

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why were the priests and Sadducees grieved with Peter and John?
2. What was it that baffled the leaders?
3. How did the command to “not speak or teach in the name of Jesus” affect them? Why?
4. Why does God allow persecution on his people?

SUMMARY:

After Peter and John witnessed the healing of the lame man they were able to teach Christ to the people and many believed in Him. The priests and Sadducees immediately tried to stop this talking about Christ. But Peter and John stood up boldly and gave all honor and glory, for all that had been done, to Jesus Christ of Nazareth. [\[SoF:15\]](#) Peter and John confused them because the Sadducees considered them ignorant and uneducated men. These early disciples showed what could be done through the power of the Holy Ghost, the very presence and power of God, and how with boldness and determination they endured the persecutions with steadfast faith in God.

NOTES:

[\[SoF:15\]](#) We believe that the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ is an invitation for everyone to live a life of abandonment to Him, Who loved us and gave Himself for us - surrendering His personal ambitions and possessions in an unreserved committal to take the proclamation of the Gospel throughout "all the world to every creature".

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bible Lesson #6

November 6, 2016

Fourth Quarter

THE FIRST PERSECUTION

LESSON TEXT: *Acts 4:1-22*

LESSON SETTING: In Jerusalem in the vicinity of the temple.

TIME: Approximately 33 A.D. during the development of the early church by the apostles after Jesus ascended to heaven.

- I. ANOINTED TESTIMONY.** Acts 4:1-12
 - A. Preaching Christ. [\[SoF:15\]](#) Acts 10:36; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 4:5
 - B. Spirit Filled. Acts 7:55; 11:24; 13:9
 - C. In Christ's Name. Luke 24:47; John 14:13
- II. BAFFLED LEADERS.** Acts 4:13-18
 - A. Boldness. Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:16; 10:19
 - B. Weak Instruments. 1 Corinthians 1:27-29
- III. DETERMINED DISCIPLES.** Acts 4:19-22
 - A. Examples. 2 Kings 22:2; Job 23:11; Daniel 3:18
 - B. Exhortations of the Word. 1 Corinthians 15:58; Philippians 1:27; 2 Peter 3:17
 - C. Endure. Matthew 10:22; James 5:11; 1 Peter 2:19
 - D. Persevere. Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12:1; 1 Peter 1:13; Revelation 3:11

GOLDEN TEXT: *BLESSED ARE YE WHEN MEN SHALL REVILE YOU, AND PERSECUTE YOU, AND SHALL SAY ALL MANNER OF EVIL AGAINST YOU FALSELY, FOR MY SAKE.* Matthew 5:11

NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON: Acts 4:23-37

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

QUARTERLY THEME: The Early Church

TOPIC: THE FIRST CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

The first church was just begun when it was already threatened with persecution. The priests and elders were determined to stamp out this new faith before it had scarcely been established. But did this frighten the believers? No. Indeed, it only united them more firmly, knitting their hearts and souls together. How very precious are the words, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." (verse 32) It consisted of a group of believers that were many in number, a multitude—not 30, 50, or a 100, but thousands. (Acts 2:41)

Surely if thousands could be so united as to be of one heart and of one soul, a small group can also. We are told they shared their possessions. May we recognize that to be united we must share our spiritual possessions and talents. We have no right to keep them for ourselves. We must sell all, and yield fully to the Spirit's control. In like manner, material possessions should be placed at God's disposal so that all we have can be shared.

CENTRAL TRUTH: Great things can be accomplished when believers unite unselfishly to serve the Lord.

GOLDEN TEXT: *THE MULTITUDE OF THEM THAT BELIEVED WERE OF ONE HEART AND OF ONE SOUL.*

Acts 4:32

How wonderfully and powerfully the Holy Spirit could work in the apostles as they witnessed in the early church! How the promise of Christ was fulfilled, in which He said that the Spirit would teach them all things! Even the prophecies in the Psalms became clear to them. They realized that all that had been done to Jesus by Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel had been foreordained in the counsel and mind of God (Acts 4:27-28). They also knew that Father, Son and Spirit had been in perfect agreement on the plan of salvation. As the church was aware of the unity of Word and Spirit, it also moved to a closer, and a wonderful unity.

Much of the early church's power in witnessing has been lost because of disunity and division in interpreting and following the Word. We have failed in greater or lesser measure to allow the Spirit to reveal the Word.

May each of us in our own place strive for unity and let the unity of Word and Spirit lead us to a closer walk with God.

So this unity has bound
Heart to heart on faith's firm ground;
Many members - body one,
Many souls - but Spirit one.

Z.H. 181:10

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF November 7 – 13

- M. *Prayer for Courage. Acts 4:23-30
- T. *The Secret of Victory. Acts 4:31-37
- W. The Need for Each Member. 1 Corinthians 12:12-17
- T. The Need for All Members. 1 Corinthians 12:18-26
- F. God-placed Members. 1 Corinthians 12:27-31
- S. The Discipline of Members. Matthew 18:15-20
- S. The Power of Unity. Nehemiah 4:1-6

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