

Putting Feet to Your Faith

Acts 4:13-37

- Peter is in the midst of standing in front of the High Priest, his advisors, the elders, rulers, and scribes, the most powerful court in Israel, and challenged to give an answer to the question: by what power, or by who's name has he healed this lame man, in other words who has given you the authority, power, and boldness to set someone who previously was unable to attend our services, but after a touch from you is not only in here, but also rejoicing in the midst of us!
- Peter has let them know that it wasn't by his or anyone else's hands that has healed this man but by the power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ that this man who everyone has known to be crippled is now been made whole both physically as well as spiritually. **V12- "for there can be no salvation in any other but in the name of Jesus in which a man can be saved"**.

V13-37

- **V13** this response is similar to what the people said when they first heard Jesus teach- speak in **Math 7:28-29**- saying that they were amazed how He taught them not as the temple scribes but with power and authority. Here after attempting to intimidate these fishermen into recanting what they've said and thus discredit what they've done by interrogating them in front of the highest court that the Jews could supply they are left with one perplexing thought > "**wonder**".
- They initially couldn't get past that two lowly fishermen had the audacity to accuse not only the religious leaders but all of Israel of being guilty before God of killing an innocent man, and secondly that they could recite the scriptures as proof to what they were saying is true. To them how can uneducated-untrained men > meaning they haven't gone to any of their schools and learned the scriptures, gain this type of knowledge and wisdom without our help? But then it came to them, they remembered that these men instead of attending the school of religion and false hope, but had sat at the feet of the Master of relationship the Giver of both Spirit-truth.
- **V14** this left them silenced, for everything Peter said was authenticated not only by scripture but also by deeds, as the lame man stood right in their faces so there was no denying that was said is true and what was done is miraculous. **V15-16** here is where the rubber meets the road, as their doctrine, and their livelihood is facing a huge problem, they taught it's no such thing as miracles, and that Jesus and His followers were charlatans, but now an actual miracle done by Jesus followers and in His name has happened, do we renounce our beliefs and follow truth, or do we dig our heels in and ignore what has happened and figure out a way to silence it all.
- **V17-20** sadly because the hearts of these men were hard, therefore their minds were closed to the things of God, and although they couldn't outright deny that a miracle had genuinely happened, they still inwardly refused to submit to the God Who had worked the miracle. So in the name of self interest they threatened Peter and John not to preach Jesus to the people.

- But Peter and John respond **“is it right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge”**. Then followed that up with **“we cannot help but speak the things which we have seen and heard”**. **V21** this is classic enemy strategy, first to **interrogate**, and if that doesn’t work attempt to **intimidate**, but we must always remember > **2Tim 1:7 “that God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind”**. This keeps our focus on what God has said and not how we feel, as our feelings can definitely betray us in those times.
- **V22-23** this is a very import point for us to take not of. Instead of going somewhere to get alone with their thoughts, which no doubt would have had them thinking of self preservation, they immediately return back to those who are likeminded, and report all that has happened. If I surround myself with people who encourage me to put myself before the Lord then that is exactly where my flesh is going to lean to, but if I have those who think of the spiritual before the natural they will have me thinking about what is best in the Lord and that is where the peace which surpasses all understanding begins to take over in our hearts and our minds.
- **V24-30** this leads to praise, prayer, encouragement and boldness, as they began to remind one another Who it was that is in control, they start to recite scripture of the greatness of God and the frailty of man, and how the mightiest of us is powerless against our God. This allows them to give the fight over to the Lord and to not try and carry it themselves, notice they ask the Lord to take notice of what the court said, they ask the Lord to grant them boldness to continue to fulfill the ministry that they were called to, they ask the Lord to heal, and show out as they show up.
- **V31- Eph 3:20-21** tell us **“that God is able to exceedingly and abundantly give us above more than we can ask or think, according to the power that works in us”**. Their prayer is answered as God is so pleased with their response that He causes the place that there in to shake like an earthquake, as he fills them again anew with the Holy Spirit, causing them to speak the Word of God with power and boldness. **V32-33** this produces not pride but unity and humility as each one tended, not to their own needs but to the needs of others, which emboldened them to witness with great power and with great grace that Jesus was alive and working.
- **V34-37** we see an emphasis on community, but at the root of this is putting **God first, people second, material things a distant third**, when we do that the world then sees a model that is completely different than what it is used to, and the body of Christ then begins to be set apart as it was meant to be. Sadly we look too much like the world, and therefore the world can’t tell the difference, between us and it, because our list is like there’s > **self first, material things second, people a distant third**, and God nowhere to be found. If we’re going to follow **Jn 13:34-35, 1Jn 4:11-13**- this is how were able to practice how we see Barnabas the encourager live.