

Sunday, June 22, 2025 | Filled

Week 12 | Acts 4:14-22 | “One Truth, Three Hearts, Pt. 2”

READ: Acts 4:14-22 (ESV)

¹⁴ But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, ¹⁶ saying, “What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.” ¹⁸ So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, ²⁰ for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.” ²¹ And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old.

There are three kinds of hearts in this passage:

i. Vs. 1-4 – The Tenderheart of the People

So, what’s the takeaway? Suffering for Jesus is not an indication of failure but of faithfulness.

ii. Vs. 5-13 – The Lionheart of the Apostle

So, what’s the takeaway? The quality of our communication betrays the quality of our associations.

iii. Vs. 14-22 – The Hard Heart of the Sanhedrin

Vs. 14 – Luke tells us, “But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition.” The same will be said of Stephen in Ac. 6:10. And as we said two weeks ago, Jesus foretold that the apostles would be imprisoned and questioned by the Jews. But he also said, “I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict” (Lu. 21:15). The Greek term translated as “contradict” in Lu. 21 is translated as “opposition” in Acts 4. “Opposition” was inevitable, but the Lord promised that their testimony would be invincible. As if they had been well-trained lawyers, the disciples

presented an **airtight** defense. And with the formerly lame man literally standing as evidence, there was nothing the Jews could say to disprove the apostle's claims.

A strong defense of God's message is characteristic of God's messengers. God told Moses that he'd be "with [his] mouth" and that he'd "teach [him] what [he] shall speak" (Ex 4:12). The Lord purified Isaiah by touching his mouth with coal taken from the heavenly altar. Before that, the prophet was undone, but after, when the Lord asked, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us," Isaiah said, "Here I am! Send me" (Isa. 6:8). In Jeremiah 1:9-10, were told that God touched the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

Just as God made the apostles and prophets into strong contenders for the faith, he made all believers into defenders of the faith. In Lu. 12:11-12, Jesus says, "When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." Those who are sent by the hand of God are equipped for the work of God. Proverbs 16:1 says, "The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD." God provides an answer when we have none to offer.

Vs. 15-16 – Luke says that the religious leaders "commanded" Peter, John, and the formerly lame man "to leave the council" as "they conferred with one another." This situation required careful attention and consideration. But rather than ask, "What do we think of Peter's claims," they asked, "What shall we do with these men?" The religious leaders did not want to consider that, perhaps, they had been wrong about Jesus. They had already made up their minds. Though they admitted "that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it," they were unwilling to accept the truth. Learn this lesson well: good evidence (in this case a bone fide miracle) and good argumentation (in this case a Holy Spirit-inspired sermon, cf. 4:8) cannot sway a hard heart (cf. Ac. 7:51). Stubbornness is fatal, not because it is incurable, but because it is unteachable.

Vs. 17-18 – The religious leaders reached an agreement. If they cannot deny the truth, they will suppress it. They said, "In order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus." Notice that the issue was that the apostles were doing things "in the name of Jesus." This situation is similar to the interaction between the religious leaders and the man who had been healed of his blindness in John 9. In that passage, the Sanhedrin commanded the formerly blind man to "Give glory to God" (Jn. 9:24) instead of

attributing his miraculous healing to Jesus. The Jews were OK with Jehovah working miracles. They were **not** OK with Jesus working miracles. No other name is as polarizing as Jesus Christ. For some, it is loved, while for others, it is hated.

Vs. 19-20 – How do the apostles respond to being told to stop using Jesus' name? Luke says, "Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge." **Cleverly, the apostles put themselves on the side of God and the religious as God's opponents.** And it is obvious what "is right in the sight of God" — **not** to obey the religious leaders, since doing so would mean disobeying God. Peter will later say, "We must obey God rather than man" (Ac. 5:29).

Side Note: Peter is not promoting anarchy but godliness. **He's prioritizing loyalty to God over loyalty to the government.** Christians are commanded to be "subject to the governing authorities" (Rom. 13:1). Peter says, "For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people" (1 Pet. 2:15). Extremists, insurrectionists, and agitators are agents of Satan and not God. However, when a government tries to usurp God's authority by demanding sinful behavior or prohibiting righteous behavior, the believer not only has the right to disobey but must disobey. **We are required to obey the government unless it forbids what God commands or commands what God forbids.**

The apostles explain why they will not stop preaching in Jesus' name, saying, "For we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." It was **impossible** to hold in the good news. They had "seen" and "heard" too many amazing things to keep their mouths shut. Similarly, the prophet Jeremiah said, "If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak anymore in his name," there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot" (Jer. 20:9).

Vs. 21-22 – The religious leaders did not respond well to the apostles' defiance. Luke tells us that they were "further **threatened**." First, they were "warned" (vs. 17), then they were "charged" (vs. 18), and now they're being "threatened." **Things were escalating.**

But what could the religious leaders do? They could not establish guilt. So, Luke says, "They let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened. For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old." Between the apostles' argumentation, the healing of the lame man, and the people's enthusiasm, the Jewish council was powerless. **And once again, they're out of touch with reality.** In verse 7, they took issue with the apostle's credentials rather than focusing on

the miracle. Here, they want to penalize the apostles for doing good! How ironic that while Sanhedrin wanted to “punish” the apostles, the people were “praising God for what had happened.” Can you be any more delusional or irrational?

So, what’s the takeaway? The salvation of future generations depends on the obedience of the current generation.

Imagine where we’d be today if Peter and John had obeyed the Sanhedrin.

READ: Exodus 1:15-21 (ESV)

¹⁵ Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ “When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live.” ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and let the male children live?” ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.

Don’t miss this. Though the midwives disobeyed the king of Egypt and lied to him, God blessed them.

Video Description:

Filled | Week 12 | “One Name, Three Hearts, Pt. 2” (Acts 4:14-22)

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

Some weeks ago, Peter, through the name of Jesus, healed a man who had been lame his entire life. Such a miracle caused quite a commotion, drawing a massive crowd. Taking advantage of the opportunity, the apostle began to preach. By the end of the sermon, thousands of Jews had become Christians.

Unsurprisingly, the religious leaders weren't happy about this. Their displeasure arose not because someone was healed but because the miracle was done *in Jesus' name*. They imprisoned Peter, John, and the formerly lame man until they could be questioned. Suffering for Jesus is not an indication of failure but of faithfulness.

When the Sanhedrin interrogated the apostles, Peter did not shy back from the confrontation. He defended his actions and even invited them to be saved. Such boldness, as the religious leaders themselves admitted, did not come from Peter's education but from his association with Jesus. The quality of our communication betrays the quality of our associations.

And this is where we pick up the story. Perhaps the religious leaders will convert to Christianity themselves.

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