

Text: Acts 4:23-31

Title: The Appropriate Response to Opposition

Proposition: We must not allow opposition to *diminish* our devotion but rather to **deepen** it.

When faced with opposition, the church of Christ should:

1. **Press Together** — in Fellowship

- a. United in Identity
- b. United in Responsibility
- c. Unity in Heart
- d. United in Mind

2. **Press Up** — to her Master

- a. In Worship
- b. In Deference
- c. In Dependence
- d. In Duty

3. **Press In** — to the Scriptures

- a. In Humility
- b. In Preparation
- c. In Study
- d. In Meditation

4. **Press On** — in its Mission

- a. To Continue Christ's Work
- b. To Proclaim the Gospel
- c. To Adorn the Gospel
- d. To Glorify the Godhead

23 And when they were released, they went to their own¹
and reported to them all that the chief priests and elders said.

24 And they who heard lifted their voice to God as-one² and said,
‘O **Master**³, You⁴ are He Who
MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM⁵,
Who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David **Your servant**, said,
WHY DID THE NATIONS RAGE-IN-CONTEMPT⁶
AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE A FUTILE *PLOT*⁷?
WHY DID THE KINGS OF THE EARTH STAND-IN-OPPOSITION AND THE RULERS JOIN
AS ONE AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST **HIS ANOINTED-ONE**⁸?
‘For indeed, they did unite in this city against **Your Holy Servant Jesus**, whom You anointed
—Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel—
to carry out all that Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.
‘And now, Lord, take note of⁹ their threats,
and give **Your slaves** what we need to—with confidence *full*¹⁰—keep on speaking¹¹ Your
Message,
at the same time extending Your hand that healing and signs and miraculous wonders
might occur through the name of **Your Holy Servant Jesus**.’
And after they prayed, the place where they had gathered was shaken,
and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
and continued speaking¹² God’s Message with confidence.

¹ fellow-slaves, i.e., those belonging to the household of the same Master, entrusted with the same mission – cf. v.29

² emphatic

³ *devspotā* (déspota)←*despovthV* in the ordinary sense, *master*, as opposed to slave – cf. Tit.2:9; when used of God, *Master/Sovereign Lord*, as one who is especially recognized for having superiority over and holding claim on a person (here paired with ‘your slaves’ v.29) – cf. Lk.2:29; Rv.6:10, and as Owner – cf. 2Ti.2:21

⁴ emphatic

⁵ Ps.146:4

⁶ *ejfruvaxan*(*efrúaksan*)←*fruvassw* [only here in NT] used outside scripture literally to describe the snorting of a horse eager for the race or the crowing of a rooster, and figuratively to describe the effrontery of arrogant, insolent men.

⁷ lit., something empty

⁸ Ps.2:1,2

⁹ lit., look upon – cf. Lk.1:25

¹⁰ emphatic

¹¹ taken as a distributive present, i.e., the same action occurring customarily yet intermittently

¹² taken as a distributive imperfect