

Acts 4:1-31

I. The Charge: Speaking/Teaching Confidently About Jesus Vs. 2-12

Vs. 2 Leaders Issue a twofold charge against Peter & John

1. You are teaching the people (you don't have the credentials)
2. You are teaching **about Jesus** & resurrection of the dead
 - Priests & Sadducees were to be the shepherds of Israel (keepers of the law)
 - Jesus called them out and indicted them for leading Israel astray like hirelings.

The Sanhedrin Was a Family Affair

Vs. 5-6 *"On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family."*

- NASB **"priestly descent"** several others say **"family"** They were related
- Annas was former high priest until his son-in-law Caiaphas took over
- 5 of Annas' sons became high priest, one son-in-law, & one grandson high priest
- Any disruption the status quo is seen as a threat to this **"dynasty"**

The Leaders Ask a Twofold Question of Peter & John Vs. 7

Vs. 7 *"By what power or in what name have you done this?"*

1. By what supernatural power have you done this?
2. By who's authority are you legally permitted to do this?

Matt. 12:22-27 (Leaders tried to credit satan) **Matt. 21:23-27** (Leaders challenged authority)

Vs. 8 Luke tells us that Peter was *"filled with the Holy Spirit began to say to them..."*

- Peter began speaking boldly right in the courts.
- F.F. Bruce (commentary) notes "the **defendants** are now on the **offensive**".

Vs. 8-9 *"Are we on trial for making a sick man healthy?"*

- Leaders hated Jesus for healing on the Sabbath.
- Not moved by the miracle, just mad that he broke the Law.

Peter Reveals 3 Things About This Miracle Vs. 10-12

1. This healing happened by the **NAME of Jesus Vs.10-11**

- The One **YOU** crucified, God raised, who is the cornerstone **YOU** rejected"

Psalms 118 *"cornerstone builders rejected...."*

2. This man stands before you in perfect health (physically speaking) **Vs 10**

3. The NAME of Jesus brings salvation (spiritually speaking). **Vs. 12**

There is no other name by which salvation can occur except the name of Jesus.

When we Speak the truth we're likely get in trouble for it.

II. The Verdict: Cease Speaking Confidently About Jesus Vs. 13-22

Leaders See The Evidence & Hear Testimony Vs 13-14

Vs. 13 *"Now as they observed the confidence of Peter & John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus."*

- Here we see the Rulers acknowledge the confidence with which Peter & John spoke
- The result of the Holy Spirit's filling is seen by the Rulers.

Vs. 14 *"They had nothing to say in reply..."*

- **Luke 21:12-15** Rulers called them *"untrained"*. Jesus promised to give them help.
- Jesus promised that his words would be irrefutable.

The Leaders Willfully Acknowledge The Facts - But Reject the Truth Vs. 15-18

Vs. 15-16 A noteworthy miracle as taken place and EVERYONE has seen it.

- **Vs. 16** *"the miracle has taken place **THROUGH THEM & IS APPARENT TO ALL**"*

1. A miracle has taken place through them.
2. Everyone has seen this.
3. We cannot deny it ourselves.

• **Vs. 17** *"Let us warn them to speak no more to any man **in this name.**"*

- Primary concern is the spreading of the Gospel
- The order is to no longer speak in Jesus name.

• **Vs. 18** *"When they brought them back in they commanded them not to speak or teach at all **in the name of Jesus.**"*

Peter & John's Response to the Court Order Vs. 19-22

Vs. 19-20 *"We are obeying God, we cannot stop speaking what we've seen and heard."*

- Apostles reveal that they can't stop **speaking**.
- They indict the Rulers before God Himself and ask if it's right that they should obey men over God.

Vs. 21-22 *".....they let them go (finding no basis on which they might punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what happened."*

- This is an interesting irony in light of the crowds during Jesus' trials.
- **Mark 15:11** *"But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead."*
- Previously they used the crowds to their advantage

Vs. 22 Luke notes the lame man's age to reveal the authenticity of the miracle.

When we speak the TRUTH they'll tell us to stop& likely threaten punishment.

III. The Release: Sparks Greater Confidence Speaking About Jesus Vs. 23-31

Vs. 23 “.....*they went back and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.*”

- This obviously would have included the command to stop speaking about Jesus
- **Vs. 18** “**they commanded them**”
- **Vs. 21** “**when they had threatened them further...**”

Disciples' Prayer Part 1 - They Acknowledge God & His Sovereignty Vs. 24-28

Vs. 24 “*when they heard this they lifted their voices to God with one accord...*”

- Much like their unity in the Upper Room in Acts 1:14 they were of one accord.
- As soon as they heard the reports from Peter & John they cried out to God
- Disciples quote **Psalm 146:6** “*Oh Lord, You made the heavens & the Earth & the sea....*”
 - The begin by acknowledging God
 - Jesus taught this “**Our Father Who Art in Heaven hallowed by Thy name...**”
- Vs. 25-26** They quote **Psalm 2** worldly authority standing against God is futile
 - **Vs 4 of Psalm 2** says that “*God sits in the heavens and laughs at the futile thinking of men raging against Him.*”
 - **Romans 8:31** “*if God is for us, who can be against us?*”
 - Frederick Douglas “**One & God make a majority**”
 - **Psalm 2:2** specifically says that “*earthly rulers stand against God's Anointed*”
 - NET “**anointed king**” • CET “**chosen king**”

Vs. 27 The Apostles elaborate what standing against the Lord has looked like

1. Herod stood against Jesus
2. Pilate stood against Jesus
3. The Gentiles stood against Jesus
4. The Peoples of Israel stood against Jesus

Ultimately the charges & threats against believers is a charge against Jesus himself.

Vs. 28 “***Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven....***”

Disciples Prayer Part 2 - They Ask for Boldness & Confidence Vs. 29-30

Vs. 29-30 “*Take note of their threats and grant your servants the confidence to speak boldly, while You also work through us to perfume signs and wonders in Jesus name*”

- Notice that speech & teaching are inextricable from the miracles in the minds of the Apostles.
 - So far:
 - Peter gave scriptural support replacing Judas and God showed them Mathias
 - Peter explained in public speech the dispensation of the Holy Spirit
 - Peter explained the healing of the lame man.
 - The Apostles know that speech & explanation **MUST** accompany signs & wonders
 - They are careful to credit all to God.
 - “Lord **YOU** grant us confidence to speak **YOUR WORD.**”
 - While **YOU** heal & perform signs & Wonders **in JESUS name.**

The Result of Their Prayer is Another Supernatural Event Vs. 31

Vs. 31 “*they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.*”

- We see another reference to being “**filled with the Spirit**” & the purpose is an outward manifestation of speaking the word of God with boldness.”
- Notice that they prayed about signs & wonders and confidence in speech
- Notice that the results were a supernatural sign (the place was shaken) AND they all began to speak boldly with confidence.
- What a beautiful and specific answer to prayer.

When we're told to stop speaking truth, we pray for boldness and we keep speaking truth.