

THRIVING IN THREATENING TIMES

INTRODUCTION:

- A. "When you can't control what's happening, challenge yourself to control the way you respond to what's happening. That's where your power is."
- B. We are living in the midst of difficulty and threatening circumstances. Maybe you're wondering, "What are we supposed to do?" It may seem there's not much we can do.
- C. Let's notice how the early Christians lived and even thrived during such threatening times.

PRAY – Acts 4:17-31

- A. They prayed praises to God (vs. 24-28). They praised both His power and His plan.
- B. They prayed for boldness to continue speaking God's Word (v. 29; Col. 4:3).
- C. The prayers we pray have the power to do much good (Jam. 5:16).

PROVIDE – Acts 4:32-37

- A. They shared and helped provide for other Christians who were in need (v. 34).
- B. They were willing to surrender to God. They sold off their land and houses and placed their trust in God.
- C. We have to take care of our families but we also must take care of one another (Gal. 6:10; Jam. 2:15-16; Eph. 4:28; Lk. 16:19-21).

PROCLAIM – Acts 5:17-42

- A. They were standing in the temple teaching in spite of what they had been told (v. 25).
- B. They continued preaching and teaching in the temple and in homes after they had been beaten and threatened again (vs. 40-42).
- C. We must be willing to preach the message that needs to be heard in spite of any circumstances we face (Jer. 20:9).

Conclusion:

- A. The early church thrived even in the midst of threatening times because of their faith and service to God.
- B. How will we, as the church today, respond to the times we find ourselves living in?
- C. Will we hunker down and isolate ourselves, or will we be the people of God who rise up in the name of Jesus?