

CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGERS

Acts 4:1-31

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Acts 4:1-31 ESV

Introduction:

Context – Healing of the Lame Beggar and Peter’s Sermon

Passage Application Summary –

Persecution creates more opportunities for the spread of the Gospel

Persecution serves to increase the courage and boldness of the Apostles

Persecution is an impetus for prayer

Persecution ultimately serves God’s purposes

Persecution brings greater unity in the Church

1. A New Opportunity Unfolds (vss 1-7)

Priests, the Sadducees, and the temple guard were greatly annoyed because Peter and John were –

- a. Teaching the People

- b. Proclaiming in Jesus the Resurrection from the Dead
- c. The Commotion Caused by the Healing of the Lame Man

Arrest (vs 3)

Believers grow in numbers to 5,000 men, a 66% increase from those who believed on the day of Pentecost in *Acts 2:41*

Trial (vss 5-12)

Annas and Caiphas are present (Were Prominent in Jesus Trial and Crucifixion) –

2. A New Boldness Awakens (vss 8-20)

- *Acts 1:8*

Peters Response (vss 10-12)

- a. His Name and Title – Jesus Christ or Jesus the Christ
- b. His Humanity – Of Nazareth
- c. His Death at the Hands of Sinners – *“Whom you crucified”*
- d. His Resurrection – Whom God raised from the dead
- e. His Rejection Foretold – He (This Jesus) is the stone that was rejected and is now the cornerstone (foundation stone)
- f. His Deity – Salvation in no one else

- *Exodus 15:2*
- *Psalm 18:46*
- *Psalm 25:5*
- *Psalm 27:1*

g. His Unique and Singular Qualification – No other name under heaven

- *Acts 2:32-33a*

h. His Divine Origin – “Given among men”

- *Isaiah 9:6*
- *John 3:16*
- *Luke 12:11-12*

Censure by the Council (*vs 18*)

Peter and John’s Response (*vss 19-20*)

What we have seen and heard –

3. A New Impetus for Prayer is Inspired (*vss 21-31*)

Believers (Their friends) response to this news (*vss 24-28*).

- *Psalm 2*

Their Acknowledgement and Worship

- a. God of Creation
- b. God of Revelation (quoting *Psalm 2*)
- c. God of History

Their Requests (vss 29-30)

- d. Look upon or consider their threats
- e. Courage to speak God's Word with all boldness in the face of the prohibition to speak
- f. God would continue to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders in the name of Jesus

God's Response (vs 31)

4. Our Charge

- a. Join in prayer with other believers regularly (Morning prayer, Prayer by phone conference, Nehemiah prayer group, Minichurch, Weekend services, Bible studies.)
- b. Pray for God to give you boldness to share about Jesus.
- c. Pray for God to give you an opportunity to share the Gospel with at least one person a week (Ask leading questions).
- d. Pray for God to fill you with His Spirit as you seek these opportunities.
- e. Pray for God to do the miraculous as you step out in faith to share about and Him and as you respond to needs and obstacles you encounter.

The Church is the pilgrim people of God. It is on the move – hastening to the ends of the earth to beseech all men to be reconciled to God and hastening to the end time to meet its Lord who will gather all into one.

Bishop Lesslie Newbigin