

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Peter and John: Boldness in the Face of Intimidation
Acts 4:1-22

Last time...the Adventure in Faith began

Exercising spiritual gifts of faith and healing: The healing of a lame man at the Gate Beautiful

Be a part of what God is doing!

Look, don't just see

Listen, don't just hear

The Lord wants each of His children to have adventures in faith!

As we walk by faith (Heb 11:1), and not by sight,
one thing will lead to another, as surely as one step follows another

This time...one thing led to another for Peter and John and the healed man

The Adventure in Faith is met with worldly resistance

Peter and John face the intimidation of wicked men with the boldness of the Spirit
and get to share Jesus Christ to the High Priests and their gang

v1-3 And as they spake unto the people:

Peter and John spoke to the multitude gathered at the Gate Beautiful

- by Whom this man was healed (Ch 3:12-13a)
- Whom Israel had denied (Ch 3:13b-15)
- how this man was healed (Ch 3:16)
- Call to Action (Ch 3:19-21)

As they were speaking, the religious leaders joined the multitude

(Moving east to west from Gate Beautiful to Temple, sets of steps up from court to court

The chief priests could look “down” as they looked east and see a multitude gathered)

- the priests...chief priests
- the captain of the temple...”chief of Temple Police”, Head of Security
- the Sadducees...rich liberals, deniers of the spiritual realm and resurrection from the dead
- all of whom are Biblically ignorant, per testimony of the Holy Spirit (Ch 3:17-18)

They heard the Good News...“preached through/in/by Jesus the resurrection of the dead”

And this grieved/worried them

- a. Who is doing what to whom...these nobodies teaching (their office) the people (their subjects)
- b. The message...the Gospel
- c. The name...Jesus

Their problems/issues:

1. Pride
2. Self-righteousness
3. Unbelief

So worried were the religious leaders that they arrested Peter and John and threw them in jail overnight

What was Peter and John’s reward for faithfulness to be a part of what God is doing?

Trouble in the world...as promised (John 16:33)

One thing leads to another, which leads to another

v4 Howbeit many...believed...5000:

Howbeit...However, in spite of the religious leader’s objection many...about 5000 men/males

- not counting women and children
- imagine the size of the multitude gathered at the Gate Beautiful addressed by Peter and John

believed

- listened, did not just hear
- the Word...Rom 10:17
- responded...received to heart the Call to Action

Acts 2:47b

Good trees bearing good fruit!

v5-6 on the morrow...gathered:

After giving Peter and John a chance to cool their jets with an overnight stay in jail, the Jewish Court is in session

Gathered to hear the meaning of all this is the Who's Who of the Jews

- rulers...judges
- elders...Sanhedrin
- scribes...lawyers
- Annas...one of the High Priests
- Caiaphas...the other High Priest
- John...thought to be Annas' son who would succeed Caiaphas as High Priest
- Alexander...thought to be an influential Rabbi
- kindred of the High Priest...the rest of the corrupt family that had made the highest bid to the Romans for the office of High Priest that year

Some number of days earlier (50+) these same guys thought they had taken care of the "Jesus problem"

v7 set them in the midst...power...name:

Peter and John are called before the Court

The question asked of them:

By what power...*dunamis*

By what name...authority

have ye done this...healing, teaching, and preaching

Clearly, Peter and John did not "do" by the power or authority of the Who's Who of the Jews

And clearly they "did" this on the territory of the religious establishment

So they are seen as intruders, trespassers, outsiders, false teachers

by the establishment who see themselves as the only true teachers

The question is really a veiled accusation

They have asked this question before in the not too distant past;
do they remember?

1st Temple cleansing

John 2:18

Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? (Answer: Resurrection, v19-20)

2nd Temple cleansing

Matt 21:23-27

(no answer)

v8-10 Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost...Be it known:

Peter does answer the question – his “natural boldness” is refined, empowered, and used by the Holy Spirit

He answers

- filled with the Holy Spirit...inspired
 - ala [Acts 2:3-4](#)
 - per John 16:7
- with boldness, no longer intimidated (his denial of Christ) by anyone, great or small
- as Jesus foretold in
 - [Matt 10:16-20](#)
 - John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father

If we this day be examined...interrogated like criminals

of the good deed...worthy of praise, not condemnation

done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole...we've been arrested for a “lame excuse”

Be it known...the truth, these facts

1. Fact: our power, our authority is Jesus Christ of Nazareth
2. Fact: Whom ye crucified
3. Fact: Whom God raised from the dead
4. Fact: This man stands before you whole/healed by the work of God and Jesus Christ of Nazareth

- The healed man was also arrested and jailed, along with Peter and John
- The healed man was also brought before the Court
- The man lame from his mother's womb is standing...right in front of them
- Peter and John did not do this (v7), Jesus did ([Ch 3:16](#))... and Jesus alone gets the praise and honor

Peter, in his answer to their accusatory question, succinctly repeats what they already heard...and rejected

v11 stone...set at naught...corner:

Then Spirit-filled Peter gives the religious leaders/teachers the clear meaning of another Messianic prophesy, quoting Ps 118:22... which was previously quoted to them in the not too distant past when they had asked the same “by what authority” question of Jesus

Matt 21:42 Jesus saith unto them, *Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?*

The clear meaning of Ps 118:22 is that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is:

- The Stone (singular, one and only)...of stumbling and the Rock of offence
Is 8:13-14 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let him be* your fear, and *let him be* your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- which was set at naught...rejected and despised...by these men before whom Peter and John and the healed man now stand
- which is become the head of the corner...the cornerstone
 - the chief foundation upon which something is built
 - the essential stone that is the starting place in the construction of a monumental building

Is 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

1 Peter 2:6-8 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient.

- the building of God (1 Cor 3:9b)
- the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3, 1 Cor 6, Eph 2)
- the Church

v12 salvation...saved:

Peter, filled with and inspired by the Holy Spirit, cuts to the chase

The only real issue to be discussed and decided upon is...salvation,
being saved from death (eternal), the wages of sin

Salvation is by no other than Jesus Christ

There is no other name...power, authority

under heaven given among men...the power of salvation and the authority over death is

- in heaven, in the High and Holy Place in eternity
Is 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.
- given by God, not earned or purchased by man
Matt 19:25-26 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, **With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**

John 1:4

John 3:16-17

John 14:6

After Is 40:3

“The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”
i.e. John the Baptist (Luke 3:1-6)

The LORD God, the God of Israel, The Holy One of Israel (Ch 3:14) is called the Savior 7x in Isaiah

Phil 2:9-11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The “Savior List” is a list of One

v13-14 they saw the boldness...perceived...took knowledge:

How did the religious establishment react to Peter and John and the healed man?

1. To Peter and John

- saw the boldness...the direct frankness, not in the least intimidated by being in the presence of worldly power and authority
- perceived...falsely, with not-right minds (Opposite Day)
 - unlearned...illiterate, did not go to their Seminary
 - ignorant...untrained idiots
- marveled...are in wonder
- took knowledge...recognized
 - that they had been with Jesus...
 - incomplete because they ARE with Jesus!

2. To the healed man

- speechless, got nothing to say
- his healing is undeniable

v15-16 conferred...What shall we do:

Peter and John and the healed man are dismissed from the Jewish Court while their case is deliberated by their judges

In the Court, echoes of John 11:47 (post-resurrection of Lazarus)

How are they going to deal with this problem, this thorny development stemming from the previous problem?

How will they punish these men...and for what wrong?

They must concede the miracle, it is apparent to all and it is impossible to deny
But they do deny the power and authority (Jesus Christ of Nazareth) by Whom it was done

v17-18 that it spread no further...straightly threaten:

The “brilliant” plan for damage control

(of something absolutely worthy of praising God!)

comes right out of a criminal’s handbook –

to threaten them with bodily harm to keep them from preaching “in this name” (they cannot even bring themselves to say His name!)

What is Religion all about?

Power and authority

Control of people, the elite lording over (bullying) the common folk

Standing between people and their Maker

Peter and John and the man are called back into court and given their “sentence” –
Silence or else!

Were Peter and John going to the Temple this day looking for trouble with the
Religious establishment?
No, they were going to worship in prayer

Was the man lame from his mother’s womb carried to the Gate Beautiful this day
in hopes of getting in trouble?
No, he hoping for alms

But God had a work He wanted to do this day to glorify His Son Jesus Christ
And Peter and John were willing and available to be a part of that
And the lame man was a blessed recipient, and then a willing participant

We need not be looking for trouble or confrontation with the powers that be
We need to be looking to be a part of what God is doing to glorify our Lord and
Savior

Did Peter and John and the healed man just “roll over” when opposed and leave
with their tails between their legs?

v19-20 to hearken unto you...we cannot but speak:

The threat of physical harm does not intimidate Peter and John

Their hearts and minds are like Dan 3:14-18

They have been prepared, decided beforehand Matt 10:25, 28, 32-34

They are Spirit-filled (2 Tim 1:7)

Therefore, standing before God and man, Peter and John boldly respond to the
threat from the mouthpieces of the devil

Whether it be right in the sight of God...the Lord is our power and authority,
what He says is right (and goes), He is the Final Authority and the Judge
of all men

to hearken unto you more than unto God...your “counsel” is diametrically
opposed to the counsel we have been given by God

judge ye...you have to decide that your yourselves, as we have decided for
ourselves

Do you want to oppose God?

Do you want to take God’s place?

For we cannot but speak...we MUST preach of what we have seen and heard

We know what we know

We know that we know

We will NOT be silent!

We cannot be censored.

v21-22 further threatened them...glorified God:

The Religious leadership had nothing on Peter and John and the healed man so they released them

But before doing so, they threatened them again with physical harm, which did not work the first time so they double down and try even harder That was all they were willing to do because of...fear

The inverse of 2 Tim 1:7

They feared the people they lorded over (bullied) and labored to control, who knew God had done something praise-worthy

The people are now looking at God, rather than Peter and John (Ch 3:11-12)... the right and proper "gaze"

Application

Standing before God and man

Choosing sides...before trouble comes

Elijah stood before

- a king and a she-devil queen
- 850 hostile false prophets
- The Living God

This needs to be forefront in our minds: we also stand before God and man every day

With a message of hope in anxious and stressful times

e.g. Ruben at work

- suicidal employee
stepped out of his role of manager and stood on Jesus –
 - Scripture
 - Godly counselthis man
 - is now reading the Word of God
 - has learned that he is at odds with God's will
 - is moving toward God's will for his life
- super stressed out employees
calmed them down
they know where he stands

When we stand with God, we will be rewarded

By the world: threats, imprisonment, beatings

By Jesus: Matt 5:10-12

It is better to be a friend of Jesus and an enemy of the world than to be a friend of the world and the enemy of Jesus (James 4:4)

May we stand on Ch 4:12, 19-20

May Ch 4:13 be said of us

May we be as 1 Cor 9:16 woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!