

## Sifting, Submitting and Strengthening

Blessings and grace to you. We spent a few minutes (48 minutes or so) exploring a few thoughts from Acts 3, Acts 4 and 1 Peter 5. Lord willing there will be a little something to encourage and edify you in it. Blessings...

I know of nothing or anyone who leads, feeds and meets the needs of His sheep, like Jesus. Don't be shocked when He says He's not going to fix it. He knows what's best... and we can trust what He knows, even when His best seems undesirable and unbearable at the moment. And we can either press Him to "fix it," to our own demise and frustration, or surrender to Him "fixing us, for it," that we might be used to bring Him glory, through the hope builders of His grace.

God will put a recognizable step and song in you that others will see.

## A Recognizable Confidence and Courage

### The Boldness of the Brethren

While in our Acts series, we took a closer look at the work of the Holy Spirit, as He glorifies the redeeming life, message, death, resurrection and promised coming of Jesus, through the Spirit filled life of the disciples, as they gave themselves to reach, teach, equip and mobilize the body of Christ.

A courageous confidence that could be seen... in those on mission WITH Jesus.

They gave what and who they had : Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!

They gave Jesus to the lame man.

They gave Jesus to the temple goers.

They gave Jesus to the religious leaders.

They gave all they had... freely, joyfully and convincingly.

They stayed Connected and kept company with Jesus.

They remained Confident in the Father and His Sovereign work.

They courageously yielded and rested in the filling and influence of the Spirit.

We see a simple, yet, profound pattern with the disciples in the book of Acts.

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Watch for it. We'll see it, again and again, as we navigate through the book this month. From start to close, and from Peter to Paul, it will be highlighted. The narrative tells us that they had a custom... something they were known for, a way of life they did consistently and faithfully, from city to city and town to town. Three things they did every time, in every place, no matter where they found themselves. What did he do?

- 1 They Opened Their Mouths
- 2 They Opened Their Bibles
- 3 They Opened Their Lives

Yes, I know it's simple... so simple it's often missed! And you'll find the same pattern, throughout the days of Acts, church history and in our modern day, with anyone that is having an authentic and eternal impact for Jesus. It was costly then, and it's costly now, but worth making it a pattern in our lives. Now, for it to be worthy of God's presence, and fulfill God's purpose, it must be done in God's power. There's a reason the opening of Acts insisted that the disciples needed the Spirit of God to open their mouths, the word and their hearts before a lost world, as authentic witness of Jesus and the glories that would follow His redeeming work.

The disciples, simply but significantly, by God's power were men and women who opened their mouths for Christ, then they opened the Scriptures, explaining and teaching from them, how the word of God pointed to Christ Jesus, and then they each opened their lives, not to prove their perfection or their own righteousness, but to share how this same Jesus interrupted and transformed his life with gospel of His redeeming grace. Glory...

They opened up their lives so others could see how both, the grace and truth of the Lord Jesus, had transformed their lives to live and serve Jesus. I'm going to jump ahead and give you an illustration in Acts 17. The wording, in Acts 17, gives us a visual picture of Paul demonstrating or "placing his life alongside the truth" (his testimony of faith upon faith) and pointed how Jesus, his Redeemer, and His revelation HAS and IS altering how he lives, loves and now looks to Jesus for everything.

That's it... a group of difference makers who constantly found a world that they could open these things before. And we find, as they opened these three things, before the people, the Lord opened hearts and heaven to those who were poor in spirit, perishing in their sin, who needed Jesus to rescue them and by faith they welcomed the good news of His saving grace. Glory, hallelujah! As he opened up...God opened hearts for His glory.

Let me encourage and love on you? Today, there's no need to be fancy or flashy or humanly clever

to be effective. You need His power and presence... and with His help just open your mouth, open your bible and open your life before others and let Jesus open the rest. Remember this about being fancy and clever: "Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but servants that fear the Lord, shall be praised." Proverbs 31:30

May He feed, lead and meet your need for Him and His grace. Proverbs 10:3).

#nestingwithjesus #acts #acts3 #acts4 #1peter5 #deuteronomy18 #2corinthians12  
#2corinthians1and3thru11 #siftingsubmittingstrengthening #Hisgraceissufficient #Heisable  
#graceupongrace #prayingwithwisdom #thesacrificeofprayer #fixit #fixus #fixusforit  
#prepareourhearts #withgraceandwisdom #hope