

Acts of Jesus, Lesson 13: Divine Encounter

❖ We left off last time with Peter and John standing up boldly to the Sanhedrin today we are going to see what took place as they went back and reported the events to the Church. **Acts 4:23-31**

❖ What a beautiful picture of God's people responding to opposition.

1. There are several lessons we need to learn from their response.

First of all, we are involved in something that is way over our heads:

- We're in spiritual battle of cosmic proportions: Notice their recognition of that fact—**VV.25-26**
- Battle is between the world, its system and the one who rules it against the Lord and His Messiah.
- Humanity is caught in between and is the subject of the battle.
- Notice: They admitted their inability and God's ability to manage the situation.
- Among the hardest things it seems for church people to do these days is admit inability.
- We're educated, wealthy/ healthy/ people of influence/ we have things together (or so we think)
- The worst church that Jesus wrote to in Revelation was the church at Laodicea; listen to their condition: **Rev.3:16-17**
- The only chance we have of being different than this church is to admit our inability and absolute dependence on Him.

Religion can be the enemy of God. It's often what happens when God, like Elvis, has left the building.

- If our team loses, it may seem like a big deal, but all that's been lost is a game.
- If a business fails, it may seem like a big deal, but all that's been lost is money.
- If we fail as believers—fail to rely upon God—fail to be filled with His Spirit to, boldly and faithfully proclaim the truth, then lives are lost for eternity.

2. The second lesson we need to learn is that of prayer. Which is a function of the previous—a church that realizes its inability will be devoted to prayer.

There is a difference between a church that plays at prayer and a church that is devoted to prayer:

Plays

Prays about what it does
Fits prayer into its busy schedule
Prays only when there's problems
Asks God to bless what it's doing

Does things within its means and power

Is involved in what man can do.

Devoted:

Does things by prayer
Gives prayer the highest priority
Prays at all times.
Asks God's guidance to do what He will bless
Does things beyond its means and power.
Is involved in what God can do.

Listen to what happened after they prayed. **V. 31**