



One of my greatest fears in life is that I will get to the end of my earthly journey and look at a life wasted. Wasted on mindless entertainment, tv, phone, and trivial memes. Squandered on not being mentally present when I'm around my family. Wasted on projects, plans, meetings, busyness, religion, the next best things, hopes, and dreams that don't matter after the grave. I want to live a bold life for Jesus Christ.

If you take a moment to reflect on our culture, we exist in a **world longing for boldness**. We type with bold-faced fonts. You can buy bold Frito lay chip packs. You can purchase bold hair spray to keep your hair in perfect symmetry. And some of you, whether you admit it or not, watch the Bold and the Beautiful. We live, dream, hope for boldness.

**Big Idea: What would your life look like if you boldly lived a radical life for Jesus Christ?**

## **[A Bold People– Acts 4:1-5]**

---

**Bold Truth #1: A Powerful Gospel Annoys a Power-Hungry World (4:2).** While Peter preached, in bursts a distraction: the priests, temple police, and Sadducees, people of prestige and importance, a group who had power and religious authority. Included in this band of religious brothers were the temple police. The captain was known as the **sagan and was always chosen from one of the families of priestly aristocracy**. Serving as the captain was a stepping stone to appointment as high priest.

With complete transparency, the Word describes this inconvenient sermon interruption: they **were annoyed!** Their angst was **not so much theological** as political. First, the Sadducees did not believe in a **resurrection**, a direct conflict with the message of Jesus. Even more concerning was the apocalyptic theme of the resurrection, that one day the Messiah would return and **completely disturb “life as we know it.”** So much, that the He will usher/re-create new heavens and new earth. *If we are truly honest, some will never follow Messiah because you like your life currently and you don't want it disturbed.* Here is the reality, Jesus will radically upset your current situation, **but it will be for His glory and your good.** It is worth it!

What a bold powerful truth. A truth so extraordinary that most recognize it but will never understand it. So the counsel sets up a **power play**. They convene with the uber-leaders (v.5) and arrange

themselves in a semi-circle (an intimidating interrogation). According to protocol two scribes would take official minutes, one for accusations and for defense with the accused standing in the center.

Here is there question (v.7): by what **power** or name have you done this? This inquiry immediately betrays their interest. They might as well have asked: who gave you power over us? Peter, filled with the Spirit stands and replies: the power is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth!

Peter flips the script: **By whose power are you living? 2Cor. 4:7 Now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us.** Church, have you **lost your power?** Where is the church growing in the world? 1. Iran 2. Afghanistan 4. Cambodia 7. Somalia. Places with extreme persecution that must rely upon the power of the Messiah. The USA is in the top 30 slowest growing counties. **As we become more powerful we rely less on true power- the resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

**Who has power and control of your life today? Do you want this power that only Jesus Christ of Nazareth provides?**

**Bold Truth #2: An Exclusive Gospel for a Pluralistic World (4:12).** The Sanhedrin wanted to know about a **name**. Instead of an expected defense before a jury, Peter delivered a **sermon**: by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Not only is **this a name** of the power, this is **The** name.

Peter did not give them a list or a program, he gave them the name! Peter was as exact as an air traffic controller giving direction to a pilot. I don't want my airline pilot assuming which runway is clear for landing. I want him to know that its #31! Peter zeroes in on the one name that brings salvation: Jesus Christ. **Church, have we lost our conviction that Jesus is the only hope?**

I am increasingly convicted that we are quite **ok with our personal beliefs**. But, they are personal, so let me believe what I want to believe! And this only feeds the inclusive culture which says we should be open to everyone and everything and that if you are genuine, then a God will eventually accept your genuineness.

And Peter's words fall on our deaf ears: **There is one name by which men can be saved! This is the language of urgency!** If this is truth others need to hear! Oh that the **exclusive** claim of the gospel would not be lost on us. And that we would not grow apathetic to the One Way and let others stay lost. **I believe we don't share Jesus because we are not convicted that Jesus is the only way.**

When we begin to think boldly, we then cultivate bold desires to share the gospel message at every opportunity. And we grow to see witnessing not as a **burden** but a sheer **delight**. (Crossover Birmingham)

Some people want answers: **give them the name.**

**Bold Truth #3: Boldness is found in the Presence of Jesus (4:13-14).** And the rebuttal? They had nothing to say. They observed the boldness of Peter and John. **In Greek contexts, this term stood for the characteristics of free citizens to speak out.** They observed the courage and sheer freedom with which Peter spoke. ***This is the boldness of Christ resting on his people: freedom to speak.*** Its as if the tongue of Peter had been loosed and he spoke of the Messiah as a waterfall flowing from his soul. **How bold and free are you?**

And the Sanhedrin didn't understand because Peter was uneducated (**literally without letters**) and untrained. Inference: we shouldn't expect much from them, although the embarrassing evidence is standing with them!

The only explanation for the boldness, the radical freedom of men surrounded by all these power players: **they have been with Jesus.** They were cut from the same cloth. ***If only one thing could be said of me: He has been with the Messiah.***

**Unable to stop (vv. 19-20).** The words of Peter have inspired persecuted Christians throughout the history of the church.

***This is boldness. This is freedom of speech. Bolding living in the presence of the King of Kings.***

**Bold Truth #4: A Praying People are a Bold People (4:23-24; 29-31)**

After hearing about the persecution experienced by Peter and John, the church did the only thing they knew to do: pray. **Wow what a prayer.** They didn't ask for deliverance, comfort, escape, or the obliteration of their enemies. How did the church response to difficulty? Not with grit, a plan, or hopes, they simply asked for more courage and boldness.

**What did the early church recognize?** The greatest threat to the power of Christ in your life is not **external threat, it is internal comfort.** It's a slow coldness that comes when we do not spend time in the presence of the king.

Have we lost the power of Christ in our lives because we are not seeking His face? Have we forfeited our courage and boldness because we lack the spiritual fortitude to ask? What the church prayed: Lord sign me up!

How important is prayer? It was a prayer in a small garden called Gethsemane that began the journey to the cross: **"My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."**

## **Conclusion**

**How does this all end?** 31 When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.

Are you ready and willing to let Jesus Christ shake your life?

**How do you answer the question: by what power and by what name (v.7)?**

**Will others look at my life and say: He has been with Jesus (v.13)**

**What will you do with the greatest news?**

Acts 4:12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.”

**You have been designed and created to know God and experience His love**

**There is only one name, no other name. Faith-Grace-Christ**

## Conclusion (Head-Heart-Hands)

It has been said that **Christianity is Christ**. Peter's message at Pentecost give us an

# Notes

---

Chapter four marks the beginning of resistance to evangelism in the life of the church, a feature that has been true of her life during the twenty centuries that followed (NIV, 151).

After chapter 3 only three chapters in Acts do not mention persecution (NIV, 154).

The truth of God is too radical for all people to respond to it passively (NIV, 154).

Acts 4:1 While they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple police, and the Sadducees confronted them, 2 because they were **annoyed** that they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3 So they seized them and took them into custody until the next day since it was already evening. 4 But many of those who heard the message believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

**Captain-** captain probably the official known as sagan. He was always chosen from one of the families of the priestly aristocracy (NAC, 139). Serving as sagan was viewed as a stepping-stone to appointment as high priest.

The sagan was in charge of the temple police.

## **Annoyance**

The Sadducees annoyance was not so much theological as political. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. Even more concerning was the apocalyptic tone of resurrection. In fact, the worst fears of the Sadducees were indeed realized when war broke out against Rome in AD 66.

Early Christianity is about the movement and progress of the word and of the Spirit (BW3, 189).

Acts 4:5 The next day, their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem 6 with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all the members of the high-priestly family. 7 After they had Peter and John stand before them, they began to question them: “By what **power** or in what name have you done this?”

“before them” In the middle- rabbinic documents show that the Sanhedrin sat in a semicircle. Before them stood the two scribes of the judges, one to the right and one to the left, and they wrote down the words of them that favored acquittal and the words of them that favored conviction (NAC, 142).

## Power

The query makes clear that they, the leaders responsible for the temple, have not given the apostles the authority to act (ECNT, 190).

On a literary level, the reader already has the answer: 3:6 By faith in his name, his name has made this man strong, whom you see and know. So the faith that comes through Jesus has given him this perfect health in front of all of you.

At one level, the Sanhedrin knew the answer already, since the accused had been proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus in connection with the healing miracle (Peterson, 190).

The Sanhedrin felt they had the authority over religious matters in the nation (NIV, 152).

Acts 4:8 Then Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit and said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders:  
9 If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a disabled man, by what means he was healed,  
10 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 and whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing here before you  
healthy. 11 This Jesus is

the stone rejected by you builders,

which has become the cornerstone.

**Filled with the Holy Spirit-** The power of the HS is seen by man because it fills the man/woman of God. But it can not be contained or manipulated by man.

Not a discourse about Peter’s sanctification level or spiritual experiences but to indicate that, like the prophets of old, Peter was going to speak God’s word, prompted and guided in what he would say by the Spirit (BW3, 193).

## **Name**

The question as to the name was a question of accreditation and authorization but Peter could not let this one go. If the Sanhedrin wanted to know about that name, he would tell them about it. Instead of the expected defense, Peter gave a sermon (NAC, 143).

The crucifixion of Jesus Christ failed to stop the movement of the way. If anything it only spread the message of the Messiah.

Peter makes his point about the divine design of Jesus' rejection and vindication by alluding to Psalm 118:22 (ECNT, 192).

Cornerstone "head of corner", which play an essential part in the building which God is constructing. In other words, he is the key figure in God's plan for the restoration of Israel and the whole of his creation (Peterson, 192).

Acts 4:12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."

## **Salvation/ sozo**

The crux of the sermon is a play on the Greek word sozo, which means both physical salvation in the sense of healing (v.9) as well as the spiritual eschatological sense of salvation (v.12). the physical salvation of the lame man through the name of Jesus is thus a pointer to the far greater salvation that comes to all who call upon him.

More than physical change. Peter is proclaiming a change of status from being rebels to being accepted among God's people (NIV, 153).

Peter is no advocate of modern notions of religious pluralism (BW3, 194).

Under heaven means in all God's creation.

God's ultimate act of salvation, in preparation for the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord, has been accomplished through Jesus so that he is now the exalted Lord upon whom to call for that salvation (Peterson, 193).

In this pluralistic age it is considered against proper etiquette and politically incorrect to insist on the validity of one's views when it comes to certain issues, especially moral and religious issues. We must not adopt such an attitude since we know that the light of Christ is opposed to the darkness of the world (NIV, 158).

Some have downplayed the uniqueness of Christianity to maintain their respectability in society, but they have lost their power and vitality (NIV, 158).

Acts 4:13 When they observed the **boldness** of Peter and John and realized that they were **uneducated** and **untrained** men, they were amazed and recognized that they had been with Jesus. 14 And since they saw the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in opposition. 15 After they ordered them to leave the Sanhedrin, they conferred among themselves, 16 saying, "What should we do with these men? For an obvious sign has been done through them, clear to everyone living in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. 17 But so that this does not spread any further among the people, let's threaten them against speaking to anyone in this name again." 18 So they called for them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

### **Boldness**

In Greek contexts, this term stood for the characteristic of free citizens to speak out (ECNT, 195).

They observed the courage and sheer freedom with which Peter spoke.

### **Uneducated**

A meaning regularly attested in the papyri and Greek literature. Literally "without letters" or illiterate (one who could not read or write).

### **Untrained**

The inference is that much should not be expected from them, although the embarrassing evidence of their handiwork is the healed man standing with them (ECNT, 195).

### **Been with Jesus**

In terms of their amazing speech, and lack of training, they were cut from the same cloth (BW3, 196).

The Sanhedrin took note that they had been with Jesus and presented that as the explanation for their unusual behavior (NIV, 155).

Acts 4:19 Peter and John answered them, "Whether it's right in the sight of God for us to listen to you rather than to God, you decide; 20 for we are **unable to stop speaking** about what we have seen and heard."

Unable to stop

These are words which have inspired persecuted Christians through the history of the Church (NIV, 153).

Acts 4:21 After threatening them further, they released them. They found no way to punish them because the people were all giving glory to God over what had been done. 22 For this sign of healing had been performed on a man over forty years old.

The greatest threat to the power of Christ in your life is not external threats, it is internal comfort. It's a slow coldness that comes when we do not spend time in the presence of the king.

The Apostles were released because the council was afraid of the people. Boldness is not found in worry or fear of others, but fear of the One True God.

**Acts 4:23** After they were released, they went to their own people and reported everything the chief priests and the elders had said to them. **24** When they heard this, they raised their voices together to God and said, "Master, you are the one who made the heaven, the earth, and the sea, and everything in them. **25** You said through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David your servant:

How did the church response to difficulty? Not with grit, a plan, or hopes. They response with prayer: not a prayer for deliverance but a prayer for more courage and boldness!

## **Own people**

The expression is not accidental, as it presses the point of how the early church saw itself as a community of mutually supportive friends (ECNT, 203).

**Why do the Gentiles rage**

**and the peoples plot futile things?**

**26 The kings of the earth take their stand**

**and the rulers assemble together**

**against the Lord and against his Messiah.**

**Acts 4:27** “For, in fact, in this city both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, **28** to do whatever your hand and your will had predestined to take place. **29** And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness, **30** while you stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” **31** When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.

The healing did not deliver the community from danger, if anything it provoked it (NAC, 150).

The early church shows that suffering is not to be feared, not is it necessarily an indication of failure. In fact, it may well come with the territory of sharing the need for Jesus in a world that seeks self-sufficiency (ECNT, 200).

## Illustrations

---

### Countries with the Fastest Growing Evangelical Population

Rank	Country	Ann Gr*
1	<a href="#">Iran</a>	19.6%
2	<a href="#">Afghanistan</a>	16.7%
3	<a href="#">Gambia, The</a>	8.9%
4	<a href="#">Cambodia</a>	8.8%

Rank	Country	Ann Gr*
5	<a href="#">Greenland</a>	8.4%
6	<a href="#">Algeria</a>	8.1%
7	<a href="#">Somalia</a>	8.1%
8	<a href="#">Mongolia</a>	7.9%
9	<a href="#">Kuwait</a>	7.3%
10	<a href="#">Tajikistan</a>	6.9%
11	<a href="#">Laos</a>	6.8%

USA top 30 slowest growing evangelical nations .8%

Courage= asking your father to take another step back as you jump further from the ledge

The trouble with so many people is that they voice of their neighbors sounds louder in their ears than the voice of God (NIV, 161).

## Application

---

The call to suffer must be a basic part of the follow-through care of new converts (NIV, 158).

#### 6 features of significant service

1. Anoint with the fullness of the Spirit. Many prominent ministries may result in being burned up as wood, hay, and straw, at the Day of Judgment (NIV, 160).
2. Courage
3. Desire to use every opportunity to share the gospel message. A key to maintain a vibrant witness in an environment hostile to the gospel is courage. Witnessing is not a burden but a sheer delight.
4. Nearness to the Spirit of Christ. We tend to become those with whom we spend extended time.
5. Loyalty to God
6. Confidence over the gospel.