

Courage

- What is courage?
 - mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty (Merriam-Webster)
- When do we need courage?
- Where does courage come from?
- When does a Christian need courage?
- Where do you need courage?
- Seeking courage from God...

Courageous Obedience

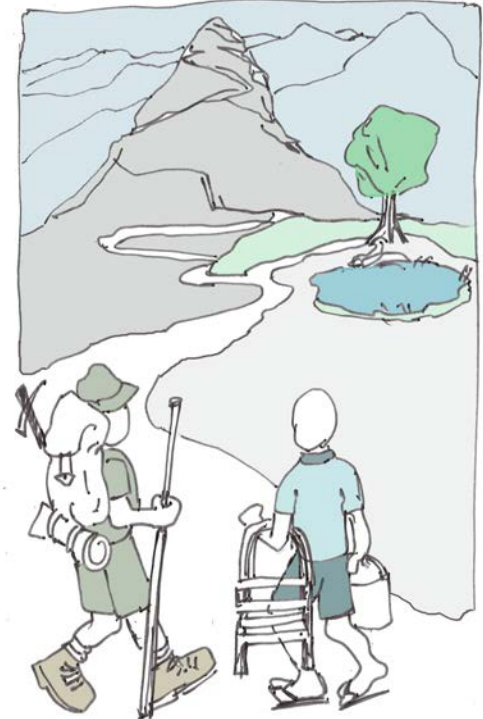
Acts 4:23-31

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Multiple Timeframes in reading the Bible

- Old Testament event
 - David's son became king
- Old Testament author / readers
 - Psalmist writes a poem about the new king (Psalm 2)
- New Testament event
 - Jesus is killed, then Peter preaches about Jesus' death
- New Testament author / readers
 - Luke writes about Jesus and Peter for churches (Acts)
- Us
 - We read what the psalmist & Luke have written

Acts 3-4

- Day 1**
- 3pm: Peter & John go to the Temple to pray
 - Heal lame man: over 40, and had never walked in his life
 - Instantly: walking and leaping and praising God
 - Peter preaches to the crowds
 - Evening: Peter & John are arrested
 - Spend night in jail
- Day 2**
- Next day: trial
 - Peter preaches to the Jewish Council
 - Threatened but not harmed, then released
 - Report to friends
 - Christians pray for boldness

Acts 4:23-31

23: Peter and John report to the church: threats

- The future of the church was in the balance
 - What happened to Peter and John was going to happen to the rest as well

24a:

24b: • “They charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.”

25-26: • Jesus’ name had been outlawed

27-28:

29-30:

31:

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- the creator (owner, authority) of everything

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27-28: • God’s hand and human opposition resulted in God’s pre-planned work of salvation in Christ

29-30: • Their efforts to stop God’s plan actually brought

31: it about by His power

Psalm 2

<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>Jesus’ day</u>	<u>Early Church</u>	<u>Today</u>
• Kings	• Herod	• Religious	• Government
• Rulers	• Pilate	leaders	peers, family,
• Gentiles	• Roman soldiers		friends, ...
• People	• Jews		
• Anointed king	• Jesus	• Church	• Us

People will oppose God’s chosen ones

Opposition is futile: “You will break them with a rod of iron”

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29-30: Request: look, give boldness, & do signs in Jesus’ name

31: Answer: sign, filling, and boldness

The Big Idea

God works all things

**including the threats and works of opposing powers
that are seemingly far stronger than God's people**

for His glory and our good

through His servants

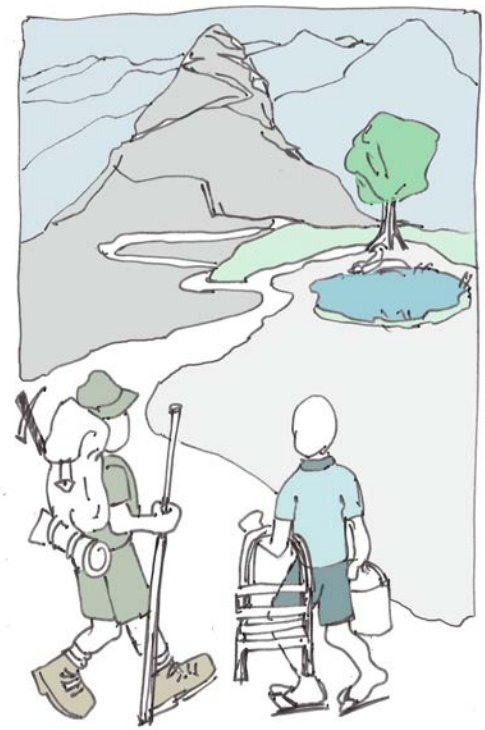
by the power of the Holy Spirit

Application

- Be bold & courageous
 - God's word to Joshua, the leader of Israel after Moses:
"Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land **I swore** to their ancestors **to give them.**" *Joshua 1:6*
 - Courageously walk in God's plan that His Hand will accomplish
 - Even when (especially when) the path looks hard

Then Jesus said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Luke 9:23-26

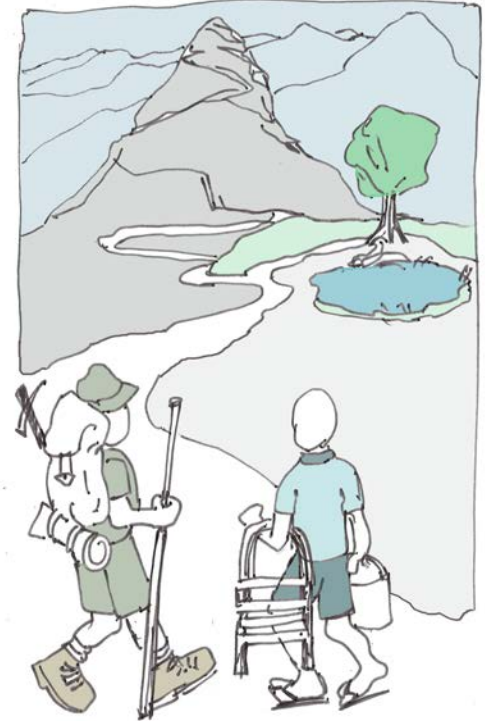


Not...

- “All things in moderation”
- God helping me with my agenda
- A better way to accomplish the goals I already had

Rather...

- He is God, and there is no other
- His wisdom and goodness are immensely greater than our own
- So: **follow Him** rather than asking Him to protect & bless us



Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
 - For this very reason, **make every effort** to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. *2 Peter 1:5*

Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
- Boldly obey: particular obedience: **proclamation**
 - “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” *Acts 1:8*
 - “And so you will bear testimony to me. ... Everyone will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your head will perish. Stand firm, and you will win life.” *Luke 21:13, 17-19*

Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
- Boldly obey: particular obedience: **proclamation**
- Pray well
 - Pray courageously
 - They were asking God to bring more attention to the name of Jesus through them, the very thing the authorities threatened them not to do
 - They were asking God to do what would make life harder for them, not easier or requiring less faith

Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
- Boldly obey: particular obedience: **proclamation**
- Pray well
 - In good understanding of God and His ways (Scripture)
 - Before asking, listen and praise=declare God's glory
 - He is sovereign, even over evil intent and actions
 - Praise Him for being what we are not
 - Praise of God brings hope and expectation for His action
 - He has a better plan than simply making my life easier
 - He often uses the slingshot effect: trouble, then greater glory
 - Focus on my responsibility rather than changing others

Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
- Boldly obey: particular obedience: **proclamation**
- Pray well
 - God uses our actions to do His work,
so we pray and we prayerfully act

Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
- Boldly obey: particular obedience: proclamation
- Pray well
 - Signs
 - We want conviction in us and others: God is present!
 - They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now **we have heard for ourselves**, and we know that **this man really is the Savior of the world.**” *John 4:42*

Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
- Boldly obey: particular obedience: proclamation
- Pray well
- Fear God, not people
 - “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.” *Luke 12:4-5*

Application

- Be bold & courageous
- Boldly obey: general obedience
- Boldly obey: particular obedience: proclamation
- Pray well
- Fear God, not people
 - Whose opinion of us matters most? God’s or people’s?
 - Whose instructions guide our minutes, days, and years?
 - Whose opposition worries us or changes our path?
 - There is only one Creator, Savior, and Judge of all humanity. **Never bow to any pretender!**

The Big Idea

God works all things

**including the threats and works of opposing powers
that are seemingly far stronger than God's people**

for His glory and our good

through His servants

by the power of the Holy Spirit

**BOLDLY LISTEN TO AND OBEY OUR GOD AND SAVIOR
WITHOUT LIMIT**

WHO GAVE HIS LIFE TO BRING US LIFE WITH HIM FOREVER