



PRAYER IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE





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WHAT'S INSIDE

Pressure - we all face hard times at work. Christians may well find themselves under increasing pressure to keep quiet about Jesus. How should we respond? The apostles found themselves forbidden from talking about Jesus and responded with prayer and a renewed zeal for speaking about Jesus. We can learn a lot from this episode in Acts 4.

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HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES



These studies are short modules to help workers think more deeply about different areas of your workplace witness. They are designed to be used in Evangelistic Prayer Teams (EPTs), but can also be used in any small group setting.

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Imagine HR has announced a new policy – religious talk of any kind is no longer allowed in your workplace. How should we respond when facing pressure to be quiet about Jesus?

BIG IDEA

In the face of pressure to be quiet about Jesus, it's time to pray that God would enable us to speak even more boldly.

From the Bible

“Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: “Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ⁶ The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.’

²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” **Acts 4:24-30**

When facing pressure to be quiet about Jesus, how did the disciples respond?

Key Truths

1. Peter and John are ordered by the Sanhedrin to stop speaking in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:18). The response of the believers in Jerusalem is to obey God and not humans.
2. The same hatred that led the Gentiles and the people of Israel to kill Jesus, is the same hatred directed towards the believers that tries to force them to stop talking.
3. “They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.” Nothing takes God by surprise! God is in control, even when Jesus died. And God is in control when believers face persecution. So we can pray even then.
4. The believers’ response to people attempting to shut them up was – pray for boldness to speak of Jesus even more! (But remember Peter’s instruction in 1 Peter 3:15 that we should do so with gentleness and respect).

Application

How do we respond to pressure to be silent about Jesus?

What is the difference between keeping quiet about Jesus in the workplace and being wise about when to speak about Jesus?

Remember, Coffee – Dinner – Gospel as an approach to sharing Jesus in the workplace means seeking opportunities to share Jesus with work colleagues through relational engagement, often outside the workplace.

Prayer

Pray that in the face of increasing pressure to be silent about Jesus that we would speak all the more boldly about him.

Ask that God would work in his miraculous power to bring people to faith in Jesus.

What is the next step with your colleagues?