

Acts 4

The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. ²They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day.

⁴But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand. ⁵The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. ⁶Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. ⁷They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?

"⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰then 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.

¹¹Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone."¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."¹³ 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.

¹⁴But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. ¹⁵So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. ¹⁶"What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

¹⁸Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."²¹ After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened.

²²For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.²³ On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:"Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

²⁶The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly

.³² All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. ³³ With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all

³⁴ that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales. ³⁵ and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need. ³⁶ Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"), ³⁷ sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character

- Who were the men who came up to Peter and John?. What were their roles within the Jewish society?
- Why were they so greatly disturbed by the apostle's teachings about Jesus and the resurrection?
- Have you had this response from anybody when you've spoken to them about Jesus?
- They seized Peter and John and put them in jail for the night. What do you think it was like for them to be seized?
- The apostle's teachings had not been in vain. Many who heard believed and increased their numbers.
- Peter and John are brought before the elders and high priest. The same leaders who had condemned Jesus to death.
- They wanted to know by what name or power the apostles had healed the lame man. There is power in the name of Jesus.
- What is it to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Peter was given a great boldness
- Peter pulls no punches. He was not intimidated by these leaders
- He lets them know that it was them who crucified Jesus but it was God who raised him from the dead.
- Why were these leaders so astonished that un-schooled, ordinary men had such courage?
- The healed lame man was evidence of the miraculous healing power in the name of Jesus.
- Why was the Sanhedrin so concerned with what to do with Peter and John?
- It would appear that everyone in Jerusalem knew about this healing...news travels fast!!
- Peter and John were warned not to teach or speak in Jesus name any longer.
- What was their response? How would you respond to such a request?
- By warning them not to speak His name, did they think that would be the end of Jesus?
- Why was it that they could not decide how to punish Peter and John?
- What does it mean for Peter and John to go back to their own people?
- How did they respond when they heard all that Peter and John told them?.
- How important is corporate and personal prayer in your life?
- Have you ever sensed the Holy Spirit enabling you to speak the word of God boldly?
- All those who believed were one in heart and mind. What does that mean to you?
- God's grace was so powerfully at work in them that their needs were met.
- Have you experienced God's grace working so powerfully in your life?
- How do you feel about selling your houses of fields and sharing all your possessions with everyone?