

Discussion Questions

April 21, 2024

Acts 4:1-22

Obedying God, Not Man



1. Read Acts 4:13

What stood out to the leaders about Peter & John?

Discuss how realistic it is for us to seek to live & love in such a way that people will begin to encounter Jesus by encountering us. How do we practically cultivate that way of living?

2. In this passage we see that even after witnessing a radical miracle, the leaders still would not believe in Jesus. How someone could witness such a miracle and not believe.

As a follow up, discuss what does it take then for someone to actually believe?

3. Read: Acts 4:15-20

Peter says they are to Obey God and not men, so they will keep on sharing about Jesus even if it means they are thrown in jail. What are the main areas you wrestle with giving into the fear of man today?

In what main ways do you struggle with pursuing God's vision for life in His Kingdom here on Earth and instead pursue your own vision for what the good-life is?

What are realistic shifts that can be made to re-align our vision to His?

4. Summarize how Peter & John responded to the persecution against them by the governing bodies.

As we move closer towards a post-Christian society, how should we as Christians respond to increasing targeting of Christians, infringing on rights, and even persecutions that will become more and more prevalent in the years ahead? (share more than "love them")

5. In Acts 4:8, Peter is again filled with the Spirit and that is what empowers Him with boldness and gives him the words to speak.

What does this kind of filling looks like for us today?

How we can cultivate this way of life?

Acts 4:1–22 (NLT)

While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees. These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead. They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning. But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of men who believed now totaled about 5,000.

The next day the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, along with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and other relatives of the high priest. They brought in the two disciples and demanded, "By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?"

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of our people, are we being questioned today because we've done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead. For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says, 'The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."

The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing right there among them, there was nothing the council could say. So they ordered Peter and John out of the council chamber and conferred among themselves.

"What should we do with these men?" they asked each other. "We can't deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it. But to keep them from spreading their propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus' name again." So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.

But Peter and John replied, "Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard." The council then threatened them further, but they finally let them go because they didn't know how to punish them without starting a riot. For everyone was praising God for this miraculous sign - the healing of a man who had been lame for more than forty years.

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Peter was saying not only that Jesus himself had been raised, but that this was the start and the sign of God's eventual restoration of everything (3:21). That was bound to be bad news for the chief priests and the Sadducees

Luke 12:11–12 (NLT)

And when you are brought to trial in the synagogues and before rulers and authorities, don't worry about how to defend yourself or what to say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what needs to be said.

John 14:6 (NLT)

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

Acts 4:13 (CSB)

When they observed the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and recognized that they had been with Jesus.

John 11:45–48 (NLT)

Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen. But some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the leading priests and Pharisees called the high council together. [the exact same council Peter & John are standing before] “What are we going to do?” they asked each other. “This man certainly performs many miraculous signs. If we allow him to go on like this, soon everyone will believe in him. Then the Roman army will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation.”

Luke 16:26 (NLT)

But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will repent of their sins and turn to God.

John 15:20 (NIV)

No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also

2 Tim. 3:12 (NIV)

Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.