

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 3

Acts Chapters 3-4

This week we continue our study in Acts by looking at chapters three and four. We saw last week how empowered the Apostles became, once the Holy Spirit came and dwelt within them; and the power of the Holy Spirit displayed as the Gospel was preached to Jews from all over the world.

We also noted the experiences of the Apostles and the converted Jews as a model for what we can experience as, led by the Holy Spirit, we share that very same Gospel message. It changes people's lives, just as it has ours, and empowers all of us to do great things in God's Kingdom if we're willing to surrender to His sovereign will.



In this week's study, we will see the Apostles in the early days of the church, continuing in prayer and ministry; and we will witness firsthand the awesome and miraculous power that God provided them. Additionally, we will also see that, given this power, they give God the glory and use each opportunity to continue to boldly proclaim the Gospel message.

For our study this week, read Acts Chapters 3 and 4 and answer the following:

1. Many times in our time of prayer, or under times of great trouble, we will ask God for one thing, but He provides something entirely different. Read Acts 3:1-5. What did the crippled man ask the Apostles for, and why?
2. Read Acts 3:6-10. The Apostles had very little resources they could not meet the man's needs...or could they? What did God do through the Apostles that answered the beggar's prayers?
3. What was the beggar's reaction?
4. Have you ever been like the beggar, having such a difficult time in your life that you had given up all hope and were simply trying to get through life one long day at a time? Did God come and deliver you from that life? If so, what was your reaction?
5. What was the reaction of all those in the Temple area when they saw that the beggar had been miraculously healed?
6. Read Acts 3:11-13. Peter and John are now surrounded by the crowd. What does Peter do, and what power does he credit with the miracle?

7. In verses Acts 3:13-15, Peter accuses those in the temple of having done four things, each starting with "You...". Can you identify what the four things are that he accused them of?

8. What theme in the Apostles' testimony do we see repeated here again in verse 15?

9. What does Peter say healed the beggar?

10. In Acts 3:17, Peter acknowledges that he understands that their previous actions were in ignorance, i.e., that they did not know what they were doing. What does he tell them in verse 19? And how do these two verses apply to us, and to the people that we witness to today?

11. In the remaining verses, Peter is referring to Jewish scripture -- our Old Testament -- to show them how God foretold these events and how Jesus fulfilled that prophecy. Can you find Jesus in the Old Testament? Find one reference and list it below.

12. Acts Chapter 4 is a well-known account of some of the early persecution that Peter and the other Apostles faced, as they followed the leadership of the Holy Spirit and preached the Gospel. It picks up at the point in time when Peter is finished his testimony to the Jews in the Temple about Jesus and the beggar was healed. Read Acts 4 verses 1 and 2. Why were the authorities upset? Why was this so troubling to them?

13. With all of the turmoil and trouble at the Temple that day, and the arrest of Peter and John, was God's plan of salvation for those people delayed or negatively impacted by the actions of the authorities?

14. At the trial of Peter and John, what is the question that the High Priest asks, and what is Peter's answer? (See Acts 4:7.)

15. What did the court realize about Peter and John as a result of Peter's response?

16. What did the Apostles do after they were released from prison?

17. What did the Apostles pray for? (See Acts 4:24-30.)

18. Did God answer their prayer? (See Acts 4:31.)

19. How did the Apostles and Disciples of Christ live in the days of the Day of Pentecost? (See Acts 4:32-37.)

And so we see from this week's lesson that God used the healing of one beggar to spread the Gospel -- and 5,000 souls were saved in a single afternoon. The Apostles continued to be bold in their proclamation of the Gospel and their condemnation of the Jews, who had rejected and crucified Christ.

We are also encouraged when we see the victory and the celebration that enters into the body of believers when they faithfully follow the Holy Spirit's leading and boldly proclaim the word of God. What an example they set for us, praying for even more boldness in the face of so much adversity! Continuing to witness for Christ, and praying for miraculous signs from God that glorify His presence among them. They were quick to give God all the glory, quick to confront adversity, and quick to seize every opportunity to share the Gospel message. Oh that we could follow so boldly in their footsteps!

Yours in Christ,

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