

sermon notes

Pastor Tony Caffey, VBVF | No Other Name

March 9, 2025 | "Why Does God Allow Trials?" | **Acts 4:23–37**

- 1) Trials _____ unity and togetherness (4:23–24a)
- 2) Trials _____ theological reflection (4:24b–28)
- 3) Trials _____ fervency and potency in prayer (4:29–30)
- 4) Trials _____ faithful disciples (4:31)
- 5) Trials _____ displays of generosity in community (4:32–37)

Questions for further application of God's Word:

GO DEEPER

Read Acts 4:23–31. How is this passage connected to its context, especially Acts 4:1–22? Why does God allow trials in our lives? What is the difference between trials and consequences of sin? Do trials cause you to draw close to other believers or isolate from other believers? Have particular trials allowed you to deepen your relationship with a trusted friend or your spouse? If so, share that experience.

Read Acts 4:32–37. What is the correlation between church unity and generosity? What is the correlation between commitment to Christ's mission and generosity? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in all of this?

How is togetherness and community emphasized in Acts 4:23–37? People seem to have a natural longing for fellowship and community. Name some places where people look for community outside of Christ and his church. Is it possible for people to be connected to church and still lack a sense of community? Why or why not?

GET PERSONAL

How is real, biblical community experienced in the church? What are some commitments that God's people need to make if they are to experience a biblical community? Is there anything in your life right now that hinders this?

Read Acts 4:23–30. What are some components of this prayer that Luke recorded? How did this prayer incorporate Scripture? Are you in the habit of incorporating Scripture into your prayer life? Do you affirm God's sovereignty in prayer? Are your prayers overly focused on requests of God? List 2 or 3 principles on prayer that we can glean from the example in this passage.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Is there anyone in your life to whom you could say, "that man/woman is a generous person!" Take some time to praise God for those individuals. In light of this passage, how is God challenging you to be generous? As the Spirit leads, be specific and write out one change that you can put into practice in the next year. Share this with an accountability partner.

ADVANCED QUESTION

In Acts 4:30 the disciples prayed for God to give them boldness and to do more signs and wonders in their midst. Should we pray the same? Is it wrong for us to pray for God to perform signs and wonders? What are some dangers that we should avoid?