**Acts 4:24-31 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: “Lord, You *are* God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: ‘Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.’ 27“For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. 29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.”31And 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.**

Last week, we had a beautiful Baptism. We had another beautiful soul join our church. Last week, we left our series on prayer, but we’re coming back this week. So far, we’ve learned a few things that I hope we’re applying to our prayer life. From Jabez, we learned to pray from a place of humility, pray from a place of faith, and pray from a place of understanding. Then we visited David as he stopped atop the Mount of Olives and we listened in as he prayed a prayer of deliverance. We watched as David prayed his current perception of his situation, recounted God’s past protection, and believed in God’s future provision. Great prayers require great clarity.

Today, we’re looking at a prayer for boldness in Acts 4. A prayer for boldness. Too many times we pray timid prayers, hesitant prayers, self-focused prayers. Such prayers are not world shaking, Spirit changing, Kingdom honoring prayers. God is looking for Kingdom honoring prayers.

This scripture reminds us of three things: we must be clear on who God is, who we are in Him, and what we are asking of Him. We must boldly proclaim who God is; boldly proclaim who we are in Him; believe boldly He will grant our requests. God is already clear on who He is, who we are in Him, and our Kingdom purpose. Our prayer is for our clarity, not His.

A little background on this scripture. Peter and John were arrested for preaching Jesus. People are believing and the Sadducees are upset! Peter and John are taken into the Sanhedrin – the supreme court of the Jews – Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, testifies of Jesus. Peter and John are threatened and forbidden to speak the name of Jesus in public. Sounds a little like some of you today – threatened and told not to speak of Jesus – someone may be offended – someone may cry and whine – Listen to Peter and John’s response Acts 4:19-20 – *“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”* They’re threatened again, released, and make a beeline for their brothers and sister in Christ, to tell them of these things. What was their first reaction? Prayer.

I ask you this morning – when the world aligns against you, when you are being threatened, when something good you did in the name of Jesus has been turned against you and you are being persecuted for it – is your first action prayer? Is it your first defense or your last resort? For Peter and John, the first defense is prayer.

Let’s go back in time and join them this morning, as they start their prayer by Boldly proclaiming who God is. Look at verse 24 - *So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: “Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them.* God needs no reminder who He is. We need constant reminder of who God is. How often do we remind ourselves who God is? He made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in all three. No life was made that He didn’t make – John 1:3 *All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.* In time of Bold Prayer, we must remind ourselves, get deadly clear, on the God we are speaking to. We’re not speaking to the universe… the universe is created. We are speaking to God – Creator! Bold and effective prayer starts with clarity of who God is. You are God! You made everything! You are to be praised! Bold prayer starts by boldly proclaiming who God is.

They continue this with verses 26 & 27 *The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.’ “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together.* They boldly proclaim Christ and who Jesus is - Your Anointed, Your Holy Servant, Your Christ. My Jesus. They recall how the world aligned against Him, crucified Him… because God needed reminding? No – because we need constant reminding of the God we serve and the Savior that rose for us. How often do we remind ourselves of His Sacrifice, His Love?

Verse 28 *to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.* God purposed and determined the crucifixion for our salvation.

So they’ve boldly proclaimed who God is. Now they boldly proclaim who they are in Him. Verse 29 *Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word.* Notice the words Your servants. God – Master, King, Exalted – we are servants. Does God need to be reminded of this? No. We must boldly proclaim we are His servants. Sadly, this is often where prayer goes off the rails. We fail to realize how loved we are, how God values us, how our communion with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is cherished! We get the idea that we’re the inconvenient child and God just sort of puts up with us because we believed in Jesus. That’s not true! Boldly recall who you are! We are sons and daughters of the Most High. We are cherished and beloved. He is the good Father and wants to introduce good into our lives. We have a purpose and God will act on that purpose. But we must believe it boldly!

We’ve proclaimed God Boldly, proclaimed who we are in Christ Boldly – now we will proclaim our requests boldly. Verses 29-30 *Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.”* Sadly, most Christian prayer fails miserably here. Listen to the petition – ***Make us bold witnesses of Your Son, proclaimers of Your Word.*** Kingdom purpose boldly petitioned. In our prayers, is Kingdom purpose boldly petitioned? God heal me so I might proclaim Your glory! Strengthen me so I might serve Your people! Or do we sound more like we’re warming up for a choir recital? Me, Me, Me, Me, Me. Boldly seek God’s Kingdom purpose in life. Nothing else has eternal meaning. God look on their threats and give us Boldness!

This week, let’s take another look at our prayers. How are we doing? Is there bold belief in who God is? Is there bold belief in who we are in God? Is there a bold petition for Kingdom purpose and impact? God is infinitely clear on who He is, who we are in Him, and what our purpose is for His Kingdom? It’s us who need the clarity. Take this template and use it in prayer this week. Is prayer more like a meeting with the Father around a loving table or more like a long distance telephone call, or worse yet a text message, to a distant King? How we picture God determines how we serve God. Bold prayer begins in Bold belief. How bold are we today? How might our lives be shaken when we pray bold prayers?