

Wednesday 29th April Reflection

Acts 4:1-12

Acts 4:7 "By what power or by what name did you do this?"

"By what power or by what name?" was the question "The name of Jesus Christ" is Peter's answer. "There is power in the name of Jesus," so goes the words of a not so new song. Power in the name because the name carries with it the authority of God.

It used to be that you could talk of the difference between power and authority in terms of the car had the power whilst the Policeman had the authority to stop the car. In a game of rock, paper, scissors authority would out rank power.

Often when people have been through a tough time they may say to someone "I wasn't on my own." They mean they knew the presence of Jesus, of God, there to help them through. Yet there is a reluctance to name the name of Jesus because of what other might think.

Here in Chapter 4 of the book of Acts we find Peter and John being arrested and then questioned about what they have been doing in terms of healing and teaching the crowds.

What were they to say? Here they found themselves before the same court, which had been assembled to question Jesus about 8 weeks prior. Here is Peter who we know disowned Jesus whilst Jesus was being questioned. Not this time? Here was a new Peter standing before those asking question, empowered by the resurrected Jesus and the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit.

Peter, simply and straightforwardly answers, this "good deed done to someone who was sick" (v. 9) was done in "the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead" (v. 10).

What courage, given that this same court had called for Jesus to be killed! As is often the case our knowledge of how the story unfolds dampens the true courage of Peter's bold conviction. When Peter spoke with such boldness he could not have known if the Sanhedrin would decide that John and himself should be killed as Jesus had been.

Still today people who profess to be followers of Christ face questions about their personal experience with Jesus, in many different settings throughout the world, often far more perilous than ours. I wonder are we as bold as Peter, and others around the world, in proclaiming our trust and faith in Jesus and the power of his name which comes with the authority of no lesser being than God.

Regardless of our courage there is power in the name of Jesus, backed with the authority of the Godhead, and in his name we pray, in his name we proclaim salvation and the forgiveness of sins.

Prayer.

Gracious God, Almighty One, powerful and full of authority we pause in this moment to remember who you are, to worship you, to seek your glory that we might live with the courage to proclaim our trust in you, your presence and your grace. Amen