

Sermon Handout

Why Did the Heathen Rage? Acts 4:23-33

- I. The Prayer of the Church** vv. 23-30
- a. Peter & John return “to their own company” v. 23a
 - i. Possibly the 8,000 (2:41; 4:4; *see* v. 32)
 - ii. Possibly the 12, perhaps with the 120 (1:15)
 - b. Reported all that had been done before the Sanhedrin v. 23b
Including the threats of the Sanhedrin against them.
 - c. United prayer v. 24
 - i. “with one accord” *literally* “of one mind”
 - ii. “to God” addressing him as “Master”
 - iii. “who made heaven & earth,” etc. *cf.* 7:48-50; Isa 66:1-2
 - d. The basis of the prayer vv. 25-28
 - i. The quote from Ps 2:1-2 vv. 25-26
 - ii. David is the “mouthpiece” of the Holy Ghost v. 25
 - iii. The “Lord’s anointed” (Ps 2:2) is Jesus v. 27
 - iv. The perpetrators v. 27
 - 1. Herod, Pilate, Annas, Caiaphas “kings & rulers”
 - 2. The Gentiles (Roman leaders & soldiers) “heathen”
 - 3. Peoples of Israel (led by the Sanhedrin) “peoples”
 - v. To fulfill the foreordained work of God v. 28 *cf.* 2:23; 3:17-18
 - e. The prayer request vv. 29-30
 - i. See their threatening (of your servants)
 - ii. Grant boldness to your servants to speak Thy Word
 - iii. Grant confirmation in signs & wonders in the Name of Jesus
cf. 3:6-9; 5:12-16
- II. God’s Response to the Prayer** vv. 31-33
- a. The immediate response v. 31
 - i. Shaking in the house
 - ii. They are filled with the Holy Ghost
 - iii. They speak the Word boldly
All of this is remarkably similar to Pentecost 2:1-4 (w/o tongues)
 - b. The subsequent effects vv. 32-33
 - i. Unity (“one heart & one soul”) v. 32
 - ii. The Apostles gave powerful witness of the resurrection v. 33a
 - iii. Great grace was upon them all v. 33b