

## PRAYER FOR BOLDNESS

Acts 4:23-31

### INTRODUCTION

After Peter and John were released, the first thing they did was to return to their brothers and sisters and share about what had just happened. The boldness they exhibited in front of the Sanhedrin was an out-of-this-world type of boldness— one that can only be explained by a supernatural filling of the Holy Spirit. They turned to God in prayer, not for the persecution to cease, but out of thankfulness for the fact that Jesus is God, and out of a sense of utter dependence on God's provision of his Spirit in order to be his witnesses.

### OBSERVATION *What does it SAY?*

Discover key details of the passage by reading Acts 4:23-31 and then answering the following questions:

1. Who are the specific groups mentioned as being gathered together upon Peter and John's return? (Acts 4:23)
2. What was the reaction of the believers when they heard Peter and John's report? (Acts 4:24)
3. How do the believers address God in their prayer? (Acts 4:24-30)
4. What happened after the believers prayed together? (Acts 4:31)

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

*Day 1: Psalm 2*

*Day 2: Matthew 5:10-16*

*Day 3: Psalm 146*

*Day 3: Ephesians 6:10-20*

*Day 4: Matthew 10:16-25*

*Day 5: Joshua 1:1-9*

*Day 6: James 5:13-18*

*Day 7: Psalm 91*

## INTERPRETATION *What does it MEAN?*

5. How does the prayer of the believers in Acts 4:24-30 reflect their understanding of God's sovereignty and power?
6. What is the Old Testament passage quoted in vv. 25 -26 and how does it relate to the events happening in the passage?

### WORD STUDY

#### **"Predestined"**

Gk. *prohorizō*- The early believers lived with a vibrant consciousness of God's sovereignty over the affairs of men as well as with a strong sense of personal responsibility (cf. Acts 2:23; Acts 4:28; Rom. 8:29, 30; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:5, 11). They saw the recent resistance against Peter and John as a facet of the outworking of God's plan—what His hand and "purpose had determined before to be done." God works without coercion. He does not force people to do things against their will. To do so would make a mockery of all His judging activities (whether in retribution or reward). Rather, in a way that surpasses the ability of human reason, God's plan unfolds in such a way as to provide true uncoerced choice for human beings and unhindered omniscience and sovereignty for himself.

7. Are there any Old Testament passages that parallel the language or themes found in the believers' prayer in Acts 4:24-30?

8. In what ways does the response of God, through the shaking of the place where they were meeting, echo other instances of divine activity in the Bible?

9. How does the response of the believers in Acts 4:31 relate to Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit's empowerment in Acts 1:8?

## APPLICATION *Why does it MATTER?*

10. How can we emulate the faith and boldness of Peter and John in our own lives when faced with opposition or persecution?

11. In what ways can we cultivate a deeper sense of unity and solidarity within our family of faith, as seen in Acts 4:23-31?

12. How does the example of the early church's prayer life in Acts 4:23-30 inspire us to prioritize prayer in our personal and communal worship?

13. What steps can we take to experience a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit's power and presence in our lives, as seen in Acts 4:31?

**TAKE AWAY** *How does this change me?*

14. What does this passage reveal about God?

15. What does this passage reveal about humanity?

16. What is the Holy Spirit revealing in this passage about your life?

Have your kids do the word find puzzle on the next page or read to them Acts 4:23-31. Use the following questions to have a discussion about being bold for God and in their faith in Jesus.

1. Who gathered together after Peter and John were released from being questioned by the leaders?

(Possible answer: The believers gathered together to pray.)

2. What do you think it means when it says they were "filled with the Holy Spirit" in verse 31?

(Possible answer: Being filled with the Holy Spirit means that they were filled with God's power and courage to do what is right.)

3. How can you show courage and stand up for what is right, like Peter and John did, even when it's hard?

(Possible answers: By telling the truth, helping others, and standing up against people who try to bully us into not being bold in our faith.)

4. Why is it important to pray with others, like the believers did in this story?

(Possible answers: Praying with others helps us feel stronger, and it shows that we trust God to help us.)

5. Which one of your friends do you need God's help to tell about Jesus?

(Possible answers: The idea is to get your child to begin thinking about sharing his or her faith and start relying on God to motivate and equip them to do so.)

Take some time to listen to your child's answer and then lead them in a prayer that calls upon God to help the them yield to him and depend on his strength to be bold for him.

# WORD FIND

Acts 4:23-31

U W H J G E N T I L E S  
S H O F W O R D E M V J  
A E L A S S E M B L E E  
I N Y T O G E T H E R S  
D R U H G B O L D L Y U  
C H I E F B U S H L T S  
T L O R D I Y P E A H S  
P L A C E S H I A M I B  
E L D E R S E R V A N T  
O E A R T H A I E S G T  
P R V G A I R T N T E A  
L F I H A N D S P E A K  
E V D I C M A D E R N E

After they were released, they went to their own **people** and reported **everything** the **chief** priests and the **elders** had **said** to them. **When** they **heard** this, they raised their voices **together** to God and **said**, “**Master**, you are the one who **made** the **heaven**, the **earth**, and the sea, and **everything** in them. You **said** through the **Holy Spirit**, by the mouth of our **father David** your **servant**: Why do the **Gentiles** rage and the **peoples** plot futile things? The kings of the **earth** **take** their stand and the rulers **assemble together** against the **Lord** and against his Messiah. “For, in fact, in this city both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the **Gentiles** and the **people** of Israel, **assembled together** against your **holy servant Jesus**, whom you anointed, to do whatever your **hand** and your will had predestined to **take place**. And now, **Lord**, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your **holy servant Jesus**.” When they had prayed, the place where they were **assembled** was shaken, and they were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and began to speak the word of God boldly.