Week of Prayer 2024: Friday

**Proclaiming the Word in Times of Global Turmoil**

A tutorial from Acts 4:4

**By Yo Han Kim**

The world is suffering. No one can deny that the world we live in is experiencing global turmoil. Of course, these difficult situations may be a great opportunity to introduce God’s last-day messages to those who are in despair and uncertainty. People have become more open to having spiritual conversations, but this does not mean that proclaiming the Word has become easy.

**Context**

Acts 4 depicts a very interesting time. Perhaps it was much like what we are witnessing today. Many people were in despair, disappointment, and uncertainty. People were confused and frightened. Though the believers witnessed the ascension of Jesus Christ (Acts 1), the power of the Holy Spirit during Pentecost (Acts 2), and the healing of a crippled man in the temple (Acts 3), there were still concerns as they faced intense opposition and persecution from religious leaders. This is where Acts 4:4 comes in. “But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand” (NIV). This verse is truly significant for us today as it reveals not only the power of the Word during these times of turmoil, but also calls us to be united in mission as Seventh-day Adventists.

**Power of the Word**

Though Peter and John were put in jail (verse 3) for “teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead” (verses 1, 2, NIV), those who heard the message believed, and the numbers grew (verse 4). Acts 4 reminds us that the Word of God stands as an unwavering beacon of truth and light. It is not just something to use as a reference, but a revelation of God Himself in times of chaos and uncertainty. The Word of God is a divine communication to inspire, empower, and transform our lives. Surely there is power in the Word of God. The Scriptures tell us in Hebrews 4:12: “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (NIV).

Ellen White reminds us of this infinite power. “In its power, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have been transformed into the image of God. This change is itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word. We cannot understand it; we can only believe.”1

It is sad to say that we live amid global turmoil. In fact, this world is falling deeper and deeper into the consequences of sin. There is hope, however! The Word of God provides the greatest hope in Christ. It transcends and breaks various barriers. It reassures and reminds us of God’s love and faithfulness. Ultimately, the Word of God affirms that we are chosen for God’s mission.

**Chosen for Mission**

When Peter and John were warned not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus (verse 18), they replied by saying, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges!” (verse 19, NIV). Then comes the apostles’ famous testimony in verse 20: “As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (NIV). Obeying the Word of God and participating in the mission of God was their life calling and purpose.

Two thousand years after Acts 4, we live in a time the world needs the message of hope more than ever. Increasing uncertainty and turmoil lead people to seek answers and meaning in life. The hope and truth in Christ and Christ alone can provide true happiness and comfort. God has entrusted us with a great mission to accomplish in the last days. God has chosen us to share what we have seen and heard.

Let us remember what Ellen White wrote, “The words of Jesus Christ are spoken to us living down here in the close of this earth’s history. ‘When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.’ The nations are in unrest. Times of perplexity are upon us. The waves of the sea are roaring; men’s hearts are failing them for fear and for expectation of those things that are coming upon the earth; but those who believe on the Son of God will hear His voice amid the storm, saying, ‘It is I; be not afraid.’ . . . We see the world lying in wickedness and apostasy. Rebellion to the commandments of God seems almost universal. Amid the tumult of excitement with confusion in every place, there is a work to be done in the world.”2

When the people witnessed Peter and John’s release from prison and heard their reports, “they raised their voices together in prayer to God” (verse 24, NIV). Notice their amazing prayer found in verses 29 and 30: “Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus” (NIV). Here are the results of their prayer. “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly” (verse 31, NIV).

**Conclusion**

Standing on the promises of God and accepting the call to mission was an unchanging divine responsibility 2,000 years ago and even more today. It is not an option, but a part of our identity as Seventh-day Adventists. As we reflect upon the words found in Acts 4, let us be reminded of our mission. We were chosen to be bold and unwavering to reach the lost in times of uncertainty and chaos. May we believe, practice, and proclaim the Word of God in times of global turmoil. May the testimony of Peter and John be our testimony today: “As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (NIV).

1 Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903), p. 172.

2 Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), p. 18.

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Questions for Reflection:

How can we be bold and unwavering in chaotic times?

What have you seen and heard in your study of the Word that you can share with someone else?