



SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Week of December 15, 2024

Acts 4:23-31

[23] When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. [24] And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, [25] who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, ““Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? [26] The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed’ — [27] for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, [28] to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. [29] And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, [30] while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” [31] And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

1. The struggles and hardships of life have a way of squeezing out what is inside each one of us. What tends to be squeezed out of your life when facing immense outside pressures? How did the early church respond after Peter and John were threatened, arrested, and imprisoned?
2. Is prayer your first response when you encounter trials and tribulations? Why or why not? When we immediately turn to prayer as our first response in the face of trouble, what does that reveal about who we are and what we are about?
3. Why do you think the corporate prayer gatherings are the least attended activity within the church? What do you think is needed to encourage more of God’s people to pray?
4. Explain how the “godness” (not “goodness”, but “godness”) and sovereignty of God can bring calmness and peace to our souls even when we are in distressing situations. How can the worst event in human history - the murder of the Son of God - help us through our deepest pain and trials?
5. The early church’s desire for the proclamation and spread of the gospel superseded their desire for comfort and safety. Why do you think this was the case, and how does their desire compare with the church of today? What do you think is the main difference?
6. How can we become more bold in our witness for Jesus Christ and His gospel? What role does the Holy Spirit play in our boldness? How can we be filled with the Holy Spirit?