



ACTS: LIVING ON MISSION

Acts 4:1-31

Week of August 6, 2023

Start at 9:50-10:00

Belong: *Use 5-10 minutes as an opportunity to get to know one another. The questions below are written for people to open-up and to know the group members.*

Take a **few minutes** to hear about your group members' week.

Ask the question[s] below:

- **If you had to defend yourself in a court of law, how well do you think you would hold up under cross-examination?**

10:00-10:05

Believe: *Use 5 minutes to read this week's assigned Scriptures then highlight each verse that helps you to understand the passage better. Include the book, chapter and verse(s).*

Have a group member read **Acts 4:1-12** aloud.

- Have the class summarize this section in **1-2 sentences**.
- What is the most challenging aspect of this text for you?

Have a group member read **Acts 4:13-31** aloud.

- Have the class summarize this section in **1-2 sentences**.
- What is the most challenging aspect of this text for you?

10:05-10:15

Build: *Use about 10 minutes to engage the passage and wrestle with its meaning.*

This week, Luke records an account of Peter & John defending the faith against religious leaders. If this were the apostles of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John they would have folded like a cheap suit - meaning they would have given up easily. But these apostles have been emboldened by the Holy Spirit - and they are now defending their faith TO THE CHURCH. **This was not a political issue** - this was an issue of defending Jesus Christ to the religious elite. As you can imagine, their message is met with some opposition, but despite the opposition the newly minted church keeps marching on through Jerusalem, Judea, toward Samaria and eventually to the ends of the earth.

Peter & John stood up for the gospel and prioritized the gospel over their own comfort and safety - even when they were in an obvious difficult position in front of the religious leaders.

- **Have you seen Christians/ disciples of Jesus Christ use disobedience against an authority in a godly way? In an ungodly way?**
- **In your opinion, what is the difference between godly and ungodly disobedience?**

10:15-10:35

Become: *Use about 15 minutes to apply what you have read. How can this help me? What would the application of this verse look like in my life? What is God saying to me?*

Notice - most of the hostility Peter & John faced came from religious leaders.

- Knowing this, **how do** Peter & John demonstrate respect/ submission to the Jewish leaders while also obeying the commands of Jesus in **Acts 1:8**?

In today's culture, when is it appropriate to stand up for your faith in Jesus Christ?

- What empowers us to make a stand for our faith?
- What keeps us from making a stand for our faith?
- What is the most difficult situation you've faced because of your faith in Jesus Christ?

Knowing that persecution would continue [**John 16:33**], how does Peter's prayer in **Acts 4:24-30** prepare the church to continue to preach/ teach the gospel and for the threat that is coming?

- What was the results of this prayer in **vs. 31**?
- How would America react/ the church react with this kind of boldness from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

Historically, do disciples of Jesus Christ in America know or understand religious persecution [for their faith in Jesus Christ]?

- Would you say the "persecution oven" is beginning to heat up in America?
- If it continues to warm up, what happens to the church in America?
- How can we prepare ourselves for the costs we may have to pay for following Christ?

10:35 - Class ends at 10:45

Begin: *Use the last 5-10 minutes for prayer. It's important that we not only hear and discuss God's Word but respond to it. (James 1:22)*

How should it change the way you pray, think, speak or act this week?

At the end of the conversation, spend some time praying as a group. Here are some prompts:

- Spend some group time-sharing requests and praying specifically for them.
- Spend some time praying for FBC and that we would be encouraged and hopeful in how God is working in and through FBC Portland.

Additional Resources:

Blue Letter Bible: Acts 4: Check out the QR code to learn more.



Precept Austin: Acts 4: Check out the QR code to learn more.

