

ATTITUDES IN FIRST CENTURY CHURCH

Acts 4:15-37

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Peter and John were arrested by the Sanhedrin council for preaching the gospel.
- B. As apostles stand before Jewish leaders, they were asked by what authority they were speaking to the people.
- C. Peter's answer: by the authority of Christ then told the council more about salvation in the name of Christ.
- D. Marveled at boldness of seemingly ignorant & unlearned men, took knowledge they had been with Jesus.
- E. Reading on in text, we see very important attitudes in the first century church.

DISCUSSION:

I. BOLDNESS TO PREACH THE TRUTH Vs. 15-22

- A. Even when commanded not to and threatened with harm if they did
- B. Jesus wants His people to teach others about His sacrifice, His salvation, and His will: Matt 28:18-20, Mk 16:15-16, Lk 24:46-47
- C. Preaching the gospel is God's will: 1Cor 1:21; We therefore, need to have attitude of Paul: 1Cor 2:1-5
- D. Since only truth makes men free (Jhn 8:32) and only gospel saves men's souls (Rom 1:16), we must speak with courage, conviction, and boldness: 2Cor 4:13, 5:10-11, 7:4.
- E. It makes no difference what people of world think about us or do to us--we must preach the word of God Matt 10:28,37;

II. THERE IS POWER IN PRAYER Vs. 23-31.

- A. Jesus taught us to pray: Matt 6:6, 9-13 (not formula of words to be said, but a general pattern for acceptable prayer) note concern for kingdom; note Matt 7:7-11.
- B. Paul talked about importance of prayer in preaching of gospel and growth of the church Eph 6:18-20
 1. Pray for preachers that they'll speak the truth boldly
 2. Pray for lost that they'll hear and obey the gospel
 3. Pray for us that we'll be found doing God's will
- C. God promised if faithful, He'll hear & answer prayers in harmony with His will: Jas 5:16; 1Jhn 5:14-15.
 1. We know He did in 1st century re-read vs. 29-30;
 2. Though we don't expect God to perform signs and wonders today, He still promises to hear & answer prayers of His people

III. SPIRIT OF UNITY, LOVE AND BENEVOLENCE V 32-37

- A. They had spirit of unity (V. 32) - not divided by creeds, differing doctrines, & separate organization structures; they understood same principles Paul set forth in his plea: 1Cor 1:10; Eph 4:1-3
- B. United because of genuine love for one another; rather than feuding, fussing, and fighting over issues of judgment Jhn 13:34-35
- C. An expression of their love for one another was their willingness to give benevolence to those among them in need (Vs. 34-35)
 1. Bible teaches us to have same spirit 1Jhn 3:16-18.
 2. Reason early church grew was preaching of gospel was illustrated by lives dedicated to oneness, affection, and concern for each other.

CONCLUSION:

- A. In order for church to grow today as it should, we need to have same attitudes as those disciples in the first century.
- B. We must preach the whole truth of God's word with all boldness regardless of circumstances or consequences
- C. We must believe in power of prayer and pray fervently.
- D. We must emphasize the development of a spirit of unity, love, and benevolence.
- E. If you're not yet a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, then you're still lost in your sins, and we'd encourage you to obey His truth that you might be saved by God's grace through His blood; when you've done that, He'll add you to His church, and you can begin a life of faithful service to Him that's designed to end with eternal life in heaven.
- F. Remember what the message of salvation involves: Mk 16:15-16

(Revised by JLH from an outline by Wayne Walker)