

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did Peter and John go directly to their fellow believers after their releases?
2. What did Peter and John pray for?
3. What keeps the church united? [\[SoF:9\]](#)
4. What effect does a united church have on her own believers?
5. What effect can this unity have on unbelievers?

SUMMARY:

Peter and John had recently experienced the power of God available through the name of Jesus. The lame man was healed through Jesus' name. They had zealously preached Jesus to many, but now they had been forbidden by the council to speak again in the name of Jesus.

Recognizing that they must obey God they returned to their fellow believers knowing and believing that united prayer would cause God to send the power they needed to continue preaching the name of Jesus. They asked God not to deal with their enemies or to protect them, but only for the boldness to speak His Word. This resulted in God revealing His presence and blessing by physically shaking the place where they assembled and filling all with the Holy Ghost. They were so united both in spirit and physically, that they witnessed mightily of Jesus' resurrection and shared their possessions with one another gladly and had all things in common. [\[SoF:15\]](#)

NOTES:

[\[SoF:9\]](#) We believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, by Whose indwelling the believer is empowered to live a Godly life in spiritual unity with Christ. [\[SoF:15\]](#) 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 #7

November 12, 2023

Fourth Quarter

THE FIRST CHURCH

LESSON TEXT: *Acts 4:23-37*

LESSON SETTING: In the meeting place of the first followers of Christ in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

TIME: Approximately 33 A.D., beginning of the establishment of the early church.

I. THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Acts 4:23-31

- A. United Prayer (vs. 24) Matthew 18:19; Acts 1:14; 12:12
- B. Prayer for Courage (vs. 29) Ephesians 6:18, 19; 2 Thessalonians 3:1
- C. In Jesus' Name (vs. 30) John 14:13; Acts 3:6; 4:10
- D. Results of Prayer (vs. 31) 1 Samuel 1:27; 2 Kings 20:1-6

II. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH. [\[SoF:9\]](#) Acts 4:32-33

- A. Unity (vs. 32) Romans 12:5; Galatians 3:28
- B. Spiritual Power (vs. 33) Acts 6:8; 19:11; 1 Corinthians 12:7-12; 1 Thessalonians 1:5

III. THE GENEROSITY OF THE CHURCH. Acts 4:34-37

- A. Willingness to Share. Luke 21:4; 2 Corinthians 8:3-4

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

Acts 4:32

NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON: Acts 5:1-11

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES: Genesis 27:15-24;
Matthew 23:13-58

QUARTERLY THEME: The Early Church

TOPIC: HYPOCRITES IN THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

How quickly Satan obtained a hold in the first church by deceiving Ananias and Sapphira! What a lesson for us that we surely must watchfully and prayerfully “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12) The devil is always alert to deceive us in any way possible.

Ananias and Sapphira’s greatest sin, of course, lies in the fact that they pretended that the selling of their possessions was only the amount that they brought to the apostles. They were not yielded enough to give up all, but neither were they humbled sufficiently to admit it. Are we, as Christians, humble to admit that we are not yielded in all that God asks of us or do we appear to be completely yielded to the Holy Spirit, trying to deceive others and in all truth being deceived ourselves? Let us search our hearts diligently to detect, with God’s help, any deceit therein.

CENTRAL TRUTH: God wants His people to be holy; He will not overlook sins that we might think insignificant.

**GOLDEN TEXT: A FALSE WITNESS SHALL NOT BE UNPUNISHED
AND HE THAT SPEAKETH LIES SHALL PERISH.**

Proverbs 19:9

Falsehood and false witness are the exact opposites of godliness. God, Himself is a “God of truth,” (Deuteronomy 32:4) whereas His opposite, Satan, is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44) What a contrast between God, “which keepeth truth forever,” (Psalm 146:6) and Satan, “which deceiveth the whole world”! (Revelation 12:9) The Word of God “is truth” (John 17:17) while the Gospel of Christ is “the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

As we consider the blessings of truth and the judgment pronounced on deceit, (“cursed be the deceiver” Malachi 1:14), may we all be encouraged to break the bonds of the deceiver and turn to Christ, for through Him we can “know the truth, and the truth shall make us free.” (John 8:32)

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF November 13 – 19

Mon. The Stolen Blessing. Genesis 27:18-29
Tue. God Judges Achan. Joshua 7:16-26
Wed. The Blindness of Hypocrisy. Matthew 23:13-22
Thu. Living a Lie. Matthew 23:23-28
Fri. Self-deceit. Matthew 23:29-36
Sat. *Hypocrites in the Church. Acts 5:1-11
Sun. Preaching but no Practicing. Romans 2:21-29

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