Witnesses to Christ


Great Power, Great Grace, Great Fear
Lesson 4
Acts 4:5-5:11

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
January 24, 2016
The Acts of the Apostles

- A major transition in world history – 29 years
- Not new! Acts 15:11; Galatians 3:6-9; Hebrews 11
- Definitely new!
  - Israel removed from center stage
  - The beginning of the Church age
  - The ministry of the Holy Spirit
  - The work of Christ revealed with clarity
The Acts of the Apostles

- Ascension and commissioning
- Pentecost and empowering
- Summary Sections – describing
- Confrontation and opposition
Great Power, Great Grace, Great Fear

- The Apostles on trial (4:5-22)
- The Church in prayer (4:23-31)
- The Church in action (4:32-37)
- The Church in fear (5:1-11)
The Apostles on Trial (4:5-22)

- The Sanhedrin
- Two conflicts
  - Christ v. Satan
  - Law of Moses v. the Church
- Reason for arrest: teaching the resurrection in Jesus
- A challenge to human authority – by Jesus Christ
  - 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30
  - Acts 3:19-20, 23, 26
Peter’s Response (4:8-12)

- Filled with the Holy Spirit
- How was this man made well?
- The Name of Jesus Christ, the Nazarene
- “... you crucified ... God raised from the dead.”
- The rejected stone is the chief cornerstone
- No salvation in any other
- “They would kill Him by silence.” Lenski (1864-1936)
The Verdict (4:13-22)

- Amazement – linked to Jesus
- Reality – a noteworthy miracle
- Warning and threatening – must not teach or speak in the name of Jesus
- The supremacy of Divine Authority
- God glorified – heard message and believed (4:4, 21)
The Church in Prayer (4:23-31)

- Theology of prayer
  - “O Lord” – “despot” – supreme authority; owner and controller
  - Creator – absolute power and wisdom (Proverbs 8)

- The comfort of scripture (Ps 2:1-2)
  - David spoke by the Holy Spirit – absolute authority
  - An assault upon God

- The request
  - Not a request for personal protection or deliverance
  - Boldness to speak the Word of God

- An answer
  - Physical evidence of the Holy Spirit
  - Speaking the Word of God with boldness
The Church in Action (4:32-37)

- The main characteristics of the Christian community
  - Unity of heart and soul – the prayer of Christ
  - Love for one another – care for physical needs
  - Faithfulness to the Truth – giving testimony to the resurrection
  - Great grace upon all – the strength of God (2 Cor 12:7-10)
The Church in Fear (5:1-11)

- The example of Barnabas (4:36-37)
- The deception of Ananias and Sapphira
- Compare with “kings” and Sanhedrin
- Great fear
  - The enemy without v. the enemy within
  - The great work of the Church is sanctification – Eph 4:11-16; John 17:17
  - Job 28:28 “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.” Wrath here is a lesson for the Church
- A lesson for the Church
  - Proverbs 14:26 – in the fear of the Lord, there is strong confidence
  - Acts 9:31 – the character of the church
  - Isaiah 11:1-5 – a word used about Christ – Fear of the Lord
Lessons for the Church

- Great power – God’s power at work – only seen by faith
- Great grace – God’s power to transform
- Great fear – “worship the LORD with reverence” (Ps 2:11)