

Courage

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“ 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.”
(Acts 4:31)

Perhaps one of the greatest tests of Christian character lies in how we handle hardship, challenges, and, even, persecution. When time and circumstances apply such tremendous pressure, will we be refined by the trial or crushed under the burdens of life?

The church in its infancy offers an example for us to follow even still today. In the midst of uncertainty, intense criticism, and threats, Peter and John stood before the religious leaders of their day. They were determined to be obedient to the Great Commission rather than the warnings of an unbelieving world. That boldness galvanized the other early followers of Jesus in the church.

Far too often, we treat prayer as a last resort taken only when every human effort has failed. That wasn't the frame of mind for these early Christians. They immediately turned to the Lord and acknowledged that resistance to the Gospel is normal and persecution for Jesus' sake is to be expected. They trusted in the sovereignty of the Lord, who's perfect plan can never be thwarted. These early Christians didn't pray for security, provision, blessing, favor, or protection. Their request was simply for courage — for the boldness to remain obedient in spite of whatever pressures they might face. They put their “yes” on the table as God's servants, so let's do the same today.

