were driven by pride in their position, power in religious and political standings, and ignorance of who Jesus is. Therefore, they tried to intimidate Peter and John.

### IN THE NAME OF JESUS

Peter and John are asked, "By what power or in what name have you done this?" "This" is most likely referring to the disciples' teaching rather than the healing, but it could also be understood to refer to the miraculous healing.

- **Regardless, Peter and John understood that their boldness came solely from the Holy Spirit** (Acts 4:8; Luke 21:14-15).

### ALL GOOD DEEDS DONE IN THE NAME OF JESUS

As Jesus followers, everything that we are called to accomplish must be done in the name of Jesus (Col. 3:17). They are gifts and fruit of the Spirit after all.

- When we remain in Him and He in us, we will produce fruit. If we are prideful and strive to do life without Him, we will wither (Jn.15:1-8). **To properly produce fruit, we must abide in Him.**

### "EXAMINED...ABOUT A GOOD DEED"

Peter seems unphased by the court's attempts to intimidate, and he goes so far as to ask why this good deed is being questioned.

- Even in his seemingly frustrated tone, Peter does not take this opportunity to highlight himself or the miracle. Instead, he shares the gospel in a completely unashamed manner.

### PETER'S BOLDNESS IS UNDENIABLE

All of us can learn something from Peter in this moment taking place in verses 10-12. Peter is in front of some powerful and influential people, sharing the gospel:

- They (our sin) crucified Jesus.
- God raised Him from the dead.
- Because of our sin, we must be saved.
- There is **salvation in no one else.**

### WHAT IS THEIR/OUR RESPONSE?

The gospel hasn't changed, and saying that there is only one way to salvation (John 14:6) can seem extremely divisive.

- **Formal training can only get us so far in our faith.** Even though Peter and John had none, they had spent time with Jesus. The court saw this and still desired to silence this movement because of their arrogance and pride.

### "...THEY CONFERRED AMONG THEMSELVES"

Everything the Sanhedrin discussed pertaining to Peter and John seems to be done in private, so how do we have an account of this dialogue?

- Saul, a member of the Sanhedrin, will later convert and follow Jesus, and it is likely he is the reason we know what was said in this meeting.

### CIVIL AUTHORITY VS. GOD'S AUTHORITY

Biblically, we are instructed to pray for and obey governing authority (Heb. 13:17; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17). Even so, we are never to place national allegiance over our spiritual allegiance.

- Peter and John were being threatened and told to stop doing something God had commissioned them to do. **Our calling as Believers must always be our highest calling.**

### POWER IN PRAYER (ACTS 4:23-31)

#### A PROPER RESPONSE TO RESENTMENT

Through their response to the Sanhedrin's disgust towards them, Peter and John showcase that they learned humility from the example of Jesus. Following a less-than-stellar reception, notice that they do not return evil for evil or report their hatred for the courts they just left.

- In reporting to their own people, they resort to prayer.

#### PRAYER SHOULD BE OUR FIRST RESPONSE

As a result of what they knew to be right and amid probable frustration with opposition, their first response was prayer. Still, there are some specifics about how they prayed:

- **Together**
- **Aloud**
- **Scripture**
- **Praising God first, and ultimately for God's will.**

#### THERE ARE MANY GREAT EXAMPLES OF PRAYER

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus examples a reverent and proper prayer for us as Believers (Mt. 6:9-13). This is a model for prayer, and we see that exemplified in the prayer presented by those in Acts 4:24-26.

- **As they did, we too must also pray for and trust God's will. Though we may experience persecution, He is still good and still in control.**

#### NOT A PRAYER OF RESCUE BUT EMBOLDENMENT

Jesus prayed a similar prayer for His disciples in John 17:6-19. There, He prays that they would not be removed from the world but would receive protection and courage.

- If we claim to be Jesus followers, He is praying the same for us! We are empowered through the Holy Spirit to accomplish His will; let us be bold prayer warriors!

#### THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

This is now the third time that Peter specifically, along with the others, has been filled with the Holy Spirit since the beginning of the book of Acts.

- To stay in step with His will, we must constantly desire to be filled with His Spirit. This is not to say that we are to be emptied of His Spirit but to rely on Him to have "streams of living water flow from deep within [us]" (John 7:38).

#### FACING PERSECUTION

- Through Scripture and the examples of Believers before us, we can know that persecution for our faith is inevitable.
- Have we prepared ourselves for persecution?
- In countries where captivity and execution are happening, Christianity is growing.
- **We must not squander our national freedoms for the sake of comfortability.**

#### BOLDNESS LIKE PETER

- When we have spent time with our Savior and are servants of the Lord, why would we fear human judgment?
- As evangelists, when we share the exclusivity of Jesus, it should be apparent that, like Peter, we have spent time with Jesus.
- **Do we share Jesus with a passion driven by the time that we have spent with Him?**

#### PRAYER

- Prayer is essential for the Christ follower.
- What is our relationship like when it comes to prayer?
- Have we utilized the hundreds of exemplified prayers in the Bible and countless other Scriptures that we can pray through?
- **Do we have a desire to pray for God's will to be done in our lives?**