



Harvest Growing Deeper

Evangelical Free Church

A Disciplemaking Tool of Harvest Evangelical Free Church
(for personal and/or small group study)

Week of June 14, 2020

Acts 4:1-31

Q: Too many Christians remain silent about Christ (perhaps due to fear, or to be “safe” or be “popular” in our culture). Why is it difficult to speak up with God’s truth and choose to do what is right in God’s eyes (v.19)? Could this possibly be because you try to speak on your *own strength and power*, instead of asking God to empower you through His Spirit, to speak His grace and truth through you?

Q: (vv.23-31) When released Peter & John return to the church family and they all begin to pray. Note how they pray: praise to God, reminder of His Word and His faithful plan of salvation, and then finally their request. In spite of the threats, what do they all pray for? (v.29) How did God answer their prayer!?! (v.31)

Q: What might happen if more Christ followers would pray for Holy Spirit boldness in being witnesses for Christ in our homes, workplaces, communities, and everywhere else we go? (*Notice in v.31, it says they were all “filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to *speak the Word of God* with boldness.”)

PRAY: Salvation is found only through a personal relationship with you Jesus. Thank you for your forgiveness of all my sins and giving me new life. Lord please stir up your Holy Spirit within me and give me boldness, throughout the day, so I can tell others how Jesus has changed my life and can change others’ lives too. Help me reflect you to the people around me, and help me to share your unchanging Word with them. May your named be praised! Amen!

Ever feel you are not smart enough to join or lead a Bible study, or you have too much baggage to join a church or feel accepted by others? Have you ever felt “not good enough” for God to use you? Peter may have felt that way after denying Christ. But he met the risen Lord, was filled with the Holy Spirit and was empowered to heal a crippled man in chapter 3. He used that opportunity with the gathered crowds, to share Christ, telling them to repent of sins and turn to the Lord. Peter and John would pay a price for their commitment to Christ, but again empowered with the Holy Spirit, use it to proclaim God’s truth with boldness.

Q: (vv.1-3) How did the religious leaders (priests, Sadducees) react to Peter & John’s preaching about Jesus’ resurrection?

Q: Why would these leaders oppose this teaching?

Q: (v.4) what did God do as a result of Peter & John’s *preaching of the Word*? (It wasn’t the miracle itself that changes lives but God’s Word changes lives! See Isa 55:11; 1 Thes 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15-17)

Q: Satan doesn't like it when Christians pray and live in the power of the Holy Spirit (because Christ's church is storming the gates of hell! Matt 16:18, rescuing people from Satan's kingdom). We will be persecuted for following Christ (see John 15:18-20; 16:33; 2 Tim 3:12). How have you personally suffered for being a follower of Jesus, or from telling others about Jesus?

Q: (vv.5-7, 15) The religious leaders (council) were the same people that weeks earlier, had condemned Jesus to be crucified. Jesus' disciples, of all people, should have been afraid. But what was different now? How were Peter and the disciples changed? (v.8)

Q: (vv.9-12) The word "healed" in v.9, is the same Greek word as "saved" in v.12. How does the miracle of physical healing in chapter 3 relate to our spiritual healing/salvation through Christ?

Q: The council thought they put Peter and John on trial. How did Peter in these few moments (vv.11-12) end up putting the council on trial? (see Luke 12:11-12; 21:12-15)

Q: How can you learn to rely on the Holy Spirit, especially in difficult moments, to give you words to speak?

Q: (v.13) What specifically did the council notice about Peter and John regarding the *source* of their boldness? Can others notice a positive difference in you—that you have been with Jesus?

Q: Biblical boldness is not arrogance, nor self-centered human courage. It is simply relying fully on the Holy Spirit's power to use opportunities (even trials) He gives us to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. How have you seen Holy Spirit give you boldness in your life (or seen it in the life of someone you know)?

Q: (vv.14-18) The evidence of the healed man was right before the council as well. The council had nothing to refute the truth of Peter's words. But they commanded Peter and John to *stop speaking or teaching about Jesus*. Ironically these religious leaders were afraid of God's Word! How does Satan try to silence you and other believers from continuing to speak and teach God's Word today?

Q: (vv.19-20) What is the response of Peter and John?
