

March 19, 2023
Acts 4:23-37
"When I Pray"

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

A stark reality is realized. In this city, Jerusalem, the last place in the world where one would have thought it possible it happened. Jews and pagans, a king, and a pagan ruler, combine efforts against YAHWEH and Jesus the Messiah. King David wrote about this predestined event in history in **Psalm 2**. God is never the author of sin. However, God often uses the intents and actions of evil men to accomplish His pre-determined plan of redemption. As they rebelled against God they served His purpose.

The apostles do not ask that God punish the Sanhedrin, nor that He make its threats null and void. They do not ask for protection from their threats, nothing regarding their own person. What they do plead for is boldness, just plain old courage, a gift from God. When you pray, do you pray for courage to be His witness?

They greatly desire not to draw back nor compromise, but to boldly proclaim the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ the Messiah. It's not complicated, our mission, that is, do like Paul, see **I Corinthians 2:2**. A step toward boldness is to know what your goal is, to tell people about Jesus. Tell them about your life before Christ, how you came to believe in Jesus, and how that has changed your life for the good. This will peak the interest of a person who has no hope.

The selling of houses and lands was not, is not, communism. The proof is in the grammar. The imperfect tense is used meaning a continuous act of giving as needs arose. If it was communism or socialism at work this would have been done all at once. Just like in the case of Barnabas, his gift was voluntary, not under compulsion. Lastly, the church at Jerusalem was the only church recorded as having done this, if it was a communistic requirement, all the rest would have followed suit, they did not.

Application:

There is a direct correlation of the suffering of Christ and that of His followers. Note, they were not praying for relief from the suffering. **Philippians 1:29-30**, "For it has been granted to you on Christ's behalf not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are engaged in the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I have." Luke must have thought as he was moved along by the Spirit, this prayer will be really good for those who follow us, no matter how long or short that time may be, to serve as a model prayer or pattern to be followed in **Acts 4:23-31**.