

Week 4

Acts 4:1-31

Pray

Read: Acts 4:1-22

1. In verses 1-4, Luke records the response to Peter's sermon (from last week's passage). How do the different people respond?

2. In verses 5-22, Luke focuses on the religious leaders.

- What is their problem with Peter and John's actions?
- How do they attempt to deal with the problem?
- Why does this attempt fail?
- What is the disposition of the religious leaders' hearts (especially toward God/the Lord Jesus)?

>> Application & Reflection: In this scene, Luke depicts the hard hearts of the religious leaders as they attempt to use their power to cancel/silence the gospel of the risen Christ. In what ways does our society use power to cancel/silence the gospel of the risen Christ? Where are you feeling/experiencing this? What comfort do you take from this account in Acts 4?

3. In verses 5-22, Luke also focuses on the boldness of the Apostles. How is Peter & John's boldness expressed?

>> Application & Reflection: In this scene, Luke showcases the divine boldness of the Apostles as they are faced with opposition to the gospel. What can we learn about gospel boldness? What can be the barriers to boldness? What could this look like in our own lives (individually & as a church)? Where do we need to be more bold for the risen Christ?

Read: Acts 4:23-31

4. In verses 23-31, Luke focuses on the community of believers and their reaction to what's taken place. What is the content, focus, and emphasis in their prayers?

>> Application & Reflection: In this scene, Luke depicts the church community's prayer in the face of rejection and persecution. What can we learn from them? How can our prayers be shaped by theirs?

5. In verses 25-28, the believers interpret this moment of persecution through the lens of Psalm 2:1-2. What do they believe has happened? How has this been fulfilled?

>> Application & Reflection: In this scene, Luke depicts the church community's interpretation of their rejection and persecution. In light of this, how should we interpret our persecutions (and the persecutions of others) today? What is encouraging and challenging about this interpretation?

6. In verse 31, Luke briefly mentions what occurs after the prayer. What do we learn about God and his response to prayers/situations like this?

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