

THEIR OWN COMPANY

ACTS 4:23-31

Text: Acts 4:23

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Introduction:

The religious leaders had detained the apostles for preaching the gospel and ordered them to stop. This threatening opposition didn't hamper the message of Christ.

These apostles were determined to obey God over men.

There is great power in determination. But determination alone is not enough. We also must be dependent on God.

These apostles had a great fellowship.

Note:

1. THEIR FELLOWSHIP IN SUFFERING (vs. 23)

Acts 4:23

²³ And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

A. They went to their own company

B. They reported the situation to the church

They had been rejected by the religious leaders.

We live in a day when tolerance is a buzz word, yet very few people seem to tolerate the teaching of God's Word.

Peter warned:

1 Peter 4:12-13

¹² Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: ¹³ But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

2. THEIR FELLOWSHIP IN SUPPLICATION (vs. 24-30)

Acts 4:24-30

²⁴ And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: ²⁵ Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? ²⁶ The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. ²⁷ For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, ²⁸ For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. ²⁹ And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, ³⁰ By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

Note the pattern and structure of their prayer.

A. A Prayer of Praise

1. To a Powerful God (vs. 24)

Acts 4:24

²⁴ And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

- Before they would ask for God's deliverance they praised Him for who He is.
- The religious leaders did have power, but the Lord is all powerful.

Proverbs 15:8

⁸ The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

2. To an all knowing God (vs. 25-28)

Acts 4:25-28

²⁵ Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? ²⁶ The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. ²⁷ For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, ²⁸ For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

These verses are from Psalms 2

God spoke of the hatred against His Son (vs. 25-26)

B. A Prayer for Help

Their praise gave way to a prayer about their specific need.

They ask for:

1. Courage (vs. 29)

Acts 4:29

²⁹ And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

- They did not ask for the problem to go away, they only ask for the boldness to deal with the problem.

2. Confirmation (vs. 30)

Acts 4:30

³⁰ By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

- They wanted a form of confirmation of God's power.

3. THEIR FELLOWSHIP IN THE SPIRIT (VS. 31)

Acts 4:31

³¹ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

A. A Spectacular Sign

- The Bible tells us that the place where the disciples were gathered was shaken. This was a sign to those praying that God was answering their prayers.

B. A Wonderful Filling

The purpose of this filling was to empower them for preaching Jesus Christ. As a result, they preach with boldness.

Close:

In these verses we see the church as a fellowship in action – a gathering of people energized for the cause of Christ. The early church fellowshiped in suffering, in supplication, and in the Holy Spirit. Our church should do the same.