

Acts 4: 29 —

May: 5: 1747

Min^r: to preach & Word of God
with Boldness —

Acts 4: 29. And now L^d behold y^e Threatnings - & grant
unto thy Serv^t - y^e with all boldnes, y^e may speak
thy Word -

The Ministry of y^e Gosp: is a most hon^{or} & excellent
Employ^{ment} - What more Import^{ant} Charact^{er} can we bear -
than that of Officers in y^e Ch^{urch} of x^c - & Embassadors^{hip}
from y^e King of Kings to a guilty, and Apost^{ate}: World -
- W^hat more sublime & advantageous Design, can we
be Engag^d in - than to explain y^e Mysteries of y^e Gosp^{el} -
unfold y^e Unsearch^{able}: Riches of divine Grace - & Persuade
Rebellious Sin^{ners}: to submit to y^e Govern^{ment}: of o^{ur}: Exalt^{ed} Ch^{rist}.

But y^e Employ^{ment}: is as difficult & dangerous
as it is honourable & excellent - It requires y^e great^{est}
attent^{ion}: & diligence, to gain a clear & familiar Acquaint^{ance}
w^{ith} y^e Sublime Doctr^{ines}: & Duties of our Holy Religion -
It demands indefatigable Study and Labour, to explain
& inculcate y^e Import^{ant}: Things, in such a manner
as may promote y^e Glory of G^{od}. & y^e Spirit^{ual}: Benefit of Man^{kind}.

The Persons to w^{hom} we are sent - are by Nature
dead in trespasses & sins - under y^e prevailing Power
of y^e corrupt Appetites and Inclinations - & strongly dis-
posed to despise and resist y^e Endear^{ing}: Mot^{ives}: of Div: Grace -

And to Encrease ^{the} difficulty of our work taken to
the World, unto their Policy and Power, to Aggravate
Our burdens - discourage our hearts - & obstruct the success
of our Labour -

Since then the Ministry of ^{the} Gospel, is so difficult
& Painful an Employment - & requires such Uncommon
Courage and Resolution, to discharge it in a right
manner - there was just reason for the Apostles ^{in their day} & for
the Ministers of ^{the} Church in all the successive Ages of the
Church to pour out the Decent Prayer of my text -

The Immediate Occasion of these words was as
follows - The Apostles had exalted a Miraculous Power
in Behalf of a Poor disabled Cripple, & from the
most deplorable Circumstances of Misery - had in a
moment ^{by a word of Authority - in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth} restored him to perfect Health & Vigor -

For this good Work, they were taken into Custody by
their Countrymen the Jews - Arraigned at the bar of
their Magistrates as Criminals - strictly prohibited to
preach any more in the Name of Jesus - & threatened
with the severest Punishment in case of disobedience -

Instead of being affrighted from their Duty, by the
wrath & resentment of the Jews - they lift up their Voices
to Heaven, & Implore the Almighty, Lord of Divine Grace
that they may be enabled to go on in their Work, with
renewed Vigor & Resolution - And now grant O

As if they had said - Thou seest O L^d. how Unrighteously
we are Persecuted by y^e Enem^y of y^e Church - how Ungratefully
we are treat^d for y^e most kind & benevolent Actions - how
severely we are threatened for y^e faithful discharge of o^r Duty
Now y^e in y^e time of darkⁿ & difficulty - when we are
surrounded with so many Enem^y - beset on all hands wth
the most Affrighting Dangers - - Look down from Heaven
upon us in thine Abund^{ant} Grace - Encourage our hearts
strengthen our hands - Unloose our tongues - that in
the midst of all the Opposition of Earth & Hell we
may Preach thy Word with boldness -

And Never were the Ministers of o^r most lady
called to make this request, y^e in y^e Day of preaching
~~Error~~ Infidelity - Error & Corruption - for tho^{ugh} thro^{ugh} the
Good Providence of God - & the Clemency of the Govern^{ment}
the hands of the Wicked are tied up from Open Rapine
- yet never was the spiritual Rigid^{ity} of o^r Master more
violently Opposed - Never were the truths of the Gospel
more Openly Blasphem^{ed} & Insulted than at present -

In this day of Blasphemy & Abuse - Our help is
in the Name of the Lord who made Heavⁿ & Earth -
all our strength and Assistance must descend from the
treasures of his Grace -

[Let us then O Faithful Ministers of C^h. Unite our
heads & voices upon this Important Occasion &

I send up to that God in whose Name, we are assembled
together, that fervent Prayer of my text - I Now P. Great
In speaking to these Words by Div: Appliance I shall show

First: The Ministers of the Gosp: and the Serv: of I -
Secondly It is need: that to speak or Deed: his W: to Man:
Thirdly This Work must be perform'd with his Blessing
Fourthly This is a Gift of God w: must be sought after
by fervent & importunate Prayer

First Part -

The Min^{rs} of the Gospel and the Serv: of I -

This Charact^r indeed belongs to all mank^d in general -
The Empire of Jesus Christ is universal; his Dominion extends
over y^e Visible & Invisible World - from the highest Angel
to the meanest Insect - - - But y^e Pastors of y^e Churches -
are in a peculiar Sense, the Serv: of Christ, & under dis-
tinguish'd Obligations to obey his Sovereign Orders -

They are the Stewards of his house - y^e Labourers in his
Vineyard - the Builders of his Temple - The Herald^s of
his Grace - y^e Bearers of his Orders - & y^e Interpret^r of his Word
- Thous: y^e Scripture ordinarily describes them by the
name of Ministers - & all the Hon^r y^e y^e greatest & best
among us can pretend, is that of humble Serv: to our
Divine Master - Our whole Work is noth^g but a continu:
Ministry - Our only Authority consists in complying with
the Bedon of our B: Redeemer -

If we proclaim it glad tid^g of pardon to "guilty & Con^d
wared" - it is not as persons who have a decisive Auth^y
to determine it States of Man^k? - but as Embassadors
of it Prince of Peace, & Mepingou of his Soverⁿ: Grace

If it Keys of it Kingd^m of heavⁿ are committ^d into
our hands; it is not as Masters of the House, to adm^t
w^m: we please into it Number of it Children & Fam^y:
of God - - - but only as officers to Open & shut it Gates
of the Ch^h accord^g to it Ordⁿ we have Rec^d: from our
common Lord & Proprietor -

If we are appoint^d Rulers in ^{his} ~~the~~ Church, We are
not to Imagine our selves Veiled with Authority to
prescribe any Method of Worship of our ^{own} Inventions -
nor Enjoin any Terms of Communion of our own Institⁿ -
- We have no power but as servants to execute the
designs of our Master - & sacredly Observe it Rules if
he hath prescribed and Appointed in his Word -

Therof: it Pastoral Charge is called the Work of it
Ministry & Ministers are stiled it Serv^{ts} of it Churches
Therfore it it Doct: of it Gentiles - Instructs it Corinthians
to look Even upon the Chief of the Apostles - Not as Prin
cipal Agents - but as subordinates Instruments in the
Work of many Salvⁿ - Who is Paul & who is Appoll^{os} but
Ministers by whom it have Believ^d -

Second Part —

That it is of great Importance to speak or Declare
his word to Mankind. This we are to make our Stand^{ing}
with: deviat^{ing} from it — upon any Motive or Consider^{ation} to lose —

This Word is of sacred System of Doctrines & precepts
which are contained, in of Scriptures & of Old & N. Test^{ament} —
and a complet directory of faith & Practice — to which
noth^{ing} can be added, & from which Nothing can be di-
minished, with: Enkindling the fire of Divine Jealousy —
& exposing our selves to of terrible Effects of his Almighty
displeasure —

This Divine Word is of: which in all our Publick & Pri-
vate Discourses, we are to speak and declare to our hear^{ers} —
The Word of God and not of Doctrines of men and to be of
matter of our Preaching — We are not to follow the
Dictator of Plato or Seneca — or of any other of the Sects
of Ancient or Modern Philosophers — But only of Moses
& the Prophets of o^{ur} Lord & his Apostles — if we would approve
our selves faithful Ministers of of Gospel —

The Writings of of Philosophers may be taught in the
Schools — the Harangues of of Orators may be pleaded at
the Bar — but the Inspired Oracles of truth are the
only Authority we are to cite in the Church of God —

The Works of the sublime Genius of Rome and Athens
may Plea — May Divert — & Perhaps give us some

Considerable knowledge in points of hum: learning - but
it is more voluminous alone which were dictated by the Inspi-
ration of the Holy Spirit, which can enlighten us in the mysteries
of our most Holy Faith - make us wile to salvation - &
thoroughly furnish us unto every good work -

The Doctr: of men are like beautiful flowers w^{ch} greatly
relish the sight - but the Word of God like a fruitful
tree that affords substantial food & nourishment -

Human learning teaches us: and the words & concepts
of men, the greatest part of w^{ch} are nothing - but learned
follies, curious & unprofitable vanities - but the
Revelation of God - Discovers to us the secrets of the
Divine Counsel - the wonderful methods of his Grace
which have the happiest tendency to purify our
hearts, to regulate our lives - & prepare us for a world
of immortality and glory -

To Preach them the Inventions of men filled wth
the Word of God is to give us a Stone instead of bread
a Serpent instead of a fish - & mortal Poison instead of
wholesome and agreeable Nourishment - It is by the
word of truth alone which we can save Pervert the
Number of true Believers upon Earth, & prepare them
for a triumphant Apomby of Perfect Peace in Heaven -

This is that light which affords a sure and unerring
guide thro' all the dark: & difficulties of the most: Harsh -

This is that Dolt: wth by the Appoint: of Infinite W^{is}d^{om} is
is the Power of God to the Salvation of Mankind —
[Let y^r Doer Men: of y^e Gospel remember y^e solemn
Exhort: of S^t: Paul to his Belov^d: Tim — Preach y^e Word
be instant in season out of season — Rebuke Exhort wth
all long suff^r: & Dolour —] It y^e leads me to say

Third Part —

The Word of God is to preach: with Holy Boldness —

By y^e Bold: y^e Apostles do not intend, an inconsiderate Rash-
ness that has no suitable regard to time or place, y^e makes no dis-
tinction between y^e Character of Circumstances of Persons —
But a generous freedom — an holy Confidence — a firm &
Intrepid Courage, to deliver the word of God, upon all Occasions
when we are called, to perform y^e Important Office — — —

This freedom & Boldness y^e Ancient Masters of Rhetoric — placed
among y^e Essential Qualifications of an Orator — And
it is certainly requisite to form y^e Character of a faithful
minister — — This gives life and vigor to our Preaching — y^e
clothes our discourses with Maj^{ty} & Auck^{ty} — & under y^e mighty
Arm of God, to the Pulling down the Stronghold, of Sin & Satan
which exalt themselves ag^t the Knowledge of God — — —

A Sluggish fear, Obstruction & Efficacy of the most pathetic Ex-
hortations — & Spirit & Beauty of the best composed Discourses —
It degrades the dignity of our Character — & weakens the Power
of the Word of God — — For as y^e Word appears awful & venerable
when delivered, with Courage and Resolution, so it catches fully

into Contempt, when breath? under the Influence of a ferocious
& cowardly Spirit --- y^e instead of being the Power of God it
becomes the Sport of man ---

Now this Boldness implies, that we stand ready to
preach the Gospel in every Place, where divine Providence shall
call us to the exercise of this important Charge --- In great Cities
as well as in y^e Smaller Villages --- In the Assemblies of divine
Doctors --- as well as in the Parlours of our friends --- In the Syn-
agogues of those, that are Publick Enemies of the faith --- as well
as in the Churches of the Saints --- where they have a tender
regard to the Purity and the Power of the Gospel ---

We are also to declare the truths of God told to all
sorts of Persons, according to their different Characters &
Circumstances --- to men of exalted Dignity --- as well as to those
of an inferior condition in Life --- to those who dwell in
the Palaces of ^{the Great-Princes} Princes as well as to those that inhabit
the Cottages of the Wilderness --- Without flattering the
Vanity of the Great --- or despising the Circumstances of y^e Poor ---

This generous Impartiality certainly becomes the Character
of those who are Embassadors of the King of Kings --- who speak in
the Name of him, who rides upon the Circle of the Earth --- &
looks down upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth, as Contemners
worms of Dust --- in whose Presence the ^{Morarch} Prince upon the
Throne & the Beggar upon the dunghill --- stand upon a
perfect Equality ---

Thus this holy Boldness that enabled the Prophet Elijah
to denounce the Judgment of God ag^t an Idolatrous Ahab ---

John the Baptist faithfully to reprove an Incredulous Herd
- Jesus Christ to expose the ^{Hypocrisy} ~~Authority~~ of the Superstitious Scribes
& Pharisees - They regarded neither the Magnificence of
their thrones - the splendor of their crowns - nor the terror of
their guards - nor the greatness of their Authority - they placed
their Iniquities before them in the strongest Point of Light -
thundered out of thunders ^{thunder} of divine ^{Judg^t} ~~wrath~~, which is the just
dominion of their crimes - & compassionately warn^d them to flee
from the wrath to come - - -

And as we are not to be afraid of the Persecutors, so, we are
to maintain our Courage and Resolution, in the most difficult
& dangerous times - - - We are to ~~teach~~ speak the word of
God boldly not only in the flourishing days of the Church
but also in seasons of distress & Persecution - In the Presence
of the most Violent Opposers - in the face of the greatest
Dangers - when surrounded with a thousand thunders - We
are not to betray the Cause of our Master, this is a shameful
Cowardice - Nor be ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ & Power
of God unto the Salvation of every one that believeth -

Thus the Primitive Saints the Noble Army of Ancient Martyrs
resolutely adhered to the Cause of truth, in the Presence
of Insulting tyrants - who breath^d forth nothing but threat^s
^{laughter} are the Disciples of Christ - they Arise^d & Confess^d their
bloody Executions, by their faith & patience, ^{when enduring} ~~in the midst of~~
the severest torments - they sang hymns of praise to God in the
midst of flames - & from the Scaffold of Death - ascended
in a ^{in an} ~~haze~~ of glory - & Exult^d in the triumph of

and rewards of the Paradise of God — — — & surely we are
under the strongest obligations to be followers of them, who
the faith and Patience Inherit the Promise — When we fear
the Wrath and Repentment of Man — We should Implore the
power and Assistance of God — to inspire us with undaunted Cou-
rage in the Cause of God — & render us intrepid and Unmovable
in the midst of the greatest dangers — & this brings to the
last thing I proposed to consider Viz^t —

Fourth Part —

This Holy Boldness — to speak the Word of God in a suitable
manner is a Gift of God, which must be sought after by fervent
& Importunate Prayer —

God is the Father of Lights and the giver of every good &
Perfect Gift — & it is he alone that renders us able Men^{rs}
of the New Testament — If as the Apostle Paul assures us
that No Man can say that Jesus is the Lord — but by the Holy
Ghost — how can we with the Assistance of the Divine
Spirit — ^{set forth} ~~hold forth~~ the dignity of his Person — the Excellency of
his Office — the Glory of his Miracles — the Merit of his Sufferings —
the Majesty of his Kingdom — The height & Depth — the
Length & Breadth of his Incomprehensible Love — — It is God
& God Alone, that forms his Ministers for the Divine Im-
ployment — & Supports them under the difficulties that
attend it — & renders them successful Preachers of the Word
of Righteousness —

This Assistance was afforded to the Apostles in an Extraor-
dinary and Miraculous manner — They were inspired

by the Spirit of God, with the Aid of any other Master or
teacher - with the Knowledge of all Mysteries, with the gift
of all languages - So that my People the sublimest depths
of Knowledge, with Study - & deliver the most Eloquent
& Pathetic Discourses with any Preparation -

We in this day have not the same Advantages - Nor
are we enabled to preach in the same Miraculous Man-
ner - We must obtain by Reading and Meditation - by exercise
and labour - those qualifications that are necessary for
a faithful Discharge of our Duty - We must meditate
in the Closet upon those truths, which we are to deliver
from the Pulpit - We must prepare with care and
diligence those Discourses that are designed for the
Instruction, Conversion, & Edification of our Hearers -

But all our labour will be in Vain - all our Endeavours
will prove Unprofitable without the Divine Blessing & Assistance -
- - Without the Influence of the Spirit - with all the
Gifts of Nature - with all the Advantages of Education -
with all the Improvements of Study - we shall never be
truly qualified for the Service of the Sanctuary -

[You know by Experience O feeble Ministers of
Jesus] how Insufficient you are of your selves for so
great & momentous Employment - How often should we
have sunk under the Weight of our Charge - if God had not
sustained us with his Almighty Arm - How often would

our Mouths, have been closed thus the slavish fear of
man, if God had not opened our lips ^{to speak the truth as it} ~~and unlooseth our~~
^{is, in Jesus} ~~tragedy~~ how often should we have faultered under our
difficulties and discouragements, if God had not supported
us by the invisible hand of his Grace - I strengthened us with
might in the inward man -

[Let us then give God the glory of his Grace while we
humbly acknowledge our own frailty & weakness - Let us
acknowledge in the face of the whole world - y^e and ~~boldly~~
unable to do any thing - that all our Sufficiency is of God]

- If we are enabled to explain the Mysteries of his
Grace it is he that unlooseth our tongues - If we ^{propria} ~~unlooseth~~
those things y^e are agreeable to his Will it is he that ^{unlooseth} ~~unlooseth~~
our Pores - If we behold the Glories of his Gospel it
is he that enlighteneth our understandings - If we preach
his Word with fervor it is he that openeth the Hearts
of our Hearers - & render it it Effectual to Salvation
of immortal Souls -

to proceed then to the

Application of my Subject -

Let us all My Beloved Dear & Honoured Brethren
lift up our hearts to God in the Language of the Psalms
and now I dare grant unto y^e ~~that~~ ^{that} we all boldly
we may speak y^e Word -

Our lot is fallen in Evil and Dangerous Times - When y^e ^{Insom}
of the truth, against the Church of ~~the~~ with y^e greatest Zeal ^{Adi}
and diligence - they unite their counsels & imply all y^e ^{Instru}

of Policy & Power, to ^{ruin} ~~destroy~~ our Character - disturb our
Repose and destroy our Uneasiness - Here we see the Infidelity
of 4 Ago boldly strike at the foundations of the Gospel - &
^{& subtilly} ~~slily~~ endeavouring to bring all Religion into Contempt & Ridicule
- That we see Many that profess to be Masters for Great
darkening, the glory of the Gospel - by their absurd and Un-
reasonable Comments - & explaining away its supernatural
Mysteries into Empty & Unmeaning Sounds - Some Prophan-
dizing the sacred Influences of the Spirit, by which alone we
can be sanctified and Saved - Others under a pretence of
honouring this divine Guide, turn into Neglect the inner?
rules prescribed in the Word of God - And Instead of being
directed by the Spirit, ^{of God} ~~and~~ ^{are} ~~govern~~ ^{govern}? by their own
heated Imaginations, and precipitated into a Wilderness
of Enthusiasm Error and delusion - Who is that Seal
of a few Years Ago, Animated the Breasts of the Pastors of
our Churches - Who that Seriousness & solemnity of ^{the} ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~at~~
times was visible, in the very faces of our Gracious Assemblies -
- What Contempt of the Ordinances of the Gospel - What
Lukewarmness in the things of God - What Apostasies from
the faith and Practice of Pure & undefiled Religion - do we
now see, to our Humiliation and Sorrow -

In y: Malench: Separation - W: Method shall we lapse to it
Method sanctuary shall we fly - shall we abandon y: Cause of
v: to y: triumphs of its Enemy - shall we desert y: Interest of Religion

1848

✓

9.

7-

on

The divinity in Chain - & hearts of men and in his hands
the Elements are subject to his Power - and all Creatures and
the ministers of his Providence the Executioners of his Will -

What then have we to fear while we are under his safe
& Almighty Protection - if God be for us who can be against us -

Let us not be afraid of men for they are but contemptible
worms of the Dust - Let us not be afraid of Devils for they
can not touch one hair of our heads without the permission of our
heavenly Father - Let us not be afraid of our own frailties & Weakness
for he has promised his Grace shall be sufficient for us -

He maketh the dumb to speak - he causeth praise to proceed out of
the mouth of ^{babes & sucklings} ~~infants~~ - & Enable the tongue of the Stammerer
to proclaim the Honours of his Gospel -

Let us then in a dependence upon his Grace - preach his Word
with holy Boldness - Let us Preach it in Public - In those Churches
where we are devoted to his immediate Service - Let us discourse upon
it in our houses, where we converse familiarly with our friends -
Let us declare it as often as we have opportunity in the
Assemblies of our Enemies - if they may be brought to the knowledge
of that truth, which now they ignorantly Oppose & Persecute -
- Let us adhere to this B. Cause in the midst of the
greatest trials and temptation - & above all take care to
Adorn by an Exemplary Life and Conversation -

I shall finish my Discourse with a few words to
you our dear Brethren ^{who compose} ~~the~~ ^{the} Body of this Assembly -
You are to be inspired, with the same Holy Boldness, which
has now been recommended to your Pastors - You are not

indeed to Preach the Word of God in Public — but you are to
receive with Joy into your hearts — & make an Open Profession
of the faith — in the face of the greatest dangers — the
Corruption of your Nature — the solicitations of the World —
& the Principality, & Powers of the Kingdom of darkness — Use
their utmost Efforts to turn you aside from the Simplicity of
the Gospel — you are diligently to preserve the form of sound
words, delivered to you in sound Writings — You are to
see that you feel their Transforming Influence upon your
souls — Evidence the Sincerity of your faith by a Conversion
becoming the Gospel —

Always remember that nothing Whomsoever — Masters
& Idolaters — but also the fearful Abolition, that have their
root in the Law, that burneth with fire and brimstone —
Our Lord hath positively assured us that Who is doing him
before men — he will do so before his Father who is in Heaven —

Let us be steadfast and Unmovable in hope &
and Advantages a Crash — Let us follow our B: Master
thru' all his difficult paths of Duty — know: if we suffer with
him upon Earth — we shall reign with him in Imm: glory —

But as Steadfastness and Courage is not of Product of
Nature — but the Gift of God and the Operation — Let us bow before
his Throne & lift up our hearts & voices to him to bestow upon us
this excellent Blessing — Pray if: he ^{for} ~~will~~ give to your Pastors —
that their undertakings may be enlightened with the saving
Knowledge of God — their hearts burn with an ardent Love
for the glory of God — their breath animated with undaunted
Courage to speak his word with holy Boldness — Pray
for your School — that God would give you the full Assurance

of faith - an Affectionate Love to the Truth - An In-
violet Attachment to the Inheritance of his Spiritual
Kingdom - & a Cheerful Submission to the Endless
demands of his Grace -

^{by his: fav: shall: both: glory: high: rich}
Happy the Pastors - Happy the Flocks - who are In-
spired with this heavenly Gift - We may be despised of
men - but thou is a Crown of Unlarned Glor Refu? for
us in heaven - We may be poor in this world, but we are
rich of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light -

In ^{the} ~~that~~ Great and Glorious Day when the Son of
God shall descend from Heaven to be glorified in his
Saints & Admired in them that believe - We shall
stand before him with Comfort - & be advanced to ^{positions}
of distinguished dignity & favour -

Then Our Compassionate Saviour Notwithstanding our
Innumerable Sins and Impurities - will acknow-
ledge us as his Disciples and Friends - ^{They} ~~but~~ will he say
to the ^{true} faithful Ministers of Christ Well done thou Good
& faithful Servant Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord -

Then will he say to the Whole Company of true Believers
Come & Blessed of my Father Inherit the Kingdom
prepared for you from the foundation of the world

To w. v.

Amen.

of the: Holy: Spirit: so: soon: as: the: Holy: Spirit: shall: be: given