

## Introduction

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As Pastor Bryan took us deeper into chapter 4 of Acts this week, a sobering reality has set in: following Jesus requires counting the cost of persecution. What was true of those early believers only 60 days removed from the resurrection is also true of us 2000 years later—we don't battle alone!

We hope your Life Group experience provides a foundation of scripture and connection that gives you the courage to face challenges to your faith these days. If you have time, try to work through these questions on your own before meeting with your group.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. What signs of Spring have you seen around you this week? (birds, flowers, decorations in store windows, etc.)
  
2. Name 3 things you are grateful for today.

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
    - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
    - b. For openness to what you're learning together
    - c. For friendships to deepen and grow
  - 2) Invite someone to read the passage in the group.
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## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) What attitudes or actions have you experienced that made you feel persecuted for following Jesus?
- 2) Put yourselves in the sandals of Peter and John who had witnessed the unfair betrayal, brutal beating, and shameful death of Jesus only 2 months before this. **What might they have been thinking that night in jail?**

What gave Peter and John the courage it took for them to speak up against the same religious leaders that crucified Jesus?

- 3) In vs 12, Peter takes a stand for Jesus by declaring that He is the only way of salvation. Read Luke 21:12-15 and 1 Peter 4:12-19. **What kind of response should we expect from an unbelieving world when they see us take a stand for Jesus Christ?**

Why is it so important for us to take a stand like this today?

- 4) According to verse 13, what amazed the religious leaders and why did that have such an impact on them?

What can you learn from that verse about God's ability to use you to accomplish His purpose?

When was the last time someone could have noticed from your words or actions that you "had been with Jesus"?

- 5) In vs 19-20, we see Peter and John engaging in civil disobedience when they choose to continue to speak in the name of Jesus. The principle of civil disobedience and taking a stand for Jesus that we see here is specifically about *speaking about Jesus*. **Do you think this principle extends beyond speaking about Jesus? Why or why not?**

Notice how Peter and John are very respectful in their disobedience. They are not angry, defensive, or trying to maintain a sense of control. They also pray, placing their hope and trust in the One they believed to be in control (vs 24-30). **What principles do you learn from this about how you can respond when taking a stand for Jesus?**

If you would like to learn more about opportunities to witness or participate in God's kingdom in Lincoln and around the world, contact [outreach@lincolnberean.org](mailto:outreach@lincolnberean.org) or checkout this Facebook Group: [www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnbereanlocal](http://www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnbereanlocal)

### Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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*Your leader will decide how best to direct this for your group, but here's a suggestion:*

Peter concludes his speech in Acts 4 with a powerful prayer that has 3 clear points:

- He acknowledges the power and character of the LORD,
- humbly asks for confidence instead of deliverance,
- and relinquishes the outcome to the continuing work of Jesus.

Read verse 31 together again and notice the result. While we may never encounter an earthquake when we pray, we can be sure that the Holy Spirit is present and gives boldness through a praying life.

Use Peter's prayer as a pattern for your prayer time this week. Perhaps only 1 or 2 of you will pray aloud— but maybe ALL of you will become more daring!

When you finish, take a few minutes to reflect on what the Holy Spirit showed you during prayer.