

**Title/Date:** 5/21/23 **“We cannot stop speaking about Jesus”**

(Courage & Confidence to Share the Gospel – Prayer & Preparation to Toughen Up as a Church to face possible future persecution/trials)

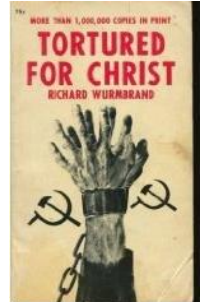
(Context: Peter & John arrested and on trial before the Sanhedrin for healing in the name of Jesus and preaching resurrection by the power of Jesus)

**Acts 4:13-31** 13 Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. 14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. 15 But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another, 16 saying, “What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. 17 “But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name.” 18 And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; 20 for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” 21 When they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which to punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened; 22 for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. 23 When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, “O Lord, it is You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, 25 who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, ‘WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS? 26 ‘THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.’ 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 purpose predestined to occur. 29 “And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, 30 while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.” 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

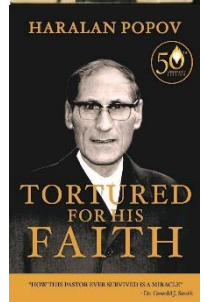
**I. Introduction: Besides Jesus, Who do you greatly respect – and why? (Brave Veterans, Bold Evangelists, Sacrificial Missionaries, Persecuted Christians/Martyrs, Fearless Christians who speak out no matter what the cost)**

**Review: Main Idea(s) of the Text / Context and Point(s) of the Passage:**

1. The Immediate **PERSECUTION** of the early church
2. The Amazing **GROWTH** of the early church despite persecution
3. The Passionate Preaching of **JESUS** by the Apostles – that He is the Christ, crucified but risen, by His name/power/authority people are raised/made well/whole
4. The absolute **EXCLUSIVITY** of Jesus – Jesus is the only name/source/way for salvation
5. The fearless **BOLDNESS** and confidence of Peter and John to preach and teach Jesus despite arrest and threats
6. The baseless **PROSECUTION**, shameless threats, and temporary authority of fallen men over the world
7. The eventual **WORSHIP**, rejoicing, and fellowship of Christians who endure and persevere through persecution for the sake of their beloved Christ



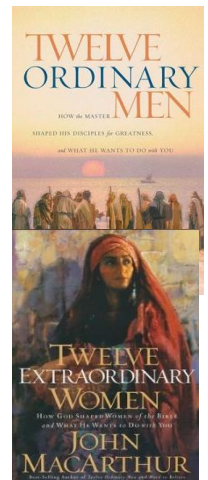
**Review: 7 Lessons Learned/Ways we can be like Peter (his courage/confidence/competence in the faith)**



1. (4:8a) He was **FILLED** with the Holy Spirit (empowered by the Holy Spirit in this moment)
2. (4:8b) He was **RESPECTFUL** (addressed them as rulers and elders of the Jewish people)
3. (4:9) He was **HUMBLE, GRACIOUS**, and yet **TRUTHFUL**/factual – this lame man was healed by the name/power/authority of Jesus and that Jesus is raised by God from the dead
4. (4:10-11) He was **FEARLESS, BOLD**, and **COURAGEOUS** even in the face of persecution to call out the Jewish leaders for their murder/crucifixion of Jesus (the builders/leaders have rejected the stone/Jesus that has become the chief cornerstone – central/foundation of saving faith/belief)
5. (4:12) He was doctrinally **UNCOMPROMISING**, **SCRIPTURAL**, and **EXCLUSIVE** rather than ecumenical, practical, pragmatic, pandering, or pluralistic by saying “salvation is in no one else, there is no other name by which one can be saved”
6. (4:13a) He was **CONFIDENT** and **COMPETENT** despite not being formally educated or trained
7. (4:13b) He had much **TIME** with Jesus – he was all these things because He had been with Jesus/spent much time with Jesus

**II. Preaching Outline (Acts 4:13-31) with cross references (8 “Bees”)**

1. (4:13a) Be **UNASHAMED** – speak up, speak out, don’t be afraid (Heb. 13:6)
2. (4:13b) Be with Jesus, **DWELL** with Him, spend much time/quality time with Him (Col. 3:16)
3. (4:14-18) Be **WISE**, be smart, be strategic with unbelievers (Mt. 10:16, Col. 4:5) – present the evidence (Jesus and His power/healed lame man standing with Peter and John in front of the Sanhedrin)
4. (4:19-20) Be God **FEARING** not man pleasing – obey God rather than man as the ultimate authority (Ecclesiastes 5:7, 12:13, Mt. 10:28, 1 Pet. 2:17, Rev. 14:7)
5. (4:21-22) Be worshipping, **GLORIFYING**, and praising God for all that He has done, is doing, and will do (Ps. 22:23, Romans 15:6-9, 1 Cor. 6:20, 1 Peter 2:12, 4:16\*)
6. (4:23) Be encouraging, **EDIFYING**- sharing/reporting to others all that God is doing in your life (Heb.10:24-25)
7. (4:24-28) Be recalling, quoting, reporting, and **SHARING** much Scripture in our worship and fellowship with one another (Ephesians 5:18-20, Colossians 3:16-17)
8. (4:29-31) Be praying...much in earnest prayer, **TRUSTING** in God’s sovereignty (Luke 18:1, Rom. 12:12, Col 4:2, 1 Thes. 5:7, Eph. 6:18, Phil. 4:6)



**III. Main Points in greater depth and detail**

1. **(4:13a) Be U** – speak up, speak out, don’t be afraid (Heb. 13:6)

Acts 4:13 Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

- We can be Confident & Competent though not formally educated (God changed the world through fisherman, tax collectors, zealots)
- We can be Ordinary people doing extraordinary things for God as long as we spend much time with Jesus

**What are your overall/lifetime spiritual goals? – what are you hoping and praying God will accomplish in/through you in your life?**

2. **(4:13b) Be with Jesus, D** with Him, spend much time/quality time with Him (Col. 3:16)

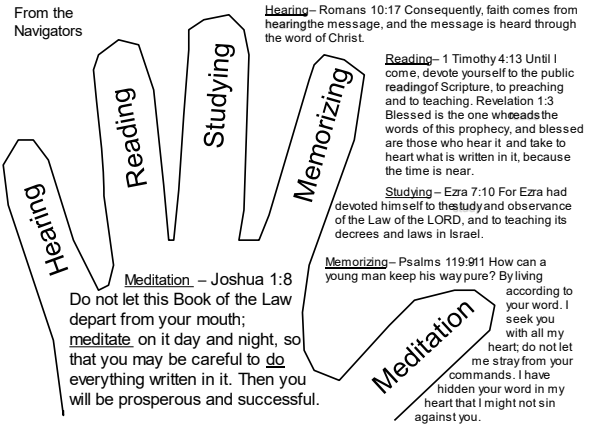
The Apostles had much **TIME** with Jesus – he was all these things because He had been with Jesus/spent much time with Jesus. But you do have to put in the **TIME** (quality time – have YOU been with Jesus this week, a lot or a little?)

- 1) Time in the **Word** (reading, hearing, studying, meditating, memorizing)
- 2) Time in **Prayer** (talking and listening to God)
- 3) Time in **Fellowship** (time with your brothers and sisters in Christ – practicing & growing in the “One Anothers”)
- 4) Time in **Witnessing/Evangelizing** (you do get better with practice, practice never makes perfect, but it does make you more useful, powerful, and fruitful for the Lord in sharing your faith/making the most of every opportunity—**Eph. 5:16**)

**What is your current devotional plan to spend time with God – do you have a specific time, place and plan to meet with the Lord?**

Chad mentioned several Bible Study methods (Know, Stop, Change Do – 2 Tim. 3:16), (Read it Through in Two Years), (Highlight Commands/Promises), (Creating your own chapter & section titles), (2 Chapters/day - Underlining Key Verses, writing your thoughts, questions, prayers), (Jmac – divide NT books by 7 chapters, read 7 chapters/day, read same 7 chapters every day for 30 days, read NT in 2.5 years 30x)

**What are some other Bible Study methods that you like, have practiced in the past or currently using and growing from?**



### 3. (4:14-18) Be **W**, be smart, be strategic with unbelievers (Mt. 10:16, Col. 4:5) – present the evidence (Jesus and His power/healed lame man standing with Peter and John in front of the Sanhedrin)

Acts 4:14-18 <sup>14</sup> And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. <sup>15</sup> But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another, <sup>16</sup> saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. <sup>17</sup> "But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name." <sup>18</sup> And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

- They had nothing to say
- They could not deny it (noteworthy sign/miracle of healing the lame man) (apparent to ALL in Jerusalem)
- All they could do is resort to threats
- God being all-wise provided the undeniable evidence front and center at the trial – the lame man now healed was STANDING there with Peter and John in front of the Sanhedrin!

**Can you think of a way or times when we must be very careful or wise in what we say or don't say, do or don't do when talking or interacting with unbelievers? Do you agree with Chad that we need to pray more as we see a developing two-tiered justice system in the U.S.A.?** (Chad gave an example of how abortion protesters are raided/questioned by the FBI for just praying outside murder clinics, but no one yet from Jane's Revenge (group vandalizing pregnancy resource centers) have been arrested yet as far as we know)

### 4. (4:19-20) Be God **F** not man pleasing – obey God rather than man as the ultimate authority (Ecclesiastes 5:7, 12:13, Mt. 10:28, 1 Pet. 2:17, Rev. 14:7)

Acts 4:19-20 <sup>19</sup> But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; <sup>20</sup> for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

- Threat - Stop speaking in this name (Acts 5:29)
- Godly Response in the form of question - You be the judge – heed you or God?
- Godly Boldness - We cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard (resurrection/power of Jesus)

**If you are ever threatened, arrested, imprisoned, persecuted, or even facing death for your faith/obeying God and Scripture – what are some Bible books (1/2 Peter) on suffering or good verses on Christian persecution to remember?** (1 Peter 2:11-17, 21-23, 3:13-18, 4:12-19)

### 5. (4:21-22) Be worshipping, **G**, and praising God for all that He has done, is doing, and will do (Ps. 22:23, Romans 15:6-9, 1 Cor. 6:20, 1 Peter 2:12, 4:16\*)

Acts 4:21-22 <sup>21</sup> When they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which to punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened; <sup>22</sup> for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

**What are some verses that command/instruct us to always be glorifying God?** (1 Cor 10:31, Psalm 86:12)

### 6. (4:23) Be encouraging, **E**, and sharing/reporting to others all that God is doing in your life (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Acts 4:23 When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

**Take a couple minutes to find as many “one another” passages/commands that you can find and share them with each other to encourage/edify each other as well as discuss how we can practically practice them more in our church.**

### 7. (4:24-28) Be recalling, quoting, reporting, and **S** much Scripture in our worship and fellowship with one another (Ephesians 5:18-20, Colossians 3:16-17)

Acts 4:24-28 <sup>24</sup> And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM. <sup>25</sup> who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, "WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS? <sup>26</sup> "THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST." <sup>27</sup> "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, <sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

- This section quotes Exodus 20:11, Nehemiah 9:6, Psalm 146:6, and Psalm 2:1-2 (Look up these O.T. verses up and discuss if time allows)

**What did you think of the Charles Spurgeon quote: “When you go through trial, the sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which you lay your head.”**

### 8. (4:29-31) Be praying...much in earnest prayer, **T** in God's sovereignty (Lk.18:1,Rom.12:12,Col 4:2,1 Thes. 5:7,Eph.6:18,Phil.4:6)

Acts 4:29-31 <sup>29</sup> "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, <sup>30</sup> while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus." <sup>31</sup> And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

**(How can we better prepare and toughen up as a church for possible future persecution/trials?)**

**IV. Application: Ephesians 6:18-20 Will you grow/respond to Chad's challenge to pray MORE not less as a church this summer (Thursday nights 6:30-8p at the Hollywood office & Prince Fredrick Bubble) as we endeavor to seek God's power, blessing, and glory in a new church plant (Lord willing – Sep. 10, 2023)**

