

**Union United Methodist Church**

Sermon Outline: **The Acts of the Holy Spirit, Part 2: Enabling Bold Witness**

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Pastor Michael Larbi

Readings: **Acts 4:1-12; Matthew 10:24-33**

1. **Recall - Our Commission: GO, PREACH, APPLY**

○ **Jesus's Example of Ministry & Our Commission**

**"Jesus went** through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, **proclaiming the good news** of the kingdom and **healing every disease and sickness.**" Matthew 9:35 NIV

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.<sup>19</sup>Therefore **go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."  
Matthew 28:18-20 NIV

"Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and **gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.**"  
Matthew 10:1 NIV

Like Jesus, we are to

- **GO** where the need is
- **PREACH/PROCLAIM** the gospel under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit
- **APPLY/ EXERCISE** the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit

○ **The Role of Compassion**

**36When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.**

**37Then he said** to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. **38Ask the Lord** of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Matthew 9:36-38 NIV

John 4:35 Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, **open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.**

## 2. Some Challenges of Being Witnesses for Christ

### ○ Persecution

- Reason - the god of this world (the devil) is working blinding people.

**“If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”** 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 NRSV

In explaining the parable of the Sower, Jesus also said:

“Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy.<sup>17</sup> But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When **trouble or persecution comes because of the word**, they quickly fall away.” Mark 4:16-17 NRSV

- Mild forms: Name calling.

“The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master... If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!” Matthew 10:24-25 NIV

- Physical forms: e.g., Peter & John

“While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, **2much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead. 3So they arrested them and put them in custody** until the next day, for it was already evening.”

Acts 4:1-3 NRSV

### ○ Fear

**“So do not be afraid of them**, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.<sup>27</sup> What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.<sup>28</sup>**Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.**” Matthew 10:26, 28 NIV

### 3. Successful Witness: Boldness Through the Power of the Holy Spirit

- **Success In Spite of Persecution**

“So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. **4But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.**” Acts 4:3-4NIV

- **Fearless Preaching of the Gospel - God’s got your back!**

**“So do not be afraid of them,** for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.**27What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.** 28Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. **29Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. 30And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.31So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.**

32 “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven.33But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.”

Matthew 10:25-33 NIV

- **Be Filled with the Holy Spirit - Boldness comes from Him**

5The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 7They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: “By what power or what name did you do this?”

**8Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them ...”** Acts 4:5-8

**“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus.”** Acts 4:13 NRSV

*Remember, from Isaiah 11 that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of might, wisdom, knowledge, counsel ...*

○ **Preach the Essential Message of the Gospel**

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: Rulers and elders of the people! 9If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, 10then 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.**

11Jesus is

" 'the stone you builders rejected,  
which has become the cornerstone.'

**12Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."**

Acts 4:8-12 NIV

This is our essential message:

- **Salvation is found in one else but Jesus the Christ**

Jesus said: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6 NIV

- **Jesus came and was crucified to redeem us** from the clutches of sin, guilt, to destroy the works of the devil, and to give us eternal life.
- **In the name of Jesus, we have power to overcome** sin, sickness, and all the works of the devil in this life.

St. Paul puts it this way:

**"Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom,  
23but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and  
foolishness to Gentiles, 24but to those whom God has called, both Jews  
and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."**

*It is only in preaching this essential message of the gospel, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and emboldened by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can see lives won for Christ and transformed in His mighty name. Nothing else will achieve the same result.*