

Third Sunday of Easter – 2024

Saturday, 4/13 at 4:00 | Sunday, 4/14 at 9:00



Text: [Acts 4:1-12](#) NAS 1995

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Are you fearful or courageous? Sir Winston Churchill said, "Fear is a reaction, courage is a decision." Let's decide today to:

- 1) **Put MORE trust in God** and *react LESS when afraid!*
- 2) **Be filled with the Holy Spirit** and **live with courage!**

As we jump back into the book of Acts, it's been about a year since Jesus was **raised** from the dead and **ascended** into heaven. As recorded in **chapter 3**, **God worked through Peter** to heal a man who had been crippled since birth. When many gathered in amazement, *Peter and John told the people about Jesus and called them to repent.*

We now move into **Acts chapter 4...**

1. **Peter and John Lived with Courage:** <sup>1</sup> **As [Peter and John] were speaking to the people [about Jesus], the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, <sup>2</sup> being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. // Remember, on the very**

day that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the Bible says, “...from that day on [the Jewish leaders] planned together to kill [Jesus]” (Jn. 11:53). Now, those same Jewish leaders are **greatly disturbed** because Peter and John, **filled with the HS** and **speaking with courage**, are proclaiming that **Jesus is risen, Jesus is the Messiah!**

2. **Peter and John were Arrested:** <sup>3</sup> **And [the Jewish leaders] laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening.** // The Jewish leaders had Jesus killed, *and now they want to silence everyone who is continuing to teach and proclaim Jesus to others.* When the COVID lockdown began on **3-15-2020**, *the BLC L.T. did **not** lockdown – even though most others did.* We did not violate the governor’s order, we are essential, even more than strip clubs, Home Depot, and Giant Eagle – see **Mt. 4:4**. Instead, we continued to teach and proclaim Jesus. *May the HS keep giving us courage to do God’s will!*
3. **Many Who Heard about Jesus Believed:** <sup>4</sup> **But many of those who had heard the message [of Peter and John] believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.** // A year or so earlier on the Day of Pentecost, **3,000** were added to the NT Church. *Now*, counting only the men, *the total has increased to 5,000.* The **Holy Spirit** did it, *He is **the Lord and Giver of life!** He gives and sustains* our saving faith in Jesus!
4. **Another Golden Opportunity for Peter and John:** <sup>5</sup> **On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;** <sup>6</sup> **and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent.** <sup>7</sup> **When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, “By**

what power, or in what name, have you [healed the man who was born lame]?” // Imagine being Peter or John: Surrounded by powerful men who put Jesus to death and are very upset with you! What would you do? **Be afraid and shrink back** or **be courageous and seize the moment to proclaim Jesus?** Let’s see what happened...

5. **Courage in the Face of Fierce Opposition:** <sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people, <sup>9</sup> if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, <sup>10</sup> let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this *name* this man stands here before you in good health.” // Peter gave **JESUS** all the credit!
- a. Filled with the Spirit: What does that mean? Kretzmann explained: “...the Holy Ghost took charge of his mind and his mouth and directed the action of both.” May we **✦** *desire to be filled* **and** **✦** *be completely open to surrendering our will to the will of the H.S. (1Th. 5:19).*
- b. Proclaiming Jesus: The powerful leaders had already arrested Peter and John, **and** they had a poor track record – *with their crucifixion of Jesus*. **Nevertheless**, the Holy Spirit, *through Peter*, gave two sharp reminders: **YOU** *crucified Him*, but **GOD** *raised Him!*
6. **Clarifying the Greatness of Jesus:**
- a. The Chief Corner Stone: <sup>11</sup> “[Jesus] is the **STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED** by you, **THE BUILDERS**, *but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone.*”

- i. When constructing a building long ago: The corner stone was set first, *then all other stones were set in alignment with the corner stone.*
  - ii. Jesus as the Chief Corner Stone: When thinking of **all people of all time**, JESUS is the MOST IMPORTANT – *because He is the Son of God in human flesh.* To be a member of God’s kingdom, *you must be in alignment with Jesus!* In other words, **you must** ↗ turn from your sin to God and, *through faith in Jesus,* ↗ receive God’s gift of eternal life!
- b. The Only Way to be Saved: I urge you memorize **John 14:6** and **Acts 4:12**: **“And there is salvation in no one else [except JESUS]; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”** // See the timeline, arrows...

**Acts 4:12 – Jesus Is the ONLY Way!**

Old Testament                      New Testament

“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12 NAS-95).

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Father, we **TY** for giving Your Son into the world to save us from our sins! **Fill us with the HS and give us courage to tell others that Jesus is the only way to heaven!**

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