

TEXT: Acts 4:5-12

THEME: "The Courage to Speak"

I. THE COURAGE TO SPEAK OF YOUR FAITH IS GIVEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Acts 4:8-10

[8] Then Peter, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! [9] If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, [10] then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

The Holy Spirit moves within the believer's psyche

- a. to prompt you to speak...
- b. to equip you to speak...

Luke 12:11-12 (NIV)

[11] "When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, [12] for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say."

The will either goes with the Spirit

or resists the Spirit at this point

The inhibitor is fear...

2 Timothy 1:7-8

[7] For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. [8] So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord...

We must always remember that the effectiveness of our speaking of our faith is the Holy Spirit's business.

II. THE COURAGE TO SPEAK OF YOUR FAITH IS BORN OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Acts 4:5-7 (NIV)

[5] The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. [6] Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family. [7] They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

What happens is that you find yourself in a circumstance where you are asked a question, where you feel compelled to say something, where you have an opportunity to speak of faith, where you create an opportunity to speak of faith.

III. THE COURAGE TO SPEAK OF YOUR FAITH CREATES THE CHANCE FOR SOMEONE TO HEAR THE GOSPEL

Critical Q = Does someone want to listen...

Scriptural Guidelines

1 Peter 3:15

[15] But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...

Ephesians 4:15

[15] Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ.