

Warning – Offensive Content

Acts 4:1-22

Warning! Prepare to hear offensive content this morning!

The word “offensive” can take on two very different meanings!

- If something is “offensive,” it often means that something was said or done that caused displeasure or anger in another person or group.

We all find certain things “offensive”- language, actions, behaviors, etc.

In Acts 4, there are at least 11 people/people groups that take offense to what the apostles of Jesus were teaching and doing!

- There were the priests, the captain of the temple, the Sadducees, the rulers, the elders, the scribes, Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John and Alexander, & all who were of the high priestly family.

It says in Vs. 2 that they were all **“greatly annoyed b/c the apostles were teaching the people & proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.”**

Why was the apostles’ teaching and this message so offensive to them?

- Because the apostles were uneducated, common men and their teaching was producing a large following. **It was a reaction of fear!**
Those in authority often fear anything that challenges the status quo.
- Because the apostles were teaching that “in Jesus is the resurrection of the dead!” **It was a reaction of power!**
Jesus, the one they had crucified, is being declared alive! Those in authority often exercise their power when that power is threatened!
- Because it was in the name of Jesus that a crippled man was healed! **It was a reaction of rejection and denial!**

Those in authority often reject that which they are not willing to accept!

These 11 people/groups took offense, but there was nothing they could do to stop what Jesus Christ had started & what the Holy Spirit was continuing!

They tried – They had Peter & John arrested & thrown in jail. **They used threats to try & silence them, but all their attempts would fall short!**

- The second meaning of the word “offensive” is to take an attitude or position of attack. (Ex: A team trying to score is on offense.)

Both the 11 people/groups, & the apostles, took an offensive position!

First it was these 11 people/groups that took an offensive approach against Jesus Himself – **they attacked His teachings and ultimately killed Him for it.**

Now they are attacking the Apostles in the same way, b/c they are trying to rid the world of any remnant of Jesus and the teachings He left behind!

Vs. 18 – So they called them (Peter & John) and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus Christ. What was Peter & John’s response?

They did not take a position of defense, but of offense!

Vs. 19-20 – “Peter & John answered them ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen & heard.’”

If the message of Christianity is true, then it is imperative that Christians take up the offensive position! **“Go and make disciples of all nations...”**

Jesus’ commands trump the commands of earthly authorities, therefore the apostles declared, *“do what you must in your positions of authority, but we will do what we must under the authority of the King of kings/Lord of lords.”*

They also prayed – **“Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your Word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” Vs. 29-30**

This is the “offensive” posture we are called to take in this world (2nd def.), even if the authorities over us try to inhibit us from doing so!

This is where a correct understanding of the **H.C. # 104** is important!

We are called to submit to the authorities that God has put in place above us, in so far as they do not command that which is in direct opposition to our highest authority – Jesus Christ!

The message of Christianity is going to be offensive to this world, and there will be an offensive position against us. **Our best defense, is a good offense!**

6-10-18 Warning – Offensive Content Acts 4:1-22

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Our defense of the gospel should be seen in the offensive posture we take!
Our offensive posture will show the world that there is an ultimate authority
that we as Christians must submit ourselves under!