**Acts 4:13-17 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. 14And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16saying, “What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them *is* evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny *it.* 17But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name.”**

There’s a poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox that speaks to the way that we, through our individual relationship with God, find God and His work for us. In part, the poem says: One ship sails East, And another West, By the self-same winds that blow, 'Tis the set of the sails And not the gales, That tells the way we go. Like the winds of the sea Are the waves of time, As we journey along through life, 'Tis the set of the soul, That determines the goal, And not the calm or the strife. **Tis set of the soul and not our situation that determines where we’re going.**

We’re back in Acts this morning. The apostles have received the Holy Spirit. Pentecost has occurred. The church has been born. Thousands have believed and been saved. Peter and John have healed a lame man and more people have believed. There’s 5000 men, not including women and children. Peter and John are arrested for speaking of the resurrection of Jesus and held in custody. This is where we join them this morning, as they are brought before the Sanhedrin, the high court of the Jews with many of the same men who sought to condemn Jesus, as Peter speaks boldly in His Name, empowered by the Holy Spirit. There were Pharisees present as well as Sadducees. Men educated in the Law. Peter didn’t worry about what he would say. He spoke what the Holy Spirit laid on his heart – just as Jesus said in Matthew 10:18-20 *You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.*

In today’s world, we mustn’t worry about what we need to say. We seek the Holy Spirit and allow Him to speak through us. When we speak from the Spirit, our words are filled with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This is how we are to be speaking and not with the voice of this world.

Verse 13 - *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.* The sweetest words any Christian can ever hear – they realized that he had been, she had been with Jesus. They realized - No one had to advertise. Peter didn’t have a shirt that said, “I’ve been with Jesus.” His words were a reflection of the Savior. More important than the t-shirt or the bumper sticker or the fish symbol or the necklace with a cross or the statue of Jesus in our office, people must realize that we too have been with Jesus! In all we do, are we reflecting the Savior? If the world comes to a place where Christian’s are being arrested, is there enough evidence to bring them to my door? We have been with Jesus – does it show?

Verses 14-16 *And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, “What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.* Don’t let this be lost on us - the ones sitting in judgement of Peter and John are not worried about justice or truth. They saw this man who’d been healed miraculously! Even they did not deny the miracle, but they sought how they might condemn. When Jesus was on trial, the false accusers could not agree in Matthew 26, Pilate found no fault in Jesus in Luke 23. Truth is not the problem. Seeing past self-interest is the problem.

And so we must be prepared today, even as we live for Christ and speak as the Holy Spirit directs, please know it will fall on the ears of many not interested in Truth, but invested in the evil. John 3:19 - *And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* Our only valid response to darkness is what Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*. If Peter, through the Holy Spirit, healed a lame man of over 40 years old and is still condemned, we can all rest assured that no matter the good we do we too will be condemned.

Verse 17 *But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name.* Peter and John are threatened not to share their faith. Later they’ll be imprisoned and beaten. Satan, through his followers, seeks to scare, threaten, intimidate, discourage and ultimately silence the Truth of Jesus. It was true in the courtroom all those years ago and it’s true on Social Media, in public places, and in private conversations today. If Satan cannot shut you up, he’ll seek to wear you down. He’ll bait you and hope you’ll lose your witness in anger.

Our strongest weapon today is the same one used in Acts 4:24 – Prayer for one another. Listen to verse 31: *And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.* The same God available to them 2000 years ago is available to us today. The same God that shook their room can shake this world. But we must believe and be bold.

Today, if you have not placed your faith in Jesus – who still heals and still changes lives, do it today. 'Tis the set of the sails And not the gales, That tells the way we go. Like the winds of the sea, Are the waves of time, As we journey along through life, 'Tis the set of the soul, That determines the goal, And not the calm or the strife. What is the set of your soul today?