

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

I THE ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN JERUSALEM Acts 1-7

LESSON 4 - Persecution, Prayer, and the Fear of the Lord - Acts 4:5 - 5:11

KEY VERSE

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

PONDER¹

READ Acts 4:5 - 5:11.

WRITE the *word, phrase, or verse* that spoke to you the most. Explain. _____

PETER PREACHES TO THE SANHEDRIN²

Previously, Peter and John had been imprisoned for healing a lame man and for preaching in Jesus name the resurrection from the dead. So it came to pass, the next day, that the Jewish religious leaders began to interrogate Peter and John.

READ Acts 4:5-12.

1. Who were the religious leaders (vv. 5, 6)? _____ 3 4 5

6 7

2. How did they begin their interrogation (v. 7)? _____

3. How did Peter, empowered with the Holy Spirit,⁸ respond to their questioning (vv. 8-10)? _____

¹ PONDER: think about and consider carefully God's spiritual truths as revealed in the Word of God.

² SANHEDRIN: the council of 71 members that had supreme executive, legislative, and judicial power over the Jewish faith and lifestyle, was limited in power only by Rome.

³ rulers: members of the Jewish Sanhedrin in New Testament times.

⁴ elders - Greek *presbuteros*: a senior Sanhedrist; the full assembly of the elders of Israel.

⁵ scribes: writers and transcribers of the Law.

⁶ Annas the high priest: father-in-law to Caiaphas (see Luke 3:2, John 18:13).

⁷ Caiaphas: high priest at time of the Lord's passion (see John 18:13).

⁸ Holy Spirit: third Person of the Godhead, God is a trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

4. The Holy Spirit, who inspired the ancient psalmist (see Psalm 118:22), now confirmed through Peter, what great truth concerning Christ (Acts 4:11)?

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LOOK DEEPER

DESCRIBE Isaiah's¹⁰ prophesy concerning Christ as the Chief Cornerstone of the church.

Isaiah 28:16 _____

What does Jesus declare about Himself as the Chief Cornerstone (Matthew 21:42)? _____

5. What bold statement about Jesus did Peter conclude with (Acts 4:12)? _____

THE NAME OF JESUS FORBIDDEN

READ Acts 4:13-22.

1. What did the religious leaders notice about Peter and John (v. 13)? _____

What did they realize? _____

2. Where was the healed man (v. 14)? _____

How did he affect the religious leaders? _____

⁹ cornerstone: chief stone that holds up a building.

¹⁰ Isaiah: Old Testament prophet who spoke of the sufferings of Christ; and bold prophetic warnings mixed with visions of future blessings.

PERSONAL

How does the empowerment of the Holy Spirit working in and through Peter encourage you? _____

3. As the leaders conferred among themselves, what was their dilemma (vv. 15, 16)? _____

4. How did they attempt to stop the news of the miracle (vv. 17, 18)? _____

As Christians we are to obey government authority, except when it is contrary to God's Word.

5. Did this threat stop Peter and John (vv. 19, 20)? Explain. _____

6. Why did the leaders release Peter and John (vv. 21, 22)? _____

PERSONAL

What do you learn about facing conflict and opposition from these verses? _____

How will this lesson help you in the future? _____

THE APOSTLES PRAYER FOR BOLDNESS

READ Acts 4:23-31.

1. After being released, where did these Apostles go and what did they do (v. 23)? _____

2. How did they raise their voices and what did they say (v. 24)? _____

3. Having the Old Testament Scriptures in their hearts, the New Testament believers were led by the Holy Spirit to pray concerning what revealed truth about Christ (vv. 25-28)?

4. As the Apostles continued in prayer, what was their request (vv. 29, 30)? _____

In whose name would the wonders be done? _____

PERSONAL

How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through this prayer of the saints? _____

5. How did God answer their prayer (v. 31)? _____

PERSONAL

Why do you think a prayer for boldness to speak God's Words is so important today? _____

THE EARLY CHURCH SHARES ALL THINGS

READ Acts 4:32-37.

1. DESCRIBE the attitude of the multitude who believed (v. 32). _____

PERSONAL

How would the church be today if believers would follow the example of the early Christians? _____

2. How did the Apostles give witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (v. 33a)? _____

3. What was the result (v. 33b)? _____ ¹¹

4. How did the early church believers take care of those in need (vv. 34, 35)? _____

5. Who was Barnabas and what was his contribution (vv. 36, 37)? _____

_____ ¹²

LYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

READ Acts 5:1-11.

1. What did Ananias¹³ and Sapphira¹⁴ do (v. 1, 2)? _____

What did Ananias' wife know about the gift that her husband laid at the Apostles' feet? _____

¹¹ grace: the unmerited favor of God; grace meets man in his wickedness and offers righteousness as a gift.

¹² Levite: a priest of the priestly tribe of Levi set apart to serve God (see Numbers 3:39-51); one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

¹³ Ananias: Hebrew God is gracious.

¹⁴ Sapphira: beautiful sapphire.

2. What did the Holy Spirit reveal to Peter about Ananias (vv. 3, 4)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

Peter asked Ananias, “Why have you conceived this thing in your heart?” According to Acts 4:32-37, what do you think was their motive for lying to the Holy Spirit and therefore to God?

PERSONAL

Have you ever lied to the Holy Spirit? Explain. _____

3. What affect did Peter’s inspired words of truth have on Ananias (Acts 5:5, 6)? _____

What came on all those who heard? _____¹⁵

What did the young men who witnessed this do? _____

4. Who also came to Peter three hours later having no knowledge of what had happened (v. 7)? _____

5. What did the Holy Spirit compel¹⁶ Peter to pursue with Sapphira (v. 8)? _____

Ananias was smitten by God for his deceitful act against Him. Sapphira was given time to respond. What did she say?

6. Peter empowered by the Holy Spirit confirmed what absolute truth to Sapphira (v. 9a)? _____

¹⁵ fear - Greek *phemobai*: alarm, be afraid exceedingly; terror; fear of doing any unrighteousness before God.

¹⁶ compel: to cause to do or occur by overwhelming pressure.

7. Who were standing at the door witnessing this grave sin against God (vv. 6, 9b)? _____

8. What did they do with Sapphira (v. 10)? _____

9. What did the Holy Spirit cause to come upon all the church¹⁷ and as many *as* heard these things (v. 11)?

LOOK DEEPER

DESCRIBE the Person of the Holy Spirit and His work in the believers' life through the following verses.

John 4:21-24 _____

John 14:26 _____

John 16:13 _____

PERSONAL

Tell of a time when the Holy Spirit enabled you to walk in the truth or revealed a lie to you. _____

LOOK DEEPER

Using the following Scriptures DESCRIBE Godly fear and what God commands.

Deuteronomy 10:12, 13 _____

Job 28:28 _____

Psalms 19:9 _____

Psalms 33:8 _____

¹⁷ church - Greek *ekklesia*: a calling out, the body of believers; the word church occurs for the first of 23 times in Acts.

Psalm 34:9 _____

Psalm 111:10 _____

Proverbs 8:13 _____

Proverbs 10:27 _____

Proverbs 14:26, 27 _____

Proverbs 23:17 _____

Ecclesiastes 12:13 _____

Matthew 10:28 _____

PERSONAL

Prayerfully examine the fear of the Lord from these Scriptures. How has it redirected your heart?

WRITE out the KEY VERSE _____

*And they continued steadfastly
in the Apostles Doctrine and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.
Acts 2:42*

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