

## Acts of Jesus – part 12

--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.**

1. We are involved in something that is way over our heads:

--Notice: They went straight back to the Church and had a prayer meeting.

--May seem like a likely response: -Opposed by the ruling class of the Jews, the same ones who manipulated Pilate into putting Jesus to death.

--It was clear that they were in over their heads.

But when are we not in 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 pitted 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 handle the situation.

--Among the hardest things it seems for church people to do these days is **admitting**

**inability.**

--We're educated, wealthy/ healthy/ people of influence/ we have things together (or so we think).

--"Blessed are the poor in spirit" never the strong in spirit.

--The worst church that Jesus wrote to in Revelation was the church at Laodicea; listen to their condition. **Rev. 3:16-17**(aren't these things what we are striving for?)

--The only chance we have of being different than this church is to admit our inability and absolute dependence on Him.

Dr. D. A. Dixon: "When we rely on **organization**, we get what organization can do; when we rely on **education**, we get what education can do; when we rely on **eloquence**, we get what eloquence can do. **But when we rely on prayer, we get what God can do.**"

Religion can be the enemy of God. "Religion, quite often, is what happens when God, like Elvis, has left the building."

--A list of instructions where there was once conviction; dogma where once people just did what God said to do.

--A congregation led by a men where once they were led by the Holy Spirit.

--Discipline replacing discipleship.

--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.

<<**We're in something way over our heads and of cosmic proportions**>>

**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**

--You could say many things about our church: friendly, helpful, preaches and teaches the Bible.

--But the critical thing and the most important thing that any one could say about any church is that God is there working in us and through us.

--We can't transform lives

--We can't convict people

--We have no power in ourselves

--We put our total trust in Him