

Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

“EMBROIDED BUT EMBOLDENED”

Big Idea: The Holy Spirit emboldens God’s people to proclaim Christ’s name in the face of persecution.

Discuss

If you have ever watched TV courtroom dramas, you know that the lawyer who stars in the show triumphs every time. The end of each episode often takes place in the same courtroom, perhaps even with the same presiding judge, and the same opposing attorney. There are varying twists and turns before the victory, and sometimes it looks as though the star of the show is finally going down in defeat, but in the end, we are presented with yet another satisfying win.

In the passage we are studying this week, we have the first of several courtroom (or courtroom-like) scenes that Luke has included in the second part of his history. He recorded the most momentous trial of all time, of course, in the first part of his history, his gospel. Some of the same key players who were at Jesus’ trial, including Caiphas and Annas, were also present when Peter and John were brought before the Jewish elders. In both cases, the Jewish leaders were adamantly opposed to Jesus. The person who was radically different in these two trials-before-the-elders, of course, was Peter. No longer lurking on the fringes or denying Jesus when asked, Peter instead testified boldly. So what kind of triumph was this? And should Christians expect a “win” when brought to trial?

- 1) Let’s look at the position (or side) of the Jewish elders.
 - What were they willing to admit?
 - What did they object to and why? (See Matthew 12:23-24, Mark 3:23-24, Mark 7:5, Luke 5:30, and Luke 23:1-2 for more insight into the objections Jewish leaders had about Jesus.)
- 2) The decision of the court was a strict warning to Peter and John not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. (vv. 17-18)
 - Many non-Christians today in many different settings are similarly opposed to any speaking or teaching that is done in the name of Jesus, but usually their opposition stems from different beliefs than the ones held by the Jewish leaders. What are those beliefs?
- 3) As one modern-day Christian apologist has recently noted, “To our modern ears, the idea of one religion claiming to be *the* truth is anathema ?”¹
 - How can we insist on Jesus as the only hope for salvation in ways that are not disrespectful or unloving yet do not compromise the truth? (See 1 Peter 3:15-16)
 - When we face mockery or hatred because of our belief in Jesus, what will enable us to be bold? What should we not rely on?

DATE: September 29, 2019

SPEAKER: Chad/Brian

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 4:1-22

Pray

WE PRAISE YOU, LORD JESUS.

You were willing to be rejected and despised for our sake. Help us to remember daily that it is always better to take refuge in you than to trust in man. We exalt you today and give you thanks.

We rejoice in the power of your name, the name above all names, the name at which every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

You are not one name among many, nor one way of salvation among many options. You are the way, the truth, and the life. Very God of Very God. Give us boldness to proclaim the truth that salvation is found in no one else. In your matchless name we pray. Amen.

– based in part on Isa. 53:3, Psalm 118:8,28; Phil. 2:9-10, Acts 4:12, John 14:6

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Child Evangelism Fellowship

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Susan and Bruce Young serving with Mission to the World

¹Rebecca McLaughlin, *Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World’s Largest Religion*, p. 48