

Home Group Questions

The week of 3/1/2020

Acts 4:1-31

UNDER ATTACK!

GETTING STARTED...

This past Sunday, Pastor Mel spoke on Acts chapter 4 which gives us the account of the first persecution against the church!!

LOOKING IN THE WORD...

1. **Read Acts 4:1-31.** Read this passage putting yourself in the position of the leaders and believers in this new church. What are some of the ranges of emotion that the early church must have been feeling with its amazing growth and yet the Jewish leaders suddenly arresting the church's leaders? What are some of the questions that must have been asked by those experiencing this wide range of emotions?

- **Verse 8 mentions Peter being filled with the Holy Spirit** which is commanded for all believers in Ephesians 5:18. What do you think the outcome is of someone's walk with Christ, who consistently desires to live "filled with the Spirit"? What would be the attitude and heart condition of a person who is filled with the Holy Spirit?

- **Verse 12 is a well-known verse from God's Word.** What does this verse proclaim and why do you think that message was so offensive to the Jews? (and so offensive to the world in which we live in?). Do you think there is a tendency to shy away from this verse and what it says about Jesus? Why do you think that is...and how can we have the courage as well as a thoughtful response to the world who might challenge us about the teaching of verse 12?

2. **The sermon highlighted some characteristics of the "opposition".** Discuss them from the text and your thoughts about them:

The opposition....

A. More interested in the status quo than the Word of God. v. 13

B. No real acceptance of the miraculous. v. 14

C. No consistent logic about the supernatural. v. 15-16
(believe in God but minimize the miracles)

D. No willingness to accept the "good" resulting from God and His Word. v. 17-18

Perhaps we have all felt these tendencies at times in our walk with the Lord. How do we overcome the tendency to negate the supernatural work of God in our lives but not be deceived by those who claim something happened supernaturally but it really didn't (feelings that i've felt watching some very sensational evangelists on TV that claim healings but no verifiable proof)? Point "D" above raises some interesting issues: We all feel that experience should reinforce what we believe but it shouldn't be the proof of what we believe. Too often Christians allow experience to override the Scriptures. How can we lovingly live in that tension with other believers as we stress the Word of God but are open to the miraculous?

3. **Read 1 Peter 4:12-19.** The church must have been a bit "taken back" by the persecution they encountered. The Bible and Jesus Himself are very forthright about what the walk of Christ will be like. This passage tells us not to be surprised when we encounter trials. Why does God allow these trials to occur? How does that relate to what Jesus experienced on the cross and what His disciples must have felt and experienced during and immediately after Jesus' crucifixion? Take time to share other principles that you discover from the passage in 1 Peter 4.

MOVING FORWARD...

Pray that you will surprised by attacks that may come your way as a Christian and that you will face these attacks in a way that honors the Lord and the principles of His Word!