

Westwood Baptist Church *Grounded. Growing. Going.*



Worship Guide for December 16, 2018

Sermon Notes

Extraordinary Boldness in Ordinary People

Acts 4: 1-31 (pew Bible pgs. 911-912)

In chapter one of the book of Acts, we saw the risen Christ make a promise and give a commission to his disciples before he ascended into heaven. In chapter two, we saw the promise fulfilled at Pentecost as the Holy Spirit filled the disciples and the power of the gospel was unleashed and the Church was born. In Acts chapter three, we saw the inevitable overflow of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit-filled church goes out into a dark and hurting city and the risen, ascended Christ continues His work through that community of faith.

Today, we come to Acts chapter four. After a dramatic healing and powerful sermon, we see the inevitable conflict between light and dark as the church faces persecution for the first time. Persecution is an inevitable element of genuine Christian faith. The gospel never progresses unopposed. It is the pattern we will see through Acts and throughout Church history: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit leads to extraordinary advances of God's kingdom, leading to the hostile opposition from the enemies of God. Jesus told his disciples this would happen. He promised to give them the power and words they needed to boldly face this opposition. His promise is for us today.

The Inevitable Confrontation (Acts 4: 1-4)

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The Bold Proclamation (Acts 4: 5-12)

'How did you do this – by what name did it happen?' is the question that comes to Peter and John. The answer comes with boldness and clarity. "Be it known to you all," Peter says, "that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well." The one you crucified God raised and made the Cornerstone of his kingdom. He is the only Savior. "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

The Fearful Intimidation (Acts 4: 13-22)

The authorities of the court are unable to deny a great miracle has taken place. Neither can they dispute the claim of Peter and John that the healing was done through the power of Jesus. Concerned that this 'Jesus Movement' could quickly get out of hand, they try to contain it. But all they can do is threaten and intimidate and command Peter and John to stop saying the name of Jesus. The disciple's answer rings true for us today: "we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."

The Bold Intercession (Acts 4:23-31)

When the disciples came back, they told the church of the threats they received. Everyone understood the implication: persecution or worse. So, did they flee back into hiding? No, they prayed for boldness! In answer to prayer, fear melted away and they received a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit and renewed boldness to keep proclaiming the name of Jesus.

Life Group Guide

Sunday

In your journal, reflect on today's sermon by answering the following:

I never knew:

I was challenged:

I was reminded:

I was convicted:

A question I still have:

A truth I could share:

Know

Monday

Spend some time today doing the following:

Read the sermon passage again.

Select a portion of this week's sermon passage to memorize this week.

Write your selected portion and read it to yourself at least 10 times throughout the day.

Know > Be

Tuesday

In your journal, spend some time writing about the following:

Read the sermon passage again.

Write a prayer of response, guided by the passage.

(May include adoration, confession/repentance, thanksgiving, petition, etc...)

Write your selected portion of the Scripture several times to aid in memorization.

Be

Wednesday

Think about this week's questions for group discussion:

How does the reaction of Peter and John to the persecution they face encourage us as we face or prepare to face various forms of it ourselves?

How does persecution open opportunities for gospel proclamation? How does understanding this help us in preparation to face it? How should it shape the way we pray in preparation for it?

Did it strike you at all the way Luke shares about the community of believers and how they acted together? How does this passage show us the importance of community for individual believers in a world hostile to the gospel?

Be > Do

Thursday

In your journal, spend some time considering the following:

What insights have you had while internalizing this week's passage?

How specifically will you seek to apply its truths in your home/workplace/life in general?

Do

*Use this guide to help you internalize this week's passage & message.

Westwood Staff

Gerald Hodges: Lead Pastor

Jonathan Taylor: Associate Pastor

Jim Fulp: Counseling Pastor

Jason Engle: Pastor of Students

& Discipleship

Katie Austin: Children's Ministry

Coordinator

Contact Us

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Upcoming Events

December 16 - Children's Christmas Program

December 18 - PHS Choral Concert

December 19 - Christmas Caroling

December 23 - Worship Service ONLY @ 10am

December 24 - Candlelight Service & Communion

December 25 & 26 - Church Office Closed

December 30 - Worship Service ONLY @ 10am