

Introduction:

Today we will look at *enduring hardship and testing*.

Things we will look at in this lesson:

Part One: Suffering for Doing Good

Part Two: The Sovereignty of God

Part One: Suffering for Doing Good:

01. What do many Christians believe will happen if they do the right thing?

02. What happened as a result of the lame man being healed?

03. What happened to Peter and John in spite of this great success?

04. Why did the Sadducees want to stop the apostles?

05. What important lesson does Acts 3 and 4 teach?

06. What does Satan seek to do?

07. What is more important than pleasing people?

08. What should give us courage when working for God?

Article 1)

Good that came from Peter and John's suffering:

(1) As a direct result of their arrest, Peter was able to preach a Spirit-inspired sermon before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:8).

(2) He exalted Jesus and pointed to His sacrifice and resurrection (Acts 4:10– 11).

(3) He explained the way to salvation through Jesus (Acts 4:12).

(4) The Sanhedrin could not argue with or cover up the miracle God had done through Peter and John (Acts 4:16).

(5) The religious rulers could not escape the truth that these men showed a power and understanding far beyond their own strength and ability (Acts 4:13).

(6) Even these facts did not stop the Sanhedrin from making threats, and there was no happily ever after (Acts 4:21). Peter and John's Spirit-inspired speech did not change the religious leaders' hearts. The leaders would wait for another day to try to stop these men and this new movement.

Part Two: The Sovereignty of God:

09. What did the group do when Peter and John returned?

10. What does the word “sovereign” describe?

11. When should we fall back on God's sovereignty?

Article 2)

Prayer for Boldness: *And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.*” —Acts 4:29-30

- (1) They did not pray for protection.
- (2) They did not pray that the persecution would end.
- (3) They did not pray for vengeance but for boldness.
- (4) They asked God to give them courage to continue doing what was right.
- (5) They asked for strength to speak God's Word with boldness.
- (6) They asked for God to move among them and stir the people again with miraculous signs and wonders in Jesus' name.

Article 3)

Boldness:

parrēsia

Greek pronunciation — [pahr ray SEE ah]

CSB translation — boldness

Uses in Acts — 5

Uses in the NT — 31

Focus passage — Acts 4:13, 29, 31

- (1) The Greek noun **parrēsia** means **boldness**, **openness**, or **confidence** and thus signifies the freedom to speak openly. Since such freedom of speech often provokes opposition, *parrēsia* indicated fearlessness in speaking one's mind. The word was normally used in a positive sense, but a negative usage such as *bluntness* or *shamelessness* also occurs in ancient Greek literature.
- (2) All ten occurrences of *parrēsia* in the Gospels refer to speaking openly or plainly, either by Jesus or about Jesus (Mk 8:32; Jn 7:4, 13, 26; 10:24; 11:14, 54; 16:25, 29; 18:20).
- (3) The uses of the term in Acts refer to three instances of boldness on the part of the apostles in proclaiming the gospel (2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 28:31).
- (4) It was also something Paul referred to in his letters (2Co 3:12; Eph 6:19; Php 1:20).

12. What does God use our trials for?
