

Studies in Acts

Study five

Key verse: Acts 4:29

Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.

Kick Off



Big Idea: Courage for Christian living comes from understanding the significance of Christ's victory at the cross.

What do we mean by these idioms? a. Nothing to lose... b. Might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb... c. It's a win win situation

STUDY

Read Acts 4:1-31.

This chapter carries on from the previous one and covers the reaction of the Jewish leaders to the healing miracle Peter and John did in the name of Jesus on a crippled beggar. As a result the church has another growth explosion... 5000 men is 5000 families... probably more than 20,000 people have joined the church.

1. vv1-4. Where do Peter and John end up after bringing healing to the beggar?

What reasons can you read and think of, as to why they are jailed?

How do you react to this story and how would you behave if you were in their shoes?

2. vv5-12. The next day the Sanhedrin (law court) is formed and an attempt at intimidating the Apostles takes place.

Does the question they ask of the apostles imply they already know the answer?

Who is more afraid, the Sanhedrin or the Apostles?

List the things Peter makes a point of in his response.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

What do you think Peter was hoping to achieve in saying these things to Israel?

3. vv13-22. What are the people of the Sanhedrin afraid of?

What is their action plan to resolve the problem?

What would have been a better action plan?

4. vv23-31. This section is very significant for us understanding how to respond to opposition biblically... with the nation's leaders plotting to harm them, what do the Christians do?

How is Jesus the centre of the believers' prayer?

What do the believers specifically focus on in relation to Jesus and the world v27?

How and why does focusing on the rejection and death of the Lord fill us with courage to openly live for him?

Opposition, threats, imprisonment, persecution and death have no impact in stopping the power and proclamation of the gospel... but what does stop it is found in v 29... What is it? Why does this shut down the gospel?

THINK AND APPLY

*Fear itself is not the problem, it is giving in to our fears that is. We all in different situations get afraid and have fears... The two things the apostles did to help them was to openly share their fears and experiences with the **whole believing community** and then together they **all prayed**. Their prayer was not for peace and safety that they might "live long and prosper"... it was that they might have courage to continue to speak God's good news with great boldness...*

List and share openly some of the things you fear for that stop you from boldly living and speaking about salvation in Christ alone.

Discuss how the cross results in a win win situation for us in **all** circumstances.

Pray together specifically for the fears you and people in your group shared. Pray that such fears may be replaced with boldness in the light of Christ's victory at the cross.



**For next week
Read
Acts 4:32-5:11**