

MARKED TO MAKE A MARK – ACTS 4

When I was thinking the other day about what inspirational nugget I would leave you all with, like what could I say right now that's essentially the pregame pep talk to the Super Bowl that is graduation, I realized I'm not the greatest motivational speaker, but I know someone who is, so I just thought I would give him a chance to speak to you to spur you on, so why don't you take a look at this.

----Kid President Video----

So seriously, I do, before we move into the message today, want you to know how bittersweet this day is...I've really been dreading it. Excited for you, sure! But dreading it because of what it represents for our student ministry. Being the first class to graduate that we have had from freshman year on, y'all have been the strongest leadership class I've EVER had in ministry. I want you to know how proud I am. I'm proud of you! I love you! And Sadie and I are FOR YOU!

Many of you have moved beyond being just students to us, but have become a part of my family, my little brothers and sisters. So thank you for giving me the privilege of being your pastor and getting to push you towards Jesus. It is a tremendous honor!

And I love y'all and I'm not gonna cry...

Ok, so Bibles if you have them and go to Acts 4.

TATTOOS – marks that signify something. Someday I'll show you this tattoo, I've got that covers my whole back and its...I'm just kidding. I don't have that...but that would be cool I think...maybe someday. But tattoos mean something...most of the time. Or at least they should. **JODY** and **MINE**. But it's a Mark that signify something and it's permanent and visible. And we're going to see what it means today to be Marked to Make a Mark.

Vs 1-3

- 1) The world is a TOUGH place!
 - a. Adults in here can vouch for that.
 - b. Not just knowledge for students, we get a reminder of this frequently...need it.
 - i. Families have miscarried.
 - ii. Brilliant friend has no job.

- iii. Cancer diagnoses seem to come every week.
- c. Not easy. There's "preachers" out there that tell you God wants you to be healthy, God wants you to be happy, God wants you to be filled and to prosper. **GOD WANTS YOU TO BE HOLY AND TO BE HIS!**
 - i. PIPER QUOTE, "Prosperity cannot be a proof of God's favor, since it is what the devil promises to those who worship him."
 - ii. John 16:33, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In this world you WILL HAVE trouble/tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome this world."

Vs 4-12

2) Jesus is the only hope!

- a. Chapter 3 they healed a beggar who couldn't walk. By Jesus' power they accomplished this.
- b. He is the cornerstone.

When Solomon's temple was being built, it was forbidden for the sound of hammers to be heard at the job site because it was a holy place of worship. You can't have worship with construction going on in the background! So it had to be quiet. What this meant for the construction was that each and every 20 ton stone had to have a 'shop drawing' and was made several miles away in the quarry. Several miles away each stone was carefully cut for its exact spot in the temple. From the very start, there was a plan for each stone. The very first stone to be delivered was the capstone, but that's the last stone needed in construction. So the builders said, "What is this? This doesn't look like any of the first stones we need. Put it over there for now." Well, years went by and the grass grew over the capstone and everyone generally forgot about it. Finally the construction was done and the builders said "send us the capstone" and the word came back from the quarry "we already did". They were confused. Then someone remembered what they had done with the very first stone sent to them. It was taken from its lowly position among the overgrown weeds where it had been forgotten, and it was honored in the final ceremony to complete the temple. Thus the scripture says, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone."

- c. Peter gives the clearest statement of the Gospel which is a direct invitation to those present to put their faith in Jesus.
 - i. Remember who he is speaking to. Caiaphas (High Priest in charge of Jesus' crucifixion...also over Stephen's stoning of Acts 7...powerful and dangerous man for anyone who opposes the Jewish religion), so *him* and other religious leaders all while under arrest.
 - 1. Future uncertain. Standing on the precipice of the unknown.
 - 2. You could say that what comes out of his mouth would be the most important words that he has ever said at that moment and...
 - ii. **BOLDNESS!** It comes from His faith.
 - 1. 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."
 - 2. Hebrews 12:2 says Jesus is the "founder and perfecter of our faith."
 - iii. It comes from Jesus, but how does one get this boldness? This faith?

Vs 13

3) Boldness comes from being with Jesus.

- a. They could tell these men had been with Jesus.
- b. They had been **MARKED** by Jesus. It was like Jesus was tattooed all over them.
 - i. Exodus 34:29, "When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone *because he had been talking with God.*"
 - ii. The Apostle Paul meets Jesus for the first time and is blinded and scales cover his eyes...
 - iii. Examples all throughout Scripture of moments when someone has been marked by Jesus and everything changes...and it comes from **BEING WITH JESUS!**

1. Study Bible

Vs 14-31

4) Activated their Prayer life

- a. The results are 1000s coming to faith from their being with Jesus. But look at how it doesn't stop...they gather together and pray. Pray for MORE BOLDNESS (vs 29).
 - i. God answers their prayers because they weren't about their own motivations. They were about God's fame.
 - ii. They had been MARKED TO MAKE A MARK!
- b. So they had been with Jesus, activated their prayer life, praying fervently for God to work in and through them and then...?

Vs 32-35

5) Connected with the Local Church

- a. This is what we see here...this is the Church. They all invested in the local body of Christ, having everything in common and lacking nothing. That's what Church is for!
- b. And look how God uses that! That's the very definition of a full life (John 10:10).

SO students:

As you transition here, God has called you and has marked you to make a mark in whatever field you go into for His name...to make Him famous.

You do this by:

- 1) Be with Him
- 2) Activate your prayer life
- 3) Connect and Invest in the Local Church

Same is true for us ADULTS!

Where do you fall if you take a spiritual inventory? Have you been with Jesus? They weren't special or particularly educated men. They weren't spiritual celebrities...they had just been with Jesus.

Are you active in Praying?

Maybe you haven't fully bought in to this church thing? Maybe you've come and consumed and been fed and that's good, but God wants you to connect like the believers in Acts 4...everything in common.

So here's what we will do...respond. The band is going to come...