

Acts of the Apostles – 4

I. The Inspired History

A. The Trial of Peter and John (1-22).

1. The Rejection of the Resurrection (1-3).

- a. **Sadducees.** A Jewish sect denying spirit and resurrection (23:28; Matt 22:23).
 - (1) The High Priest was a member of this liberal sect of Jews (5:17).
 - (2) Paul later uses this Jewish doctrinal division to protect himself (23:6).
 - (3) John and Jesus rejected both Pharisees and Sadducees (Mat 3:7; 16:12).
- b. Observe that false religions seek to maintain a monopoly on teaching people.
 - (1) Religious monopolies give refined men position, wealth, and security.
 - (2) Jesus accused the lawyers of stealing knowledge (Luk 11:52; Mal 2:7).
 - (3) Truth and knowledge are rare today (II Tim 3:6-9; 4:3-4; I Tim 6:3-5).
 - (4) Rome, for 1500 years, forbade Bibles to be read and spoke in Latin.
 - (5) Scripture – inspired and certain – in your hands breaks their monopoly.
 - (6) Pastors – godly and bold – to guide and defend breaks their monopoly.
- c. They hated the doctrine of the resurrection and the idea Jesus was resurrected.
 - (1) Weeks earlier they paid great money to keep it under (Matt 28:11-15).
 - (2) The apostolic message damned their no-resurrection, no-spirit heresy.
 - (3) The apostolic message brought a nightmare to life (Matt 26:64; 27:25).
- d. How did the most educated, Scriptural, and “godly” men in Israel reject them?
 - (1) A man lame for over 40 years was healed. The soldiers told of His resurrection. And the apostles gave great interpretation of prophecy.
 - (2) They were blinded by the Lord of glory (John 12:37-41; I Peter 2:7-8).
- e. They ended this great day of Pentecost in prison after two preaching services.

2. The Belief of the Resurrection (4).

- a. Many of those who heard the preaching believed it – those ordained (13:48).
- b. Of course, they would have been baptized also (2:38; Mark 16:16; I Pet 3:21).
- c. If the number of men was 5000, then the total crowd might have been 10,000+.

3. Peter testifies boldly (5-12).

- a. They are questioned about the authority of their miracle rather than the power.
- b. Jesus had promised the Spirit to assist their public defenses (Matt 10:16-20).
- c. Note Peter poking at the Jewish leadership for trying them for a “good deed.”
- d. We healed this man by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.
 - (1) This is the man Christ Jesus Whom you crucified.
 - (2) This is the man Christ Jesus Whom is alive and well.
 - (3) This is the Stone you dread (Matt 21:42-44; Ps 118:22-23; Is 28:16).
 - (4) There is no other salvation than by Jesus Christ (John 14:6; I Tim 2:5).

4. Political expediency at work (13-18).

- a. It was obvious that Peter and John were not educated. Jesus called fishermen.
- b. They marvelled at their response, as Jesus had said the Spirit would bless them.
- c. They presumed correctly that they had been with Jesus to know this doctrine.
- d. They could not say anything due to the healed man standing beside them.
- e. They hold a committee meeting to determine how to suppress the truth.
- f. What can we do to protect our jobs and destroy the truth in spite of a miracle.
- g. Let us use intimidation to threaten them and hope we silence them this way.
- h. So they commanded them with human authority to not preach Jesus anymore.

5. Peter's bold answer (19-20).
 - a. Peter reasons – like an eloquent fisherman – as whether obeying God or man.
 - b. We are serving God; we have God's message; and this is clearly God's power.
6. The Jews' foolish ignorance (21-22).
 - a. They threatened them but did not punish them, because of public opinion.
 - b. They couldn't see the glory and power of the healing miracle. They were blind.
- B. An Apostolic Prayer Meeting (23-31).
 1. Powerful prayer by holy men (23-30).
 - a. They address and praise the God of heaven for His creative power.
 - b. They appealed to the Scriptures for prophecies describing their predicament.
 - c. They applied the Scriptures to their predicament.
 - d. They acknowledged the sovereign government of God over the earth.
 - e. They asked for God's mercy and blessing to glorify His Son.
 - f. Though God had promised all they needed, they yet prayed for it anyway.
 - g. They invoke the unique name of His Son – thy Holy Child Jesus.
 2. A powerful answer to powerful prayer (31).
 - a. The place was shaken for a visible sign of God's Presence and Power.
 - b. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.
 - c. They spake the Word of God with boldness as they had requested.
- C. Character of Spiritual Saints (32-37).
 1. Unity of persons and possessions (32).
 - a. They were completely united in heart and soul (I Cor 1:10; Ep 4:1-3; Ph 2:1-2).
 - b. They did not selfishly think of their possessions as personal property.
 - c. They shared their goods as the church had been described earlier.
 2. Power and grace resulting from unity (33).
 - a. Their prayer was answered with great power by the apostles.
 - b. Great grace was upon them from God for their prayer and obedience and unity.
 3. Sharing of possessions (34-37).
 - a. No one lacked anything. We should not assume luxuries, but rather necessities.
 - b. Any member with extra sold his assets and gave to the apostles for distribution.
 - c. Luke mentions Barnabas by name as an example of one selling real estate.
 - (1) Barnabas would become a companion of the apostle Paul (13:1-3).
 - (2)
 4. The giving was done under the control and direction of the apostles.
 - a. Ministers know the true needs of the congregation.
 - b. Ministers have the proven integrity inherent in their office.