

Acts 4: What They Didn't Pray

Acts 4:23-31 (with Psalm 2 and Luke 23:6-12) · For posting on YouTube & Facebook. Use the overview for the description; add the prompt and links wherever they fit.

VIDEO OVERVIEW (post-ready)

Peter and John walk out of custody under orders never to speak in Jesus' name again, and they go straight back to the church and pray. Verse 24: "Sovereign Lord." Then they quote Psalm 2, "the kings of the earth set themselves... against the Lord and against his Anointed," and they say it happened right here in Jerusalem. Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the peoples of Israel gathered against Jesus **"to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place."** Now look at what they ask for. Not "make it stop." Not "keep us safe." Verse 29: "Look upon their threats, and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word **with all boldness.**" If God was running things at the cross, he's running this council too. They didn't ask him to take the threat away. They asked him to keep the name of Jesus going out. And verse 31 tells you what God did with that prayer.

GO DEEPER, STUDY PROMPT FOR VIEWERS

Read **Psalm 2** out loud, then read **Acts 4:24-30**. Mark every line of the psalm the church applies to what happened to Jesus, and every line they apply to themselves. Then read **Luke 23:6-12** and notice who became friends that day.

KEY PASSAGES REFERENCED

Elsewhere in Acts: **Acts 2:23** (God's definite plan and "lawless men" in one sentence) · **Acts 4:31** (the answer: filled with the Spirit, speaking boldly) · **Acts 28:31** (the book ends "with all boldness and without hindrance")

Luke's Gospel: **Luke 23:6-12** (Herod and Pilate become friends that very day) · **Luke 2:29** (Simeon's "Sovereign Lord") · **Luke 4:18** ("the Spirit of the Lord... has anointed me")

Rest of Scripture: **Psalm 2:1-12** (the nations rage, God laughs, the Son reigns) · **Isaiah 37:16-20** (Hezekiah spreads the threats before the Lord) · **Genesis 50:20** ("you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good")

RESOURCES & FURTHER READING

A Prayer That Brought the Holy Spirit Down

John Piper · Desiring God (sermon)

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/a-prayer-that-brought-the-holy-spirit-down>

Piper on Acts 4:23-31: praying Psalm 2, God's rule over the evil done to Jesus, and asking for boldness.

The Great Conspiracy

Tabletalk devotional · Ligonier Ministries

<https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/the-great-conspiracy>

A short devotional on Acts 4:23-37: the rulers' plot carried out God's plan.