

SERIES: **THE MOVEMENT- a journey through the astonishing book of Acts- BE BOLD**

TEXT: **Acts 4:1-31**

There are roughly 4,300 religions in the world

Though they differ in many ways, they all have one thing in common:

A desire to improve our state, to pursue an attainable 'better' than this now.

Which implies they all agree, that to some extent, we're broken/incomplete/ etc

There's really only one question that separates the Gospel from every other religious message in the world.

THE TENSION- Who/What can fix us? (fix=save)

Can we save ourselves? If we can save ourselves, there can be multiple ways to God.

Choose a path; do your best; try to be a good person in the religious way you have chosen.

But if God is the only one who can save us, then salvation is only found in the place where He has provided it.

RECAP- Miracle Healing-

Points to message that Jesus is: Servant, Messiah, God, was killed and oh yeah, is Resurrected

MIXED REACTIONS TO THE MESSAGE (V1-4) Here's why:

The Gospel comes with a promise to bring life through Jesus

and with a threat to kill any perception that relies on anything but Jesus

(and that was a problem for the religious establishment)

Now as they were speaking to the people, the priests, the commander of the temple police, and the Sadducees confronted them, ² because they were provoked that they were teaching the people and proclaiming the resurrection from the dead, using Jesus as the example. ³ So they seized them and put them in 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 5,000.

The message of Jesus (through Peter & John) wasn't 'rules' (as the religious establishment was used to), it was 'resurrection'

Not live well so you can approach God and be fulfilled, but

God has approached you and so now from that, you can live well and be fulfilled

The *priests* should've recognized this, they were the ministers of God- but they missed it;

The *temple police* should've recognized this, but their only master it seems was the chief priests;

The *Sadducees* did not even believe in resurrection

they rejected the concept of the resurrection from the dead for anyone (when you die that's it)

So they had no Messiah and no hope and that's why they were... Sad-U-see

V2 PROVOKED; Annoyed; lit. *worn down* ("this again!")

Didn't want the Romans taking notice and sparking further roman presence in the land (they had just taken care of this whole insurgence when they killed Jesus)

And so the messengers were seized,
but it was too late because 5,000 (men) had already seized the message
The movement was unleashed

THE MESSAGE CONFRONTS YOU (V5-12)

⁵The next day, their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John and Alexander, and all the members of the high-priestly family.

Not even 100 days before, Peter had cowered before these very men!

Annas & Caiaphas were part of the trial and condemnation of Jesus

They have to have asked themselves, “*will we be crucified too?*”

⁷After they had Peter and John stand before them, they asked the question: “By what power or in what name have you done this?”

Jesus had told them this would happen: **Luke 21:12-15** they will lay their hands on you and persecute you. They will hand you over to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of My name. ¹³It will lead to an opportunity for you to witness. ¹⁴Therefore make up your minds not to prepare your defense ahead of time, ¹⁵for I will give you such words and a wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

⁸Then Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit and said to them,

Back in Ch2 already received the Spirit- so does He come and go?

No. God is ever with us now by His Spirit, yet there are moments when the indwelling Spirit freshly empowers us for a special/ specific purpose/need-

“Rulers of the people and elders: ⁹If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a disabled man—by what means he was healed— (*“Are we actually on trial for healing a guy?”*)

¹⁰let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead—by Him this man is standing here before you healthy. ¹¹This Jesus is the stone rejected by you builders, which has become the cornerstone. ¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people, and we must be saved by it.”

Basically, tells them their plan didn’t work-

the Jesus they had murdered was not only living, not merely surviving on life support in some E.R.,
HE WAS HEALING AND SAVING, WHICH MEANT HE WAS ALSO RULING!

V11 is an important concept, Jesus is the Cornerstone: The way they built buildings back then, the cornerstone was extremely important (load bearing).

The whole shape of the building; the dimensions; how tall it could be, was framed by the strength of that stone. It was usually an irregular shape, not perfectly cubed.

I.O.W.- Jesus didn’t LOOK the part according to you, but ironically it was because in order for Him to be savior/Messiah/king, He needed to be what we weren’t expecting

Jesus is not a good way; He's not even the best way; Jesus is the only way to be saved.

JD Grear- *"the apostles are not in trouble because they privately believe that Jesus rose from the dead, but because they have convinced 8000 other people to believe it and told everyone who disagrees with them that they are dead wrong about Jesus and will be held accountable by God for it, and that there is no other name under heaven by which they must be saved."*

Christianity birthed into pluralistic worldview- pax Romana;

you can worship any God you want just don't claim yours is the only one or supreme God

Pantheon- on top there was an emblem that said Caesar is the king of kings and lord of lords...

Some takeaways from their response:

Be bold because the resurrection is true

Be bold today, despite your past failures

Be bold because cowardice is more costly (there's p-ple who may not hear the gospel if U fail 2 B bold)

Be bold because the Spirit of God empowers you to be (no excuse not to be)

OPPOSITION TO THE OPPOSITION (V13-22)

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.

This is a verse I hold dearly because I can relate! **God can use anyone!**

God can use PhD's and GED's, the prominent and the prostitutes,

God can use the competent and the criminals, the respected and the repulsive,

God can use the famous and the infamous, the lovable and the lamentable,

God can use the intelligent and the ignorant, the clever and the comical,

God can use the strong and the shy, the overachieving and the undermined,

God can use the outrageous and the inconspicuous, the outgoing and the introvert,

God can use the loud ones and the listeners,

the ones who grew up in the church and the ones in church who never grew up,

God can use the highly praised and the hardly popular,

the ones who know a lot and the ones who got a lot to learn,

The only necessary qualifier is for us now what is was to them then- have YOU encountered Jesus?

¹⁴ And since they saw the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in response. ¹⁵ After they had ordered them to leave the Sanhedrin, they conferred among themselves, ¹⁶ saying, "What should we do with these men? For an obvious sign, evident to all who live in Jerusalem, has been done through them, and we cannot deny it!

They're asking the wrong question; they should be asking what should we do to be saved?

They are willingly ignoring the signs! Because they don't want their 'empires' to change

¹⁷ However, so 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 preach or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But 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;

Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than Him?

Christians are called to obey the authorities (romans 13),
yet not at the contradiction of God's word or our consciences (*when aligned with God's)

²⁰ for we are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."
unable to stop, cannot stop- **some of us haven't even started!**

²¹ After threatening them further, they released them. "we're serious, stop it! Stop healing people"
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 40 years old.

MORE BOLDNESS PLEASE (V23-21)

²³ After they were released, they went to their own people and reported everything the chief priests and
the elders had said to them.

They go back and tell everyone the 'good' news, then they do what many do not- they prayed

²⁴ When they heard this, they all raised their voices 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: Why did the Gentiles rage and the peoples plot futile
things? ²⁶ The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers assembled together against the Lord and
against His Messiah.

Quoting Psalm 2, which describes the victory of the Christ against those who conspire against Him

Praying scripture truths

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 plan had predestined to take place. ²⁹ And now, Lord, consider their threats,
What Psalm 2 said is exactly what they did a few months ago when they went after Jesus, and its what
they're doing now when they're going after His followers.

So what do they ask for? That opposition would stop? No.

and grant that Your slaves may speak Your message with complete boldness, ³⁰ while You stretch out
Your hand for healing, signs, and wonders to be performed through the name of Your holy Servant
Jesus."

mission > comfort

**Could it be that OUR prayers are more about our comfort being *maintained or enhanced*, rather than
God revealing Himself to all around us through all that happens to us?**

*Al Mohler, "Of course, it is not wrong to pray against suffering and persecution. But we should
never fear opposition to the extent that we prioritize our personal security above the mission of
spreading the gospel. Fear is often a dangerous weapon which the world wields against the
church."*

See, they had found something they felt had so much value that it was necessary to make it known!

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 God's message with boldness.

That's a movement- of God, through the church

MAIN TAKEAWAY- Christianity isn't "come and sit", but "go and tell"

If we're not doing that, we're either not really following the real Jesus, or we're in disobedience

Carl F. H. Henry: "the gospel is only good news if it gets there in time."

God will always give more boldness to those who desire to be bold for Jesus

Why don't we tell? It's a beautiful, life-changing message!

God did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves.

He paid our sin debt, by living the life we should have lived, and dying the death... so that when we receive him we could be declared righteous on the basis of what Jesus has done, not what we do.

He raised himself from the dead, so that he could live in us in the person of the Holy Spirit and infuse us with the power of new life...

CHALLENGE: Take a risk for the gospel!

What's your immediate next step in following Jesus?