

Acts 4: 1-22 - Peter and John before the Sanhedrin

Sunday, 7th June 2026

1. Have you ever been called to do jury service. If you have, what was it like?
2. What is/was your favourite comedy partnership and why?

Read Acts 4: 1-4

The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. ²They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. ⁴But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

3. Over the last couple of weeks as we have looked at the story of Peter, we have seen that he is often accompanied by either the apostles or John - on this occasion it was both Peter and John who were '*speaking to the people.*' In outreach, how important is it that we are supported? Why?
4. The leaders were '*greatly disturbed*' (vs 2):
 - a) What sorts of things greatly disturb you and why?
 - b) Do we get disturbed by the right things or wrong things?
 - c) What are the right things and the wrong things?
 - d) How do we express our 'disturbedness' – would you put someone in jail (vs 3)?
5. Despite the opposition, '*many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.*' We might think this impossible to achieve, but if 100 people in our congregation brought a new person to Church every year, how long would it be before we had a congregation of over 5,000? - answer calculation at the bottom of page 4.

6. Does the church grow in times of conflict or in times of peace/apathy? Why?

Read Acts 4: 5-7

⁵The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. ⁶Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. ⁷They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: 'By what power or what name did you do this?'

7. Throughout this reading the question is asked, by 'what name' Peter and John had performed the healing of the lame beggar. Can you think of any other examples when the power of the name of Jesus was used? Can you think of any songs that reference this?

8. How important is it to know and use people's names? Is it something that we can do better? Should people change their names to be accepted?

Read Acts 4: 8

⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: 'Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰then 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. ¹¹Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone."¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.'

9. Have you ever been criticised 'for an act of kindness'? Why?

10. Peter was 'filled with the Holy Spirit' (vs 8) and explains what has happened and in whose name the lame man was healed. He effectively gave his testimony. How important is it for us to know our testimony for times when we might be asked to give it?

11. Vs 11 – *‘The stone you builders rejected which has become the cornerstone’* is a reference from Psalm 118:22 and is referenced by Jesus in Luke 20:17 and again by Peter in 1 Peter 2:7. We don’t have to know the whole Bible, although it helps, but a few key texts can help us explain our faith. Do you know a few ‘key texts’ that help you and why?
12. The religious leaders had rejected Jesus and had him crucified. In what ways do people reject Jesus today?
13. Vs 12 – *‘Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we much be saved’*. One commentator has written: Salvation = deliverance, forgiveness, wholeness and health of body, mind and spirit through Jesus alone. How would you describe what salvation means to you and brings to your life?

Read Acts 4: 13-17

¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realised 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. ‘Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name.’

14. Vs 13 – *‘They saw the courage of Peter and John’*. Are we courageous or timid? If we are timid, what will make us courageous?
15. Vs 13 – *‘They realised that they were unschooled, ordinary men’*. Do we place too great an emphasis on formal education and qualifications? Answer the following question (answer at the bottom of page 4):

Which word in this sentence is an adverb? - "The lively owl hooted loudly into the night."

a) Loudly

b) Hooted

c) Lively

- a. Does knowing the answer mean that you are more intelligent?
- b. Is intelligence more than academic learning?

16. **Vs 14** *But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.* They say: 'The proof of the pudding is in the eating.' You are the proof – you have been saved:

- a. What kind of pudding are you?
- b. Are you a bit stale – do you need refreshing?

Read Acts 4: 18-22

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, 'Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰ As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.'

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.

- 17. Peter and John were '*commanded ... not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus*' (vs 18). How many times is the word, 'name' used in our reading? Is this significant?
- 18. Should there be any restrictions on speech? Should people be able to say what they want, when they want? What, if any, would be your 'rules'?
- 19. Peter and John refused to be intimidated – '*which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or him?*' What sorts of things intimidate you and why?
- 20. **Vs 22** – '*For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old*'. For God, age (up or down) is no barrier – is it for you?

Q5 Year 1: 100 + 100 = 200 Year 2: 200 + 200 = 400 Year 3: 400 + 400 = 800
 Year 4: 800 + 800 = 1600 Year 5: 1600 + 1600 = 3200 Year 6: 3200 + 3200 = 6400

Q 16 Loudly (BBC Bitesize) – how many mistakes on this sheet?