

Series: Acts

Sermon: Acts 4:1-22

**Passage: 4:1-22**

Illustration:

Need: Jesus said that His followers would surely face persecution but He also promised that they would be given the words to say and the power to endure for His sake.

### **I. Annoy & Arrest (4:1-4)**

- The temple police chief, the priests, & the Sadducees came to confront Peter & John.
- They were annoyed because they were promoting Jesus, teaching without permission, and claiming resurrection (Sadducees denied the doctrine of resurrection).
- Because of the late hour, Peter and John were arrested and likely held in a nearby jail over night.
- Either 5000 more were saved at this time or the total number of male believers was now 5000.

### **II. Trial & Defense (4:5-14)**

- These were the same men who had illegally tried Jesus and had him executed.
- The group was made up of the authorized visible authorities and the authorities “behind the curtain.”
- Peter and John likely assumed that this trial would be leading to their own deaths.
- “By what power or by what name did you do this?” They were not unaware.
- They were seeking to cause them to recant by means of intimidation, tradition, & coercion.
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter defended their actions on the authority of God’s crucified and risen Messiah.
- Jesus is the foundation stone of the God’s kingdom who was rejected by His own.
- Jesus is the only way of salvation (John 14:6; Matt. 7:14). Narrow, Exclusive, Intolerant.
- Their “boldness” does not reflect arrogance or insurrection.
- Like Jesus, these men had received no formal training yet defended themselves like skilled professionals.

### **III. Threaten & Release (4:15-22)**

- Killing Jesus had not stopped Him. His disciples were carrying on His mission and now there were thousands of new followers.
- Their only course of action was to try to bully them into fear (hand in fist).
- Peter and John would not be coerced. Jesus was right. They had nothing to fear. (Dan. 3:16-18)
- This was just the beginning. More persecution was coming.

### **IV. Facing opposition as a Christian...**

- Let only your zeal for the great commandment & the great commission ignite conflict.
- Let the gospel be your defense.
- Don’t let threats or intimidation cause you to fear.
- Make up your mind. (Luke 21:12-19)