

Week 7—Acts 4:23-31

Begin each day of your study by asking the LORD to speak to you through His Word.

Day 1

1. Read Acts 4:23-31. How do the believers respond to the Sanhedrin's threats?
2. How would your response be similar or different? Why?
3. Our situation as followers of Jesus in the United States is different than what these early believers faced, but what are some of the "threats" we might face today? How do we usually respond to them? What can these believers teach us about this?

Day 2

1. Read Acts 4:24-28. What do the believers confess about God? Write down as many observations as you can.
2. Why aren't the believers surprised by the threats of the Sanhedrin according to these verses? What can this teach us when we face anger and threats for standing firm in our convictions today?

3. Notice how the believers start their prayer by acknowledging God and praising Him before they ever make a request. Is this similar to your prayer life? What could their example teach us about prayer (cf. Matthew 6:5-15)?

Day 3

1. Read Acts 4:29-30. What three things do the believers ask God to do (vv. 29-30)? Why are these requests significant?

2. How is their prayer different than what you might expect after what just happened to Peter and John? Why do you think the believers didn't make any requests for protection? What might this mean for us?

3. Compare 4:29-30 to 5:12-16. Was their prayer answered? In your judgment, would such a prayer be answered today? Why or why not?

Day 4

1. Read Acts 4:31. What happened as the believers prayed in this way? Have you ever experienced something like this? If so, when? If not, why do you think that might be?

2. It says that “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...” Since most of them had already been filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:4), what do you think this means (see also Acts 4:8)? What does this tell you about being filled with the Spirit today?

Filled with the Spirit—The phrase “filled with the Spirit” is used throughout the Old Testament and New Testament to describe both the initial filling of the Holy Spirit as the seal of salvation (cf. Eph 1:13) *and* a special filling of the Spirit to enable someone to proclaim a special word or action. As Ben Witherington describes it, it is “a fresh filling” for a specific purpose.

3. What is something you know the Lord is calling you to do that you need to be “freshly filled” by the Spirit in order to do? Spend time asking the Lord to do that for you in expectation He will provide.

Day 5

1. Reread Acts 4:1-31. How do these verses equip you to face resistance to the gospel?

2. Who is suffering persecution for the gospel that you could pray for today?

3. Along with praying for those you listed in #2, spend the remaining time today praying for the courage that these early believers had in the face of persecution as you seek to step out more in faith in a culture that isn't as receptive to Jesus' claims anymore. As you do this, jot down what the Holy Spirit is saying to you about this.

Conclusion

1. What most stood out to you as you studied Acts 4:23-31 this week? *Why* do you think this was the case?
2. What is the Holy Spirit prompting you to *do* as a result of this? Be prepared to share with your group!