

The Apostles Arrested and Freed

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 June 2025

Preacher: Gabriel Wong

[0:00] And good morning, everyone. It's good to be with you. And for those of us new here or following along, we've been preaching through the book of Acts. Acts is about the beginning of the church, the history of the early church, that Jesus died and rose from the dead.

And that's the spark that set fire to the early church. And we see in Acts how this fire spreads until we're here 2,000 years later in Hong Kong worshipping Jesus. And we heard in the last several weeks that the church got off to a strong start.

The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost. Peter preached the first sermon. And 3,000 people believed. We also saw the first healing, where a crippled man in Jesus' name started to walk.

The church was new and exciting. And there were so many great firsts. But then it took a turn. Last week, we heard about the first sin and the first death.

And Ananias and Sapphira, they conspired to lie, and God struck them down, dead, to preserve the integrity of the church. We learn there that God is gracious, and he is also holy.

[1:06] He is jealous for the purity of the church, that we are holy like he is holy. So that's the first sin and the first death. Mainly, I want to turn our attention back to the week before that, to Acts 4, where we see another first.

The first persecution. Peter and John heal a crippled man. There was this man that was handicapped. He couldn't walk for decades. That's amazing, right? But what reward did the apostles get?

Did they get a medal? Did they get a community service award? No. Instead, they faced persecution. Instead, the authorities arrest them, throw them in jail for a night, and drag them to court.

And they warn them, stop talking about Jesus. We know you healed this guy, but you can't talk about Jesus. But do you think Peter and John stopped preaching? Of course not. And they tell them, whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than men, you must judge. But we can't stop speaking of what we heard and seen. And so they meet back up with the friends, and they pray. They pray. It's interesting because they don't pray. They don't pray, God, stop the persecution.

[2:10] They don't pray for that. But instead, they say, Sovereign Lord, give us boldness. Look upon their threats, and give us boldness. And as they prayed for boldness, we heard, The room shook.

That's how God answered their prayers. Boldness against opposition. We see the same thing happen again in Acts 5. The same thing repeats. The apostles are arrested, but God delivers them. And that's what we're going to focus on today. How can we have boldness to proclaim Christ when facing opposition? But you shouldn't care what I have to say unless it's what God has to say.

So let's stand as we read God's word. We're gathered to be devoted to God's word, not mine. So let's stand out of reverence as we read God's word today in Acts 5. I'm going to invite Gabs to read for us.

Acts chapter 5, verses 12 to 42. Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles, and they were all together in Solomon's portico.

[3:10] None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever, believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them.

The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up, and all who were with

him, that is, the party of the Sadducees.

And filled with jealousy, they arrested the apostles and put them into public prison. But during the night, an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.

And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach. Now when the high priest came and those who were with him, they called together the council or the senate of the people of Israel and sent to the prison to have them brought.

But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison. So they returned and reported. We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors. But when we opened them, we found no one inside.

[4:23] Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priest heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to. And someone came and told them, look, the men who you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.

Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council.

And the high priest questioned them, saying, we strictly charge you not to teach in this name.

Yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us. But Peter and the apostles answered, we must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.

God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things. And so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.

When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while.

[5:28] And he said to them, men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. For before these days, Thudias rose up, claiming to be somebody and a number of men, about 400 joined him.

He was killed and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. After him, Judas, the Galilean, rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of those people after him.

He too perished and all who followed him were scattered. So in the present case, I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone. For this plan or this undertaking is of man.

It will fail. But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God. So they took his advice and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go.

Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for his name. And every day in the temple, and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

[6:31] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks. You can take a seat. And let's pray. Lord, we look to you.

You are a God who is powerful, who can't be stopped, who is on our side. We may be chained, but the word of God can't be chained. So speak to us by your spirit. In Jesus' name.

Amen. Okay, so, the lens we'll look through this today is how can we be bold witnesses for Christ when facing opposition? That's our focus.

So two weeks ago, Acts 4 again, we saw the first persecution. And now, as we read in Acts chapter 5, it's déjà vu of that. The same thing almost happens again.

There's persecution again. The apostles are arrested again. And they're freed again. Now, Jesus says, if we're truly followers of him, we'll all face some sort of persecution.

[7:30] The gospel is offensive. Jesus says in John chapter 15, if they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. And we said before, if we're not offensive in some way, we're not going out of a way trying to be mean, but if the gospel is offensive and if we are not being offensive in some way in the way we live or the gospel we preach, if that is palatable to everyone, that should make us consider whether that is really the gospel or just cheap grace.

Now, at the same time, life's actually pretty good in Hong Kong. We're gathered here today freely without any fear of persecution. We're not really scared someone's going to come and arrest us

right now.

I doubt many of us have been arrested because of our faith. And I'm pretty sure that none of us have been killed for our faith. That's not the same experience for Christians in many places around the world or even in the early church in Acts.

But if persecution sounds a bit dramatic for you as a word, if persecution is a bit dramatic, how about the word opposition? As followers of Christ, all of us face opposition. Opposition could be big or small, ranging from severe persecution, being killed for your faith when there's a threat on your life to small things like fear of being awkward, being the odd one out, being rejected, being the weird Christian.

We're probably not being arrested like the apostles today. Maybe some of us will be, but we still need boldness to be witnesses for Christ and facing opposition. I remember early when I was working at my previous job in finance, I needed boldness sometimes when my coworkers, they would just make small talk, easy, simple things, and ask, hey, any plans this weekend?

[9:12] And I'd be like, yeah, I'm going for a hike, I'm going rock climbing, I'll read a book, I'll go to the gym, play guitar. I'm happy telling them all of that stuff. Normal people things, but I'd conveniently skip the fact that I gathered with the church to worship my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, out of fear, to avoid being awkward, to avoid being, just feeling nervous.

I lack boldness. Can you guys relate to that? And so the question we'll address today is how can we be bold witnesses when faced with fear of opposition?

Acts 4, at the end of the chapter, that taught us to pray for boldness. And today in Acts 5, we see a few more ways. We see a few more ways to be bold as God works on behalf of his church.

First, we can be bold by doing what's good. We can be bold to face opposition by carrying with us a clean conscience. We read in Acts 5 that the apostles got arrested again.

But what was the crime that got them arrested? What were they arrested for? They must have done something really bad to be wanted criminals. Let's read from verse 12. It says, Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles.

[10:27] They were doing signs and wonders and because of these signs they gained a reputation. Verse 13 says, The people held them in high esteem. They had a good reputation because they were healing people. The healing of that crippled man in Acts 3 wasn't just a one-off.

They kept performing miracles in Jesus' name and people started taking notice. Verse 15 says, They even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats that as Peter came by at least a shadow might fall on some of them.

People also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits. And they were all healed. The apostles were doing good. They were healing people. And the result in verse 14 is that more than ever believers were added to the Lord. Multitudes of both men and women. The apostles, they were doing what Jesus did. Proclaiming the kingdom of God. Preaching the gospel.

Preaching that Jesus is Lord. And demonstrating that through their actions. And in this case healing people. And as a result people believed. Multitudes believed. And yet we read in verse 17.

[11:28] But the high priest rose up and all who were with him that is the party of the Sadducees they were filled with jealousy and they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. And they were arrested but what was their crime?

Their only crime was making the blind see the deaf hear the lame walk. Their only crime was preaching good news that there's forgiveness of sins and eternal life only in the name of Jesus. The apostles were simply obeying God but the rulers were filled with jealousy.

They were in power and they wanted to keep it. They did the same thing in chapter 4. They're jealous again and so they arrest the apostles again. It's déjà vu. And it's all because the only crime the apostles committed was pointing people to Jesus.

They would not stop talking about him and acting like it. Jesus promised us if they persecute me they will also persecute you. And so we can we know we will face opposition.

But when that happens when persecution comes when people oppose it let it be for doing good not because we're going out of our way and being mean. Let it be for doing good like the apostles.

[12:36] A few decades later the apostle Paul wrote a letter in the book of 1 Peter. In it he says be holy as God is holy. Be holy since God is holy and so that you may have a good conscience.

When people oppose you you may have a good conscience. so that when you're slandered those who revile your good behavior in Jesus Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing evil if that should be God's will than for doing good.

Give people nothing to criticize our lives about except for good conduct. Let our only crime be obeying God and talking about him. That's what Peter did and he wrote later in 1 Peter from experience.

The apostles they had nothing to fear because they knew they were obeying God they were doing what's right. Their only crime was obeying God and they were persecuted for it. Now the question for us is do we have that same boldness also?

Are we bold to preach Christ with a good conscience or are we nervous because of how we live our lives and how we act because of our conduct? Have you ever felt I'm a terrible Christian I'm a bad witness I can't share the gospel right?

[13 : 52] James likes to say I don't want my teaching to outrun my living and sometimes but what happens is when your teaching does outrun your living when the way we act doesn't match up with what we say the result then is we want to stop talking we want to stop preaching right?

You might think I'm such a bad example I can't let people know I'm a Christian let alone tell them about the gospel and I get it right? We don't want to be hypocrites because if you just cussed out your co-worker it's awkward to say hey screw you want to come to church on Sunday?

That doesn't work it's hard to preach the gospel when you know they'll ask if Jesus is so good then why did you cheat on your wife? Why'd you do that? How is he Lord? we spoke last week about having integrity and God showed us in Acts 5 that his people must be holy so absolutely let us not be hypocrites saying one thing and doing another are we held back in our scattering because of the way we live our lives?

But what should we do when we think I'm not good enough to preach the gospel what should we do? Remember the gospel isn't just good news for others but for ourselves as well if you don't feel like you can be Peter remember we've talked about this also remember where Peter started Peter told Jesus I'll never deny you but what happened?

Jesus was arrested and Peter was scared of this little girl he was scared to admit to a little girl a servant girl that he knew Jesus and after denying nine Jesus three times the rooster crowed and Peter wept bitterly because he considered himself an unworthy follower and witness of Christ before Peter was a bold witness he was a witness like that crippled man in Acts chapter 3 someone who was sick but who Jesus healed and we're the same when we follow Christ the spirit transforms us and people will see our lives changed we have new life the spirit of God is in us and he empowers us he changes us to do good so that we can be bold witnesses with a clean conscience let's aim to do good be holy as God is holy that's how we can face opposition with boldness firstly number two when we face opposition we can be bold because we know that God is in control we can face opposition because God is in control again in verse 17 the religious rulers the high priests the Sadducees these guys because they were jealous and they arrested the apostles and put them in prison in verse 19 it says during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life and when they heard this they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach see the rulers arrested the apostles to stop them from preaching but God he sends an angel to bust them out of jail the apostles the rulers trying to stop them but God can't be stopped

[17 : 02] God sends this angel to bring them out of jail and he commands them the thing that they arrested you to do just go and do it again go into the temple go back to the temple and keep preaching the gospel that brings life keep preaching the words of life so the apostles obey and they do it meanwhile those who arrested the apostles went home they probably had no clue what happened they had a good night's sleep they were probably smug about catching these apostles again licking their lips about what to do with them right but the next morning they reconvened to figure out what's going on what to do with them and you know at the gathering we love God's word that's why we stand as a small gesture out of reverence for God's word we have reverence but sometimes the Bible is pretty funny sometimes God's pretty funny and if I made a list I think this passage would be up there on that goofy list of some of the funniest passages in the Bible it doesn't beat John 20 where John slips in hey I'm faster I outran Peter or Acts 20 where Paul preaches a sermon so boring that someone falls out the window and dies he bores someone to death hope that doesn't happen today but this passage is kind of up there on the goofy list right the book of Acts is

accurate history but that doesn't mean it's boring

Luke had some fun with it to show what happens to those who oppose the sovereign God right verse 21 says the ruling council sent to have the apostles brought from prison but when the officers came they did not find them in prison so they returned and reported we found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors but when we opened them we found no one inside now when the captain of the temple and the chief priest heard these words they were greatly perplexed about them wondering what this would come to and someone came to them and said look the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people now as I was reading all this earlier preparing for this I just wish there was some cartoon sound effects because this is it's like a chase scene straight out of Tom and Jerry right it's some Looney Tunes nonsense where Wally Coyote he springs a trap and then he catches the road runner but then you blink and next thing you know the apostles they're like meep meep right in the temple right the rulers they're all smug scheming at their senate meeting what they'll do with the apostles but the apostles they put them on skates the rulers are like what what do you mean the prison's empty where are they who's got eyes on them these are the priests the Sadducees the people who've studied

God's word but they were puzzled they were marveling they're wondering how could this happen does anyone know someone who sets captives free and breaks every chain who could have done this I don't know I'm puzzled and then someone runs in and says hey you know the guys that you arrested and told them not to preach about Jesus and then arrested again because they kept preaching about Jesus well you won't believe it they're preaching about Jesus oh no they're not hiding you know that public place that you're responsible for as the high priest the temple that you're meant to be watching well they're right there out in the open right while you're scheming against them it's all a clown show right these guys they're responsible for the temple but they're oblivious to what's going on they're scratching their heads right while the apostles are right under their noses they're like looking for their sunglasses on top of their heads that's how goofy they are right and that's a clear picture of what happens when people oppose God

God is absolutely and indisputably in control it's not a fair fight between the rulers and the apostles God simply wins there's no contest Psalm 37 says the wicked plot against the righteous but the Lord laughs at the wicked for he sees his day is coming it's not a fair fight you might have seen after service the kids like to run around and play on the bean bags like to play and wrestle and I like to play around with them but it's not a fight right if Sam seriously thought he could pin me down he could wrestle me to the ground I had to laugh it's not a fight it's no contest we're just playing when we follow Christ we will face opposition but we can have confidence knowing that God is sovereign he always wins we sang earlier who can stop the Lord Almighty who can oppose him who can stop the Lord Almighty that's what we mean when we say that God is sovereign nobody can stop our God he's in control over everything every situation every detail of your life even in opposition he's in control and no one can stop him what would it change for us to know that God's in control he's in control and watching over and guiding us in our life and he cares for us that even when we face opposition no one can stop him it's the same idea if we read on to verse 28 the rulers grab the apostles from the temple and they say we strictly charge you not to teach in this name yet here you have filled

Jerusalem with your teaching and I wish I could say we have filled Hong Kong with teaching but then the apostles reply we must obey God rather than men we must obey God rather than men rather than you guys it's easy to say we follow Jesus when we don't have any skin in the game but the real test is what will we do when we face opposition and obeying God will cost us are there areas in our life where you need to obey God rather than men or do we need to obey God rather than our hearts our own hearts our fears our insecurities our comforts rather than the fear rather than obey God rather than trying to fit in or feeling comfortable and more specifically here God commanded the apostles to go preach the gospel that's what they're meant to obey that's what it says in verse 20 the angels free them and told them to go into the temple and preach we don't get arrested on a daily basis like the apostles but the most common opposition we face today perhaps is fear and rejection we think to ourselves oh that person is probably not interested in God they're not interested in the gospel they don't care about God they're maybe hostile to God so they'll laugh at me they'll be hostile to me they'll reject me how does it change to know that we serve an unstoppable God who breaks every chain and sets the captives free that they might reject us but God won't stop to chase down all his lost sheep he knows his sheep and they hear his voice he's in

control over our hearts over their hearts and the spirit of God is with us as witnesses that's what it says in verse 34 verse 32 it may be impossible on our own to change hearts but we're not on our own

[23:54] God himself goes before us the spirit of God is witnesses along with us and so we must obey God speak the message of life rather than obeying our fears our insecurities and our small view of God is there someone that you think that person will never believe in God that person's too far gone right that person will definitely say no could be a friend a grumpy relative a world leader perhaps remember God God is unstoppable even if we don't obey him these rocks will cry out he's a God that is in control in control over every heart what's God calling to do is there someone that you think it's the least likely for them to believe in God wouldn't you want to see God work wouldn't you want to see God change that least likely person's heart because God's able to do it is there someone on your heart let's carry on so the apostles they must obey God because the gospel is good news and that good news must be shared and again the gospel is simple we've been saying that in the last few weeks there's two parts to it sin and savior and we see the same thing again in verse 30 the apostles say you sinned by crucifying Jesus on the cross but God raised him from the dead and exalted him to glory and power at his right hand as leader and savior right the gospel is that we've all sinned and deserve death but Jesus is our savior who died and rose that God exalted so that we may be forgiven of our sins and given new life that's the gospel and then in verse 33 when the rulers heard this they were enraged and wanted to kill the apostles and I said before the gospel is offensive it was offensive here to the point that the rulers want to kill them but God is in control yet again he reigns

God uses a Pharisee a guy named Gamaliel to argue for their release and this Pharisee Gamaliel he says his argument goes like this let's be careful let's wait and see let's wait and see what happens because this isn't the first time a cult sprang up this isn't the first time someone started a movement it happened twice right there's a guy named Thutis he got 400 followers but then he died and that was the end of that there was another guy Judas the Galilean he had a following but then he died and that was the end of that that all fell apart and then Gamaliel says in verse 38 keep away from these men and let them alone for if this plan or this undertaking is of man it will fail but if it is of God you will not be able to overthrow them you might even be found opposing God Gamaliel he's saying the founder of all these movements they died and that was the end of that that's how it ends let's see if this movement this thing also fizzles out

Gamaliel didn't believe in Jesus yet he still knew you can't oppose God he knew he only saw the beginning of this movement yet he knew that if this undertaking is of God it will surely secede and if even Gamaliel believed that how much more should we have conviction that our God can't be stopped that our God will win he will finish the good work he started he will make sure every knee will bow at the name of Jesus because unlike Gamaliel we know the rest of the story those two other movements fizzled out but when Jesus died that was not the end remember when people oppose us we're not the only ones who were persecuted they arrested the apostles and they arrested Jesus too the rulers they tried opposing God by killing Jesus but God put them to shame triumphing over them by the blood of his cross they killed Jesus but God raised him from the dead and exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior and now in the year 2025 we can look back on 2000 years of history showing that God was faithful to his church

Jesus said on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it he was faithful then and he will be faithful now and I love how me he and the team led us in worship singing I sought the Lord and he heard and he answered I sought the Lord and he heard and he answered can we think of times when we were in trouble when we sought God he heard and he answered when we were far from him when we were in in trouble when we were feeling depressed when we were anxious about our jobs when we were anxious about relationships and I sought the Lord and he heard and he answered he answered those situations and he drew me to him and I love how me he led us to sing I will again I sought him in the past and now I will again seek the Lord and I believe that he will answer again I sought him before and I will seek him again because he was faithful then he will be faithful now that's what I believe

God is in control he can't be stopped and that gives us boldness to face opposition and lastly we see here also in this passage that we can be bold against opposition when we rejoice in Christ when we love Christ and rejoice in Christ and rejoice in suffering with Christ that gives us boldness to face opposition let's read on so Gamaliel he made his argument he said we can't oppose God

everyone believes him verse 39 says he convinced them all they took his advice they accepted his argument and they followed Gamaliel's advice right so great God can't be stopped so that means the apostles are off the hook right God's in control and the apostles are going to get away scot free right but no we read in verse 40 and when they had called in the apostles they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go they beat the apostles that means they likely flogged them 39 times with the whip they beat them right and I find this so strange because Gamaliel he sounded like a pretty reasonable guy he was saying pretty reasonable things presenting a pretty rational argument but up until now it was so far so good but what happens next makes no sense right there's no logic in saying we can't oppose God but let's let's just beat these guys up anyway right it goes to show it wasn't Gamaliel that saved them it was all God and yet God allowed them to suffer there's something else that's strange verse 41 says that then the apostles left the presence of the council after they were beat they left rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name after they were beat up they left rejoicing that they were counted worthy right if you got punched in the face you got kicked in the shin how many of you would just throw a party after that well that's what the apostles did they were beaten black and blue but they didn't complain they didn't strike back rather they rejoiced this is weird they rejoiced not because they're beating up no one likes that no one likes to get hit they rejoiced because it says they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name they were counted worthy and they rejoiced because they suffered for Christ they suffered for him and yet remained faithful and again [31:32] Peter the apostle who was beat up here he writes later in 1st Peter chapter 4 he writes saying rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed if you are insulted for the name of Christ you are blessed because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you Peter is saying rejoice when you suffer when you face opposition because that's because when we suffer and endure that shows that we are united with Christ that we really are followers of Christ and that the spirit the holy spirit is within us and is there anything better than that to know that we're in Christ and to have the spirit of God in us the holy God that Moses was scared to approach in the burning bush he lives in us what's better than that James reminded us previously that when we scatter we serve let's not do it out of the goodness of our hearts let's not do it because we want to do something good for God serve out of the goodness of our hearts and he says let's scatter instead because we love Jesus that's the most important thing to love Jesus and want him more than anything and in the same way we can try all we want to be bold but we can't have boldness to obey just by trusting in God's sovereignty and trust in trying to be holy and doing good we have boldness when we have this surpassing love for Christ when we think to live is Christ and to die is gain that's what the apostles had that's what gives them boldness when they rejoice in suffering to be bold to obey even when facing opposition to be bold when we love

Jesus and our hearts want nothing more than to be found in him to be united with him to be identified with him even suffer for him now it might seem like a tall task for us to suffer for Christ maybe you think we're not there yet I don't even know if people were arresting me maybe I tap out if they beat me I might just yeah I don't think I could do it and I definitely couldn't rejoice in someone doing that maybe rejoicing in suffering that seems like a stretch but if we can't rejoice in suffering maybe as a first step if we can't rejoice in suffering with Christ how about let's try to rejoice in being seen with Christ if we can't rejoice in suffering with him let's rejoice in being seen with him being identified with him let's be proud of being followers of Christ I was talking to some people recently about sharing the gospel at work or at school sometimes it's hard because everyone's busy working and you can't really at your all staff meeting in the morning start reading from Acts or reading just preaching the gospel that's not quite the environment and sometimes it's weird to talk about religion at work there's a cultural stigma against it because no one does that we're meant to be professionals and I get that

I've been there where I want to share the gospel at work but I don't quite know how there's no it seems to be no opportunity I don't know how to make it natural but while we can't share the full gospel with everyone at our staff meeting with everyone we meet we can at least take every opportunity we can to be seen with Christ to identify with him to rejoice at being seen with Christ to share that we're Christians and we're proud of it it's not something that we're ashamed of that we're shoving in the corner but I am proud to be a follower of Christ and those opportunities come up pretty naturally I said earlier what did you do this weekend you can say a list of other things but how

about yeah I went to church and I worshipped to worship Jesus and that's actually a highlight of my week I love my brothers and sisters and I love worshipping my God if Jesus is Lord if he's so important we can be proud to be seen with him to be identified with him and not to do it nervously but to say it with a smile make it clear that he is Lord not someone we're ashamed of before rejoicing in suffering with Christ let us rejoice in being seen with Christ even where we can't share the gospel in depth you can show in your life you can show by the things you talk about that Jesus is everything that he is your joy that he is your treasure and that he is a God worth following and the more our lives are centered around him the more naturally we have opportunities to talk about him for example

I love my wife and my life is so intertwined with hers so when I'm talking when we're in conversation even now it just comes up naturally it doesn't take you long for you guys to know that I'm married because she's a big part of my life and I'll just talk about her naturally and so it is with Christ the more we love him the more our lives revolve around him the more we find opportunities to share about him the more we rejoice in being seen with Christ the more that we are we love Christ the more opportunities there will be to share about him and perhaps even rejoice to suffer for him let's be proud to identify with Jesus rejoice to be seen with him rejoice to suffer for him and we'll finish off by reading verse 42 it says this and every day in the temple and from house to house they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus they didn't cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus now as I was reading this to prepare by the time I got to verse 42

I was thinking man Luke almost didn't need to write this verse he almost didn't need to write this verse because it's so obvious it's so obvious what they were going to do right the apostles they arrested for healing the sick and preaching the gospel the authorities arrested them for doing what's good but God couldn't be stopped God's in control God busted them out of jail and told them keep preaching the gospel and the apostles say we must obey God rather than men we must keep preaching and they're almost killed for that but God saves them again they're not killed but they're beaten up instead they're beaten half to death but rather than complaining about it they rejoice they rejoice that they were worthy to suffer for Christ that they're worthy to be seen with him and suffer for him right and after all that after all that what do you think the apostles did that they go home and hide of course not of course they get preaching of course every day everywhere in homes and in the temples they did not cease teaching and preaching that Jesus is the Christ of course they did [38:27] God can't be stopped and neither can these guys they won't stop preaching the gospel and may that be true for us may it be true for us as well that when we rejoice in Christ when he is our treasure and when we trust that God's in control that he can't be stopped and he is on our side when we have a clean conscience knowing that we're obeying God we're doing what's right right that's when we'll be bold witnesses that's when we'll be bold to obey God despite opposition and persecution let it be true for us that when people look at our lives when they really get to know us they'll say man of course this guy of course they're preaching Christ of course he won't stop of course he won't stop may that be true for us let's pray God you are worthy you are God above everything who can stop the Lord Almighty no one no one could stop you when they killed Jesus and put him to death on the cross you raised him from the dead and exalted him above every name and every knee will bow to him

God we pray for boldness just like the church prayed in Acts chapter 4 we pray for boldness we pray for conviction that people need to hear about your son that they have to know that you are God you are holy you are gracious to us and you give us life in Jesus name Lord make us holy as you are holy and give us boldness help us to trust that I sought the Lord he heard he answered and he will answer again you are sovereign over all you will answer me and you are able you are able to make your gospel reach the ends of the earth and give us joy in you give us joy Lord we want Christ to be our treasure we want to sell everything that we have and follow you to have that heart that is willing to do that would you be the treasure hidden in the field and so make us bold help us to rejoice in being seen with you make us proud we are Christian that I am a follower of Christ that is my identity

I am a child of God let us be proud to share that with everyone around us pray all this in Jesus name amen church do we believe that that he is the lion and the lamb he is the lion with power the lion of Judah the lion of David this king that will reign who can't be stopped who will tear apart every enemy in his path that's the God we serve that's the that's Jesus the Lord we serve but at the same time the lamb that was slain who humbled himself becoming obedient even to the point of death

even death on the cross so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God our Father that's the Lord we serve the lion and the lamb the unstoppable God who can stop the Lord Almighty do we believe that do we believe that if so let's go out with boldness let's go out with boldness looking to him seeking him knowing that his spirit is with us his spirit lives in us and he can't be stopped he wants us to go and be lights to be burning bushes as we scatter as we go off into our weeks and it's not our mission it's God's mission as much as we want our friends and family we want them to know Jesus so much more how much more does the Father who sent his Son to die for the sins of the world how much more does he want his Son to be lifted up and glorified among every tribe nation and tongue and he will get the glory every knee will bow every tongue will confess that is what we sang that is what we believe so let's live like that let's live with that boldness and confidence and be bold witnesses of Christ that takes us through to the end of Acts for now where I know we stopped at Acts chapter 5 for today we'll be taking a break this summer we're going to take a pause we'll be back into the fall in Acts but for the next several weeks in the summer we'll be going through a series on some big questions on apologetics

Tim Keller likes to say before we answer the what we can tell people the what what should they believe apologetics answers why why should they believe why should they believe I need to believe that Jesus is Lord why should I believe that why is that relevant and that's what Johnny will take us through next week why is God relevant why is God relevant what's so good about Jesus and there'll be other questions like that throughout the summer after that James he'll talk us about to us about why should I believe the Bible why should I trust God's word we also mentioned interest groups earlier various interest groups one of them I'm leading will be further discussion on apologetics if you have any questions questions about the faith hey I want to share the gospel but I you know I'm scared they'll ask me a question and I won't know how to answer them and maybe I don't even know if I believe all this myself right how can we have this confidence to be bold witnesses of Christ let's be equipped in our minds also to be ready to have a reason to make a defense of what we believe to give a defense of the hope that we have with gentleness and respect so if you're interested in that the next session the first session we'll have is next Sunday after the service after lunch at 2pm over here and we'll be we'll be asking about what why should I trust the text of the Bible where does the Bible come from

I believe it's God's word but where do these words actually come from so we'll answer that question and more throughout the summer and if you have any other questions let me know too but point is let's be equipped to be bold witnesses of Christ right we trust we serve a God that can't be stopped so let's live like that church thank you thank you