

A COURAGEOUS WITNESS

PASTOR PAUL CHAPPELL | SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

Text: Acts 4:23-33

Peter & John

group prayer

Christian witness in the power of the Holy Spirit

God the Creator

“And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. 29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. 32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.” (Acts 4:23-33)

INTRODUCTION

- Acts 4:10-12 Jesus Christ of Nazareth
 - * whom you crucified
 - * whom God raised from the dead
 - * This is the stone which was set at nothing of you builders
 - * This stone... which has become the head of the corner (cornerstone)
 - * Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.
- 1 Pet 2:6 ... in the scripture ... a chief cornerstone

"And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide." (Acts 4:1-3)

leaders
did not
like
preaching

"So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done." (Acts 4:21)

Peter &
John
released

1. Prayer OF THE CHURCH (v. 24-29)

A. Prayer of Worship (v. 24)

THEY WORSHIP AS A CHURCH

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." (Hebrews 13:15)

THEY ACKNOWLEDGE GOD

"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Colossians 1:16-17)

Jesus is highest in rank

King of kings

B. Prayer of Remembrance (v. 25-27)

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

C. Prayer of Trust (v. 28)

"(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)" (2 Corinthians 5:7)

D. Prayer for Boldness (v. 29)

"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." (Philippians 1:19-20)

2. Partnership **IN THE CHURCH** (v. 31-32)

A. In the Holy Spirit (v. 31a)

A DISPLAY OF POWER

A FILLING OF THE PEOPLE

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;" (Ephesians 5:18)

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, they sent them away." (Acts 13:1-3)

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

B. In the Scriptures (v. 31b)

CONFIDENT IN THE TRUTH

"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." (Psalm 119:160)

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

Quote: "The authority of Scripture is greater than the comprehension of the whole of man's reason."

CONFIDENT IN ITS POWER

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11)

Quote: "The amazing thing is that everyone who reads the Bible has the same joyful thing to say about it. In every land, in every language, it is the same tale: where that Book is read, not with the eyes only, but with the mind and heart, the life is changed. Sorrowful people are comforted, sinful people are

transformed, peoples who were in the dark walk in the light.
Is it not wonderful to think that this Book, which is such a
mighty power if it gets a chance to work in an honest heart, is
in our hands today?"—Amy Carmichael

C. In sacrifice (v. 32)

OF ONE HEART AND SOUL - *united together*
A SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY - *Holy Spirit unites*

3. Power **IN THE CHURCH** (v. 33)

A. A Powerful witness - *united witness of Jesus*

OF THE RESURRECTION

OF THE GOSPEL

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

Quote: "It is a myth to think that because I'm somebody famous or well-known that somehow this influences people. You know what gets people saved? Not that kind of influence. What gets people saved is a recognition of who Jesus Christ is and an honest evaluation of their condition and the need for the Savior. What we need is not more people trying to influence society. We need more people preaching the gospel."

B. A Powerful grace

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-14)

CONCLUSION

- Jewish Christians in book of Acts
- * Acts 24:5 sect of the Nazarenes
- x described by secular writer:
 - Epiphanius, Jerome, &
 - Augustine of Hippo,
 - Tertullus, Cardinal Humbert
 - of Marmoutiers, Gregorius
 - of Bergamo
- x 7th century references the
- Masoretic group with group
- of Karaite Jews who rejected
- rabbinic Judaism

TAKE AWAYS

1. Without Prayer There Is No Power
2. Without Partnership We Cannot Fulfill Our Mission
3. With God's Power We Can Witness

- x Karaite Judaism
 - only written Torah has supreme authority
 - no oral law has any authority
 - * Midrash & Talmud of Oral Law not binding
 - Belief based on to plain & most obvious meaning of text