

SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS

THE COURAGE OF A GOOD SOLDIER

Acts 4:1-31 Jeff Schreve

God didn't give us a cowardly spirit but a spirit of power, love, and good judgment. 2 Timothy 1:7 GW

As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening. But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. Acts 4:1-4

1. Courageous soldiers know that boldness has consequences.

A. The world will always be disturbed by the truth.

B. The world will always try to intimidate the truth.

On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent. When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" Acts 4:5-7

2. Courageous soldiers stand up for Jesus.

When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them ... Acts 4:7-8

"When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit." Mark 13:11

A. They trust the Lord for timely provision.

B. They speak the truth with authority, power, and conviction.

"Rulers and elders of the people, if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health." Acts 4:8-10

C. They make things crystal clear.

"He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." Acts 4:11-12

Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. Acts 4:13-14

But when they had ordered them to go aside out of the Council, they began to confer with one another, 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. "But in order that it may not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to any man in this name." And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 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; for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard." Acts 4:15-20

D. They obey God above all.

3. Courageous soldiers lift their voices to the Lord.

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. 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, Acts 4:23-24

A. They praise Him.

B. They remember what He has said.

"... 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? THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.'" Acts 4:25-26

C. They ask in faith for boldness and divine power.

"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, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose

predestined to occur. “And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.” Acts 4:27-30

D. They receive an immediate answer.

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. Acts 4:31

Will you determine to live as a courageous soldier for Christ?