

Acts 4:1-31

June 29, 2025



CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

MAIN POINT

Jesus commanded His followers to share the gospel (Matthew 28:16-20). Peter and John shared boldly and asked God for help to continue sharing the good news boldly.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What have been your takeaways in our study of Acts so far?

What do you remember about Peter and John's situation and actions in Acts 3?

In Acts 3, Peter and John healed a lame man in the temple. As the newly healed man reacted with joy (jumping, walking, and praising the Lord), the crowds looked on with amazement. Peter seized the moment to preach to the people, and today, we'll see the result: Many people believed, and Peter and John were arrested.



UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 4:1-4.

What happened to Peter and John in this passage? Why?

What was the result of Peter's sermon from our passage last week (v.4)?

What can we learn about God from this passage?

These four verses set the scene for our study today. While Peter and John were preaching, "the priests, the captain of the temple police, and the Sadducees confronted them" (v. 1) and arrested them. They were annoyed that Peter and John were "teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead" (v.2). We often lump Pharisees and Sadducees together in our modern minds, but these were two different religious parties with different views of Old Testament Scripture. One of the pieces of doctrine they argued over was the resurrection. The Sadducees didn't believe in resurrection, so they were particularly annoyed over Peter and John's teaching. The governing body of the Sanhedrin didn't convene at night, so Peter and John had to wait until the next day to stand before them.

But don't miss verse 4. Even though there was major, potentially life-threatening opposition against Peter and John, the Holy Spirit was working. About five thousand people were saved following Peter's sermon.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 4:5-22.

What stands out to you in this passage?

What stand did the disciples take in verses 19 and 20?

What did the religious leaders notice about the way that Peter and John shared the gospel?

What does that tell us about how the Holy Spirit can work in our lives?

The morning after their arrest, Peter and John stood before the Sanhedrin. When Peter and John were questioned, Luke recorded that "Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit" (v.8) when he spoke to them. Peter called out their sin (v.10), connected prophecy to Jesus (v.11), and shared the good news with them (v.12).

The religious leaders were amazed at their boldness. (It doesn't get much bolder than sharing the gospel with the very governing body that condemned Jesus.) Though the



leaders were amazed at Peter and John, they didn't want the truth about Jesus to spread, so they "ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus" (v.18). The man who had been healed was standing before them, so they couldn't refute that, but they could threaten the disciples to discourage them spreading the message further.

Despite this order from the powerful Sanhedrin, Peter and John answered that they couldn't stop talking about what they had witnessed (v.20).

They knew the truth about Jesus, and they couldn't stop telling people about it. This is the role of the witness that Jesus outlined in Acts 1:8. When we know Jesus, we should want to tell other people about Him and how He has transformed our lives.

The leaders couldn't figure out a way to punish them, so Peter and John were released.

🌿 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 4:23-31.

What did Peter and John do after the trial?

What might be unexpected about what they did next? How did this show their growing faith?

What did they specifically ask for in their prayer? How did God answer?

Freshly released from the Sanhedrin, Peter and John headed back to the body of believers to tell them everything that happened. They responded to the Sanhedrin's threats not by cowering but by asking God for help so they could keep going.

In their prayer, they:

Praised God (v.24). God can work in any and every situation.

Turned to Scripture (v.26). Truth is found in Scripture, and praying Scripture is powerful.

Deferred to God's will (v.28). God is in charge, and He is not surprised, even when bad things happen to us. He has a plan with a purpose, and His plan is always better than ours.

Asked for boldness to share the gospel (v.29). We need God's help to walk in the purpose and calling He's created for us. It's good to ask for His help!

The Sanhedrin observed the boldness of Peter and John when they spoke to the assembly (Acts 4:13), and now, after receiving threats from this powerful governing body, the disciples prayed that God would grant them continued boldness. Once again, in the face of uncertainty and possible danger the believers were undeterred in proclaiming the gospel.



Opposition is to be expected, and they knew the answer wasn't to turn away from the command Jesus had given them or to back down from openly sharing the truth. No, they were on a divine mission, and they asked for God's continued help equipping them for whatever they would face.

God's response? An immediate yes. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and continued boldly speaking the Word of God.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What types of risks do we take when we share the gospel in our communities?

What risks are holding you back from sharing the gospel in your own life?

Consider the believers' prayer in Acts 4:24-30. Have you ever prayed for anything like this? What happened?

What are some simple ways we can begin to share the Word of God boldly, like the believers in this passage?

What can we learn about God from what we studied today?

PRAYER

Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.

Praise God for His sovereignty. Thank Him for always having a plan for our lives. Thank Him for helping us and walking with us when we are struggling. Ask Him to give your group boldness as you go out into the community and share the gospel.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead as we continue the series on Acts next week.

July 6, 2025 --- Acts 4:32-5:11



COMMENTARY

Acts 4:1-31

Arrested and Interrogated (4:1–12). The Sadducees and the temple guard halted Peter's speech, but not before he had evoked a considerable response. It is not altogether clear why Peter and John were arrested. The Sadducees represented the aristocracy who had made peace with the Romans. Perhaps they were worried that Peter's messianic message might lead to a popular movement against the Romans that would bring reprisals. The two were held overnight and brought next morning before the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin consisted of seventy members. The majority of these were Sadducees, mostly from high priestly families. The high priest himself was presiding officer. A minority of the members were Pharisees. They were popular with the people, and their opinion carried considerable weight. The inquiry centered on the question of credentials. By what authority ("in what name") had Peter healed the lame man? Peter responded with a sermon on the concept of "name," which witnessed to the name of Jesus, the Messiah, the "stone rejected by its builders." Inspired by the Spirit, Peter even had the courage to accuse the Sanhedrin's members for their role in Jesus' death. He ended with an implicit appeal for the high court to commit to Jesus, the only "name" in whom salvation is to be found.

Warned and Released (4:13–22). The members of the Sanhedrin were in a quandary. The apostles were popular with the people for healing the man, and the Sanhedrin could not deny the clear evidence of the healing. On the other hand, they wanted the messianic preaching to stop. Their solution was to issue a formal ban on the Christian message. This would establish legal responsibility should the apostles continue preaching Christ. Peter told them what to expect: How could he not continue to testify to the power of God he had seen at work in Christ?

Prayer of the Community (4:23–31). The rest of the Christian community undoubtedly had been in prayer for the two apostles during their trial. With their release and return, they now offered a prayer of thanksgiving. They thanked God for delivering His own in times of trial. When the rulers gathered against Christ, God delivered Him. Just now the two apostles had been delivered from the same authorities. They did more than express their thanks, however. They prayed that God would fill them with power to continue their witness even more boldly despite the rulers' threats. God immediately answered their prayer. They received a renewed sense of the Spirit's power, a new boldness for witness.

