

Acts 4:5-22

- Peter mentions that if he is to give account over an “act of kindness”.... Why is it an act of kindness – isn’t it just the will of God and the manifestation of His power? (Galatians 5:22-23, I Peter 3:15-16) What role does the Spirit have in this episode? What role should the Spirit have in our lives, as a result?
- Peter filled with the Spirit identifies Jesus as the “stone the builders rejected, which has become the capstone”. What is Peter alluding to here? Who rejected the stone? Why is he a capstone? (I Peter 2:4-12, Psalm 118:1-24)
- Not only is he a capstone, but I Peter 2 also mentions that for those who don’t believe, Jesus is a stone that causes men to stumble. Why is this dual/contrasting representation of Jesus significant? How does this relate to Peter’s proclamation in vs 12?
- Verse 13 details the elders’ astonishment at the courage of Peter and John. What does this tell us about God’s character?
- Why do you think the narrative decides to detail the elders “taking note” that these men had been with Jesus after realizing that Peter and John were unschooled, ordinary men? What does this tell us of Jesus himself in his human condition?
- What was the one thing that kept the elders from “saying anything”? This episode seems to be the direct manifestation of the truth written by Peter in I Peter 3:14-16.
- Although Peter specifically forewarned the people after the healing took place regarding their astonishment for staring “as if by our own power or godliness” (Acts 3:12), this miracle had occurred, it’s quite evident in verse 16 that the elders, in their astonishment, were still missing the point completely. They are

again trying to attribute this miracle to Peter and John. What does this tell us regarding miracles and faith? (John 10:22-33)

- Does it seem at all idolatrous the way the elders view “the name of Jesus” in regards to the miraculous healing?

Discussion Guide #2

- 1) Peter yet again speaks boldly “filled with the Spirit.” This instance was surely in the back of Peter’s mind when he later wrote 1 Peter 3.13-17. How did this instance bear out his own instructions? What stymied the religious leaders from publicly going beyond their initial question?
- 2) Peter identifies Jesus as the “stone the builders rejected, which has become the capstone.” What is Peter alluding to here? Who rejected the stone? Why is Jesus a capstone? See 1 Peter 2.4-12 and Psalms 118.1-24.

In 1 Peter 2, Jesus is also referred to as a stone that causes men to stumble? How so? How does this relate to 5.12?

- 3) Notice that the Jewish religious leaders were astonished at the courage of Peter and John, noting that they were “unschooled, ordinary men.” What is the significance of this, or why do you think God wanted it that way? What can we take away from this fact today?
- 4) After being asked to no longer teach or speak of Jesus, Peter and John and boldly claim obedience to God before their civil/religious authorities. Does their response contradict Paul’s instruction in Romans 13.1-5? Why or why not?

Prayer Time and Take Home: We ordinary men and women of varying levels of education, as believers in Christ, have been given the same Spirit as Peter and John! Peter gave credit for the miracle to Jesus but seemed to recognize his part in the “act of kindness” (cf., the fruit of the spirit in Gal. 5.22-23) and “giving an answer.” Let us seek to practice kindness (and love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control). Let us ask God to let unbelievers take note of our “good behavior” and “ask.” Let us be prepared to “give an answer with gentleness and respect,” to be witnesses of what God has done in our lives.

Acts 4.5 The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 6 Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest’s family. 7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: “By what power or what name did you do this?”

Acts 4.8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! 9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11 He is “‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.’ 12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

Acts 4.13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. 15 So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. 16 “What are we going to do with these men?” they asked. “Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. 17 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name.”

Acts 4.18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John replied, “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. 20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

Acts 4.21 After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. 22 For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.