

Redefining significance: how to surprise your biggest critics

Acts Series: "Completely Irreligious, Yet Radically Christian" Part 7

February 21, 2021

Acts 4:1-22

I. HOW OUR WORLD DEFINES SIGNIFICANCE:

1. _____ . (People know who I am.)
2. _____ . (I have money to buy/do what I want.)
3. _____ . (What I say goes. Period.)

II. HOW GOD DEFINES SIGNIFICANCE:

1. People who allow _____ to work _____ them.
(not people who do work for God)

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them..." 4:8a

"Each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward." 1 Corinthians 3:10-14

2. People of _____.
(those who capitalize on spiritual opportunities)

“Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.” Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.’ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” 4:8-13

HOW CAN I BECOME MORE COURAGEOUS IN MY FAITH?

- A) _____ Up. (see people from God’s perspective)

- B) _____ Up. (ask God to be able to see the opportunities)

- C) _____ Up. (participate in a spiritual community)

3. People who _____ more and more like _____.
(character that cannot be explained apart from the presence of God)

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.”
4:13

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” Matthew 5:6

**4. People who are _____ to _____.
(those who are willing to pay the price)**

“Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God.” 4:18-19

“Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” 2 Timothy 3:12

*“Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.”
John 15:20*

**5. People who are _____ about _____.
(those who stop trying to find significance without Him)**

“For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” 4:20

“Many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. “We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.” John 6:66-69 (NASB)

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” 4:12

Is it arrogant to insist that Jesus is the only way?

Arrogance is an attitude of perceived superiority over equals. Humility is an attitude of gratitude toward an obvious superior. To accept the message of Christ is to humbly admit that we cannot help ourselves and that Christ alone can help us. To truly accept Christ, we must first rid ourselves of any personal arrogance.

We *dare not* arrogantly say that we are better than anyone else, for not one of us deserves God's the gift of salvation. But we *dare to* say that Jesus is the only way because we have come to know that only He has performed the impossible task of saving unworthy people like us. For this we express humble gratitude.

Scripture passages from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

Home Church Discussion Guide: redefining significance

1. How would our culture describe a person of significance? When are you tempted to pursue 'man-made significance'? 2. In reading Acts 4:1-7, what outward signs of 'significance' were getting Peter and John in trouble? If we

are following the Spirit of God, when can we expect to experience conflict? 3. Read Acts 4:8-12. How does Peter's example give us a great picture as to how believers act when they are 'filled with the Spirit'? Why is this so threatening to existing power structures? 4. Read Acts 4:13-22. How do these verses demonstrate that God's significance always trumps man's attempts? If you were a 'fly on the wall' at this interrogation, how would you describe Peter and John's disposition? The religious leaders? What is the irony in this? What can we learn about God's presence in our lives? 5. If knowing Jesus shapes our character (so that people actually notice *that we've been with Jesus*), what area of your character would you ask Jesus to adjust to become more like Himself? Pray for one another.