

Jesus For All

Week 4: Persecution, Preaching, and Prayer

Series:

- Week 1: Living for Something Bigger (Acts 1:1-11)
- Week 2: The Arrival of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-21)
- Week 3: Sermons and Gathering of the Church (Acts 2:22-47)
- Week 4: Persecution, Preaching, and Prayer (Acts 3-4:31)
- Week 5: Sharing and Purging (Acts 4:32-5:11)
- Week 6: Serving and Suffering (Acts 6-7)
- Week 7: The Truth and Baptism (Acts 8:26-40)
- Week 8: Encounter with God (Acts 9:1-31)
- Week 9: Good News for Gentiles (Acts 10-12)

Scripture:

Acts 3-4:31

Motivation (Why You Need to Know It):

Where are we at in the story of the early church?

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to empower followers to speak the good news.

Acts 1:8 (NLT) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Peter calls people to repent, turn to God, and be baptized

Acts 2:38 (NLT) Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The church begins speaking the truth and living out the good news

Acts 2:42 (NLT) All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer. **44** And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. **45** They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. **46** They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity — **47** all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Information (What You Need to Know):

Acts 3:1 (NLT) Peter and John went to the Temple one afternoon to take part in the three o'clock prayer service. **2** As they approached the Temple, a man lame from birth was being carried in. Each day he was put beside the Temple gate, the one called the Beautiful Gate, so he could beg from the people going into the Temple. **3** When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for some money. **4** Peter and John looked at him intently, and Peter said, "Look at us!" **5** The lame man looked at them eagerly, expecting some money. **6** But Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!" **7** Then Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man's feet and ankles were instantly healed and strengthened. **8** He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk! Then, walking, leaping, and praising God, he went into the Temple with them. **9** All the people saw him walking and heard him praising God. **10** When they realized he was the lame beggar they had seen so often at the Beautiful Gate, they were absolutely astounded! **11** They all rushed out in amazement to Solomon's Colonnade, where the man was holding tightly to Peter and John.

"When miracles occur, they give evidence that God is truly at work and so serve to advance the gospel." – Wayne Grudem

This man's healing set in motion a series of events -

▪ Opportunity to Share the Good News

Acts 3:12 (NLT) Peter saw his opportunity and addressed the crowd.... **16** "Through faith in the name of Jesus, this man was healed—and you know how crippled he was before. Faith in Jesus' name has healed him before your very eyes." **19** ...Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away."

▪ Opposition to the Good News

Acts 4:2 (NLT) These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead. **3** They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning. **4** But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of men who believed now totaled about 5,000.

- **Observation of the Apostles' Character**

Acts 4:13 (NLT) 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.

- ✓ **Bold**

Acts 4:17 (NLT) “But to keep them from spreading their propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus’ name again.” **18** So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. **19** But Peter and John replied, “Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? **20** We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.”

- ✓ **Ordinary** (they were uneducated)

- ✓ **Spent time with Jesus**

Application (What You Need To Do):

Instead of backing down in fear, they went to God in prayer.

Acts 4:23 (NLT) As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said. **24** When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God... **29** “And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word.”

“No one has the right to hear the gospel twice, while there remains someone who has not heard it once” - Oswald J. Smith