

Peter and John Arrested
Making Right Choices

"Remember what I told you; 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teachings, they will obey yours also." John 15:20

Recently baptized in the Holy Spirit, Peter and John are on fire, boldly preaching, teaching, and healing the sick in the name of Jesus. Full of faith and courage, there's no stopping them. The ministry of Jesus, the risen Savior, is growing like never before and is more visible, vibrant and alive than when Jesus walked the earth.

Surely everyone is excited...everyone except the religious leaders who are afraid of losing face and their elevated position in society. Through the crucifixion, they thought they were finally rid of Jesus, the troublesome itinerant from Nazareth in Galilee. If only they understood or wanted to understand. They, too, could freely speak of the goodness of God, instead of seeking to quell the proclamation that could help them to save face and give them an elevated position in society through humility. They could receive eternal life through Jesus Christ, the One they seek to silence.

Arrested? Yes, Peter and John are arrested for preaching, teaching and healing the sick in Jesus' name. Yes, they are met with the same opposition with which Jesus was met and from the same people; the religious crowd, the religious leaders. Knowing the answer to the question they would ask, hoping against hope to hear a different answer, trying to trap the disciples by their speech, the leaders ask, "By what power or what name have you done this (healing the lame man)?"

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.'" Acts 4:8-12

The leaders and the elders marveled and couldn't deny that these uneducated, untrained men had been with Jesus. Nor could they deny the miraculous healing that had taken place in the life of a previously lame beggar. Burning with anger, they threatened Peter and John never again to speak in the name of Jesus. Again, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter and John boldly answered, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19,20) Again, the leaders and elders could do nothing against the truth. Still hurling threats, they had to release the disciples.

Be encouraged, when we are bold witnesses for Jesus, there will be opposition, not so much from the world, but from the religious crowd. The world is hungry for something real, something authentic. It groans for truth which is only found in Jesus Christ. We, followers of Christ, have an amazing opportunity to touch the lives of people who have never and may never set foot in a traditional church setting. I pray we are so full of the Holy Spirit that when we meet someone whose deep need is beyond monetary, we too, will be in position to speak and act with holy boldness saying, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ _____."

Abundant blessings,
Pastor Vanessa