

Read: Acts 4:23-31

Rejected But Not Forgotten

Acts 4:29-31

“Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

After Jesus' disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit on a special day called Pentecost, they spoke God's Word boldly in all kinds of cities and synagogues (like our churches today). Many people came to faith; the numbers of believers increased every single day. But there were certain church leaders of that day who did not believe the message the disciples preached—that Jesus was the Savior. They became very upset by their teachings. After two disciples, Peter and John, healed a man begging at the temple gate, the church leaders seized them and put them in jail. The next day, Peter and John spoke to the chief priests and elders. Peter and John told them the truth about Jesus. The church leaders agreed that Peter and John did no wrong and decided to let them go.

Peter and John returned to their own people and told them about everything that happened. Then Peter, John, and all the people with them prayed. This is where our lesson today begins. Peter and John proclaimed God's message boldly and prayed boldly too, knowing that God would hear them and answer their prayers.

Like Peter and John, you may face rejection and hardship because you believe in Jesus. There are people who do not love Jesus like you do. But don't run away or hide God's Word inside because of them! Look to Peter and John's example. They were bold in talking about Jesus because God gave them strength and courage. They were bold in praying, and prayed for big things in Jesus' name. In his Word, God tells us to pray boldly. Jesus once said, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you... If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” (Matthew 7:7,11).

That's God's promise! Look what happened when Peter, John, and the believers went to God in prayer! God heard and proved he was listening in ways they could see and hear! God hears us too. Should we face rejection, may we speak the truth like Peter and John. God will always bring about good for us because he promises it: “For we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Who promises to answer our prayers?
- Does God always hear us when we pray?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Describe how God wants us to pray.
- Why will God always hear us when we pray?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Take a moment to think. Share if you have faced rejection for being a Christian.
- Take a moment to think. What would you say to someone who criticized your faith in Jesus?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, help me remember how absolutely big and powerful you are and your promises to be with me. Then, make me pray absolutely big things that reflect and share you to others. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.