

Acts 4.1-22

Who's in Charge Here?

JOY and EXCITEMENT filled SOME PARTS of City of JERUSALEM

LAME Man HEALED – Jumping and Praising God – People AMAZED

5000 Men – and maybe even More Women & Children > PEACE with God

Many thousands had HOPE beyond DEATH with News of RESURRECTION!

EVERYONE in Jerusalem should be EXCEEDINGLY HAPPY? Right??

NOT so FAST!! NOT Everyone in Jerusalem Giving HIGH-FIVES....

### 1. Council in Calamity

a. Crisis - NOT Clear if Sermon was INTERRUPTED or CONCLUDED

v. 1 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.

NOT Professional POLICE Force > PRIEST Appointed for SECURITY

2<sup>nd</sup> in AUTHORITY to the CHIEF Priest > SUPERVISED Activities in Temple

Sadducees – possibly NAMED after ZADOK the High Priest under King David

1<sup>st</sup> C – WEALTHY POLITICALLY INFLUENTIAL Jews – Many Priests

vs. 5,6 The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family.

Annas – High Priest EMERITUS > DEPOSED by Romans, POPULAR w/ Jews

CAIAPHAS – Son in Law of A. > INSTALLED by Rome as HIGH PRIEST

John & Alexander UNKNOWN Today > but SURELY WELL KNOWN Then

COUNCIL – FAMILY Business – 5 of Annas' SONS Held Office

b. Conflict – Council tasked to GUARD TEMPLE of God

v. 3 They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day.

TEMPLE of God > Place to MEET God and find His FORGIVENESS

It was RIGHT for them to INVESTIGATE – New Teachers / Teachings

They were RESPONSIBLE to be SHEPHERDS of the FLOCK of Israel

But FINAL AUTHORITY was GOD and His WORD

v. 2 the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.

2 Reasons UPSET by Preaching of Resurrection 2<sup>nd</sup> REASON > BAD Theology

Theology of Sadducees:

1) Moses Law – 1<sup>st</sup> 5 Books of Hebrew Scriptures were ONLY True Revelation

2) Messiah CAME Already! During MACCABEAN Era of Israel

3) Mankind has ONLY THIS LIFE – No Resurrection, No Afterlife

(The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.) Acts 23.8

According to their teaching, souls perish together with bodies. Josephus re: Sadducees

The high priestly dynasty of Annas and Caiaphas, who controlled the temple and its profitable concessions in money-changing and the sale of sacrificial animals were Sadducees. Dennis Johnson

c. Control 1<sup>st</sup> Official Recognition of the CHURCH – Followers of Way

v. 7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

71 Members of Council / SANHEDRIN – Maybe NOT ALL Present

Still INTIMIDATING for 2 Galilean Fishermen – ORDINARY HOMEBOYS

v. 2 *They were greatly disturbed* because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.

MAIN Reason UPSET by Preaching of Resurrection >> Just KILLED the Guy  
 SAME Leaders led TRIAL of Jesus MONTHS Before > Thought Matter ENDED  
 Now take FORCEFUL ACTION to STOP the Spreading of this NAME

MAIN Reason for PERSECUTION of Church > Not Theology but POWER

Most IMPORTANT Question for Leaders - Who's in Charge Here?

PROBLEM with Apostles – PREACHING Challenged Council's Authority

They saw the apostles as both agitators and heretics, both disturbers of the peace and enemies of the truth. John Stott

#### d. Confused

vs. 14-16 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it."

CLOSED Door > EMBARRASSED >> CLOSED Minds & BIBLES

How can we IGNORE the Scripture AND the SIGN of this Healed Man!?

v. 22 For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

CRITICS Attack Luke here – How does he KNOW Closed Door Conversation?

PAUL Might have Been There – GAMALIEL Probably Was There

I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning... Luke 1.3

It is no wonder...the leading priests and Sadducees should be upset...the Pharisees' belief in resurrection of the righteous at history's end was bad enough, but to proclaim that a crucified Messianic pretender had come back from the dead in their own time – unthinkable!  
Dennis Johnson

## 2. Courageous Criminals

### a. Fixed on the Scriptures

Ancient Picture of EARLIEST Gatherings of CHRIST FOLLOWERS  
CENTRAL Role of Word of God – Risen Jesus TAUGHT Word for 40 Days  
Peter thought DEEPLY about Hebrew Scriptures > Jesus as Promised Messiah

Gathered in Homes and Temple Colonnade:

they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching Acts 2.42

SCRIPTURES are CENTRAL Piece of FURNITURE in the HOUSE of God

Testimony is telling people what Jesus has done for me in my personal experience, but evangelism is telling people what Jesus has done for the world in history.

Roy Clements

NEW Element INTRODUCED in Chapter 4 of Acts: PERSECUTION

Ch 4 BEGINS the Conflict between Authorities & Followers of Jesus

Only 3 Chapters in REST of Entire BOOK will NOT Mention PERSECUTION

Ch 28 Book ENDS with PAUL – Apostle to GENTILES in ROME in PRISON

One thing: TEACH/PREACH – Happy, Clappy, Holy Huddle of Loving Believers

Previous 2 Sermons of Peter on STREET to CURIOUS, Some-what INTERESTED

NOW before RELIGIOUS Leaders – ANTAGONISTIC, even HOSTILE

Some of the greatest opponents of renewal movements within the church have been its leaders. Ajith Fernando

vs. 2,3 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They seized Peter and John

The truth of God is too radical for all people to respond to it passively. Ajith Fernando

v. 3 PETER and JOHN > Spend NIGHT in SANHEDRIN SUITES

Complimentary Breakfast – BREAD and WATER

STILL FIXED on the Word > FEARLESS enough to be FUNNY!

AMBIGUOUS CHARGE Against Criminals > Peter CLARIFIES what EXACTLY vs. 8-11 "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.'

Can you SEE the MOVIE Version of this COURT Scene

Judge asks, "What is the CHARGE AGAINST Accused > **KINDNESS to Cripple!**

Quotes PSALM 118 to these BUILDERS > Leaders of Israel SHOULD BUILD

Psalm 118.22 - Became one of FAVORITE Texts of EARLY Church

So often in the New Testament, God's purpose for Israel finds its fulfillment in the single-handed work of Christ. F.F. Bruce

Sanhedrin SHOULD BUILD Community of Faith > BREAK It APART

by REJECTING THE CORNERSTONE of God's HOUSEHOLD

3<sup>rd</sup> Sermon of Peter – EACH One he tells Listeners > YOU KILLED your Messiah!

Christian Beliefs & Practices TODAY can AROUSE Hostility of WORLD  
Conversion – Justice – Compassion – Righteousness – Holiness – Glory of God

### b. Filled with the Spirit

COUNCIL Met many RABBLE-ROUSERS, TROUBLE-MAKERS, CRAZIES

One time walking down HOLLYWOOD Blvd > Met President of RUSSIA

Asked me for a DOLLAR so he could buy ANOTHER DRINK!

Peter & John MORE than CRAZY, Trouble-Makers > Performed a MIRACLE

ECHOES of Pentecost > FRESH ANOINTING before this FIRST ATTACK

v. 8 Peter, *filled with the Holy Spirit*, said to them: "Rulers and elders!....

Not Long before JESUS Stood Before Sanhedrin > P & J reminded them of JESUS

v. 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.

FISHERMEN – NOT Authorized Leaders or Professional Scribes or Teachers

FOLLOWERS of Jesus the Nazarene – but he was DEAD!

UNEDUCATED Laymen more POWER & AUTHORITY than ENTIRE Council

SAME word of ‘unschooled’ applied to Jesus > LAYMAN / AMATEUR

The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?"  
John 7.15

God has used UNSCHOOLED Preachers > Dwight Moody, Charles Spurgeon

NO TITLES – NO TRAINING – ONLY THE TRUTH of GOD

v. 13 – Deep IMPRESSION on ME as College Student – Wanted to Serve Lord

Do I REALLY NEED to FINISH College and THEN Go to SEMINARY??

God uses Theological Education > Faithfulness to Scripture / Lives of Professors  
30 Years since Graduated Seminary – Forgot Lectures – Loved God, Word, & Me

Peter & John FILLED with HOLY SPIRIT – AT Least TWICE in ONE DAY!!

v. 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.

...be *continuously* filled with the Spirit lit. Ephesians 5.18

Luke's description of effective ministry in the New Testament era: speaking out of the fullness of the Spirit and out of the knowledge of the Scriptures. Ajith Fernando

v. 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.

c. Focused on Salvation – Peter wants Council SAVED NOT SHAMED!

Apostles saw ANY Crowd – Even Sanhedrin – Chance to PREACH Risen Jesus!

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

v. 9 healed / v. 12 saved

NAME of Jesus Makes ALL Things RIGHT – RESTORES, REDEEMS, RENEWS

sins wiped out...refreshing...restore everything Acts 3.19, 21

PHYSICAL Healing POINTS to Jesus as HEALER, SAVIOR, LORD of ALL

God's AMAZING MERCY and PATIENCE with People – Seen in ISRAEL

Numerous Prophets Sent / Most KILLED – John the Baptist / BEHEADED

VERY Son of God / NAILED to Cross – Apostles & Miracles / ARRESTED

May GOD'S MERCY to Fill Us > PATIENTLY Witness to Lost, Rebellious World

Moody, the world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to him.  
Henry Varley to Dwight Moody

A man! Varley meant any man. Varley didn't say he had to be educated, or brilliant, or anything else. Just a man. Well, by the Holy Spirit in me, I'll be that man.  
Dwight Moody

### 3. Christ-followers in Conflict

#### a. Citizenship – Hold 2 Kingdom Passports > Sometimes Worlds Collide

vs. 17,18 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name." Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Christian – One who SUBMITS to Governing Authorities – Seen thru Whole Bible  
Joseph & VERY PREGNANT Mary – Difficult Journey to Bethlehem for CENSUS  
Jesus and Disciples were TAX-PAYERS – even if COIN SMELLED like FISH  
Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God,  
honor the king.  
1 Peter 2.17

WARNING – Jewish Law: For some VIOLATIONS Person ONLY Warned  
for 1<sup>st</sup> Violation – May have acted in IGNORANCE – 2<sup>nd</sup> Time > PUNISHED  
Court ORDERS NO MORE Preaching > Preach Again = CONTEMPT of Court

Did NOT DISCREDIT their Message > Just DENIED Rights of People to HEAR  
H.S. Dance – Preaching Buddy John – Band took Break – Microphone > STAGE  
CROWD just Waiting to HEAR John & I PREACH Gospel of Jesus  
Started – Stopped by Dance Chaperones / PE Teacher “Tomorrow is YOUR Day!”  
We DID NOT INSIST Preaching at HS SATURDAY Dance – WHY??

UNIQUE Situation here in Acts > Story of EARLY CHURCH in Jerusalem

NO OTHER Church – Messengers – ONLY Opportunity for Hearing GOSPEL

They MURDERED the MESSIAH > NOW they MUZZLE His MESSENGERS  
TRYING to CLOSE the BARN Door > But COWS have ALREADY RUN OUT

God's clear command trumps every human instruction that contradicts it.

Dennis Johnson

ISSUE > Clear CONTRADICTION – Not just Inconvenient, Expensive, Difficult

Gov't has RIGHT to Ask Citizens DO DIFFICULT Things > TAXES & DRAFT

If they OBEYED this Command of Man > DISOBEY Clear Command of God

Peter & John COULD Have WALKED Away with No PAIN or PUNISHMENT

Simply SUBMIT Quietly to Council's DEMANDS – Be Obedient and Compliant

FIRM Resolve brought TROUBLE to Them > RESOLVE made them LIKE Christ

IDENTITY was Given by Jesus Himself:

...when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses... Acts 1.8

**b. Clarity** – Normal Behavior KEEP QUIET, Stay OUT of TROUBLE Now!

vs. 19,20 But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Notice Peter's Question > Is it RIGHT? – Not Pleasant, Profitable, Popular

Join FAITHFUL Company of God-Directed RESISTERS to Unrighteous Laws

Hebrew Midwives protected Jewish Baby Boys from Pharaoh – incl Moses  
 Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego refused to BOW Down to Government IDOL  
 Daniel refused to OBEY Man-made LAW that FORBID Prayer to True God

Jesus gave the FAITHFUL Witness before Pontius Pilate

All of these were COURTEOUS, RESPECTFUL, but FIRM and RESOLUTE

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. 1 Corinthians 4.20

SOCRATES Ordered by COUNCIL in ATHENS to STOP teaching his Philosophy

Men of Athens, I respect and love you, but I shall obey the god rather than you, and while I live and am able to continue, I shall never give up philosophy or stop exhorting you and pointing out the truth to any of you whom I may meet.

Socrates on trial in Athens

Peter the FISHERMAN MIGHT Not have Known SOCRATES

Luke the SCHOLAR PROBABLY Did

CLEAR Message of Peter ONLY Way to GOD >

vs. 10,12 then know this, you and all the people of Israel:....Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

The word 'must' in the second part is related to the 'name.' Peter is saying that everyone in the world *must* be saved only by the name of Jesus. Ajith Fernando

MAJORITY Opinion in World > Does NOT MATTER WHAT you Believe

As long as you are SINCERE and NICE – And Wear TIGHT JEANS!

NOBODY likes NARROW-MINDED EXCLUSIVE Claims of ABSOLUTE Truth

With one sentence Christ's apostle sweeps away the sophisticated follies of post-modern relativism and religious pluralism. There are not many paths to salvation; there is one, and his Name is Jesus.

Dennis Johnson

Faithful CONFESSION is FOUNDATIONAL to being a Christian

If you *confess* with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you *confess* and are saved.

Romans 10.9-10

### c. Compassion

What the world expects of Christians is that (they)...should speak out loud and clear...that never a doubt, never the slightest doubt, could arise in the heart of the simplest man.

Albert Camus, existential philosopher

True to SCRIPTURE you MUST be EXCLUSIVIST > No other Savior, but Jesus

True to Scripture, Must NOT be ARROGANT > Not about YOU but JESUS

Receiving a SAVIOR requires REJECTION of SELF > Confession of FAILURE

True Salvation leads to GRATITUDE and GLORY to God our SAVIOR

Example of Jesus > FIRM CONVICTIONS and FERVENT COMPASSION

Church GREW Amidst OPPOSITION and ARREST – 2 Verses LINKED by Luke

vs. 3,4 They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

Number of MEN 5000 – Not Counting WOMEN & Kids – Amazing GROWTH

Jesus DIED and ROSE to LIFE > When Church FOLLOWS His Path we LIVE

PRINCIPLE – Seen in 1<sup>st</sup> C and PROVEN RIGHT UP to 21<sup>st</sup> C

NUMBERS are IMPORTANT to God – Not for Success of Man & Churches

For GLORY of His Name – Precious People DELIVERED from Eternal HELL  
Remember NUMBERS have NAMES – KNOWN by God who LOVES Them

When we THINK of Christianity in AFRICA > often Sub-Saharan  
Africa ONLY

JESUS is Building HIS CHURCH even in EGYPT -

Mubarack supporters started to attack peaceful demonstrators midway through the protests at Tahrir Square - a few thousand convicts broke out of jail - causing havoc on the streets. On Friday, February 11th, the number of protesters swelled because it was the day of worship. However, they were also most vulnerable because of it. (They prostrate themselves in prayer.) What better opportunity for the trouble-makers to cause disruption to the protests. Then the Christians took the initiative and did a most gallant thing. They held hands and formed a human protective wall around the Muslims so that they could fulfil their religious obligation.



### **Miracle on Sunday, February 13th:**

The Kasr El Debora Evangelical Church is located right next to Tahrir Square. For a few weeks its 8,000 regular worshippers were not able to get to the sanctuary to pray. On Sunday, February 13th, they took the bold step of taking the worship to the Square. This is totally unthinkable just a month ago. In the past, this would be illegal and it would draw serious and deadly consequences not only from the government but from the public. However, this is a dream of the Church, that someday they will be able to opening and publicly worship the Lord. 250,000 were at the Square that day, most of them Muslims. Due to the Christian gesture on February 11th, the worship went on without any disturbances. In fact, many in the Square joined in the worship, in prayers and in singing.

### **Miracle on Wednesday, February 16th:**

With this historic breakthrough, Christians invited Muslims to come to Church to pray for the nation, for peace and for the new leader. Amazingly, one thousand Muslims joined 2,500 Christians in prayer

Want to REACH 1000's for Christ? > How did APOSTLES Do It?

Showed COMPASSION of Christ to ONE LAME BEGGAR on STREET

Care for ONE INSIGNIFICANT Man link to THOUSANDS Following Jesus

BEST EVIDENCE of Truth of Gospel is a LIFE that has been Changed by It

Attempt IMPOSSIBLE – World will KNOW – ONLY God can DO IT!

## Acts 4

1. 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. 2. They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3. They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 4. But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand. 5. The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 6. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family. 7. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?" 8. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 9. If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, 10. 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. 11. He is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone. ' 12. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men 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. 14. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. 15. So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. 16. "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. 17. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name." 18. Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. 20. For 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. 22. For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

Acts of Peter Apostle to Jews	Peter & Paul: Chief Apostles in Acts	Acts of Paul Apostle to Gentiles
3.2	Healing of a Lame Man	14.8
5.15 (shadow)	Healing Power	(kerchief) 19.12
5.16	Exorcist	16.18
8.18	Confronted Sorcerer	13.6
9.36	Raised the Dead	20.9
10.9	Commissioned to Gentile mission by Vision	22.17-21