



ACTS - Living in the Promises of Jesus

Acts 4,5

Lesson 4

Our story picks up where it left off in Acts 3 with Peter, John, and the man who was once lame preaching the resurrection of Christ as the explanation for the miracle that had just taken place. Some reacted by believing. Yet, the religious leaders sought only to stop them. The church grew. Yet some tested the Holy Spirit. These two chapters are chapters of contrast. But the apostles pressed on, preaching Jesus to all who would hear of Him.

OBSERVATION: Read Acts 4,5

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to the *God, Jesus*, or any of the *apostles*.

Chapter 4: Key Words: *God, Jesus* (and titles of Jesus), *Holy Spirit, Peter or John, boldness, power, name, witness, and resurrection/believed/saved/salvation*

Chapter 5: Key Words: *God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, apostles, Satan/lie, name, raised, and witnesses*
4. The contrasting word *but* was used five times in Acts 4 and ten times in Acts 5. Mark each time the word is used. Choose one of those times (in each chapter) and record what is being contrasted.

PETER AND JOHN ARRESTED: Read Acts 4:1-12

1. In Acts chapter 3, Luke recorded the story of the healing of a man that was lame. Peter, aware of the amazement of the onlookers, seized the opportunity to proclaim the *name* of the true healer, *Jesus*. Acts 4 begins with the response of the religious leaders. Why were they *greatly disturbed*?
 - a. Why were they *disturbed*? Acts 23:8
 - b. If their beliefs were correct, Jesus couldn't have risen from the dead. What simple thing could they have done to prove that they were right, if indeed Jesus had not been resurrected? (For help see Acts 2:29-31)
2. As Peter stood before the religious council, the day after his imprisonment, we are told he was *filled with the Holy Spirit*. Using Matthew 10:17-20 answer the following questions:

What did Jesus warn would happen to them? verse 17

Why would this take place? verse 18

How would they know what to say in these situations? verses 19,20
3. Acts 4:4 begins with a glorious word. What is it?
 - a. In spite of the rejection of the religious leaders, what was the result of Peter's preaching?
4. What key question was asked of Peter as he stood before the religious leaders? Acts 4:7
 - a. Using verse 10, record Peter's answer.

What *name* did Peter give?

What did he say they had done with *this Jesus of Nazareth*?

What did he say God had done with *this same Jesus*?
5. What did Peter compare Jesus to in Acts 4:11?
 - a. Peter loved this description of Jesus. Summarize what he wrote in 1 Peter 2:4-8.
 - b. In what ways do people *stumble* over Jesus?

- c. Reflect back to the times before you recognized Jesus to be your *chief cornerstone*. In what ways did you *stumble* over Him?
6. Bask in the wonder of Acts 4:12. What is it about this *name of Jesus* that makes it unique above all others, and which makes it absolutely necessary to submit to?

THE NAME OF JESUS FORBIDDEN: Read Acts 4:13-31

1. What stood out to the religious leaders as they watched and listened to Peter and John?
 - a. They reacted in the same way to Jesus. Record their question and Jesus' answer using John 7:15,16.
 - b. This same power and wisdom that Jesus had access to, that the apostles had access to, is available to all believers. What are some of the hindrances to this access?
 - c. Look again at Matthew 10:20. Who did Jesus say would speak through the apostles?
 - 1.) What are some ways you have learned to identify when the Holy Spirit is speaking to you?
2. As the leaders *marveled* at Peter and John, what did they recognize about them? Acts 4:13b
 - a. What are some of the evidences that someone has *been with Jesus*?
3. Acts 4:14-18 tells us that the leaders *conferred among themselves saying, "What shall we do with these men?"* Realizing the lame man had truly *been healed*, they could not deny his healing. What did they decide to do?
 - a. Record Peter's and John's answer from verses 19,20.
 - 1.) What did John share about what he had *seen* in John 1:14?
 - 2.) What did Peter share about what he had *seen* and *heard* in 2 Peter 1:16-18?
 - 3.) What have you spiritually *seen* and *heard* that qualifies you to be a witness?

4. *And being let go...*(Acts 4:23), what did Peter and John (and their *companions*) do? See verse 24.

- a. What did they:
proclaim about God?

request?

1.) How does it impact you that they prayed for *boldness*?

5. What three things happened *when they prayed*? verse 31

TRUTH OR LIE?: Read Acts 4:32-5:11

1. What key words in verse 32 describe the unity of the believers?

- a. As a unique moment in history, how did they regard their property and possessions and what was the result of this perspective? verse 32-37

1.) Although we do not practice communal living, what can we learn from their example?

a.) How does 2 Corinthians 8:13,14 amplify this attitude?

2. Acts 4 closes with the story of Barnabas selling his land *and laying the proceeds at the apostles' feet*. Chapter 5 begins with the contrasting word *but*. Although Ananias and Sapphira also sold their land, what did they do differently?

a. What phrase did Peter use in verse 3 to describe what Ananias did?

b. What phrase did Peter use in verse 9 to describe what Sapphira did?

1.) In what way do you think *lying* is similar to *testing the Spirit of the Lord*?

3. Although many believers were selling their possessions, this was not a requirement made by God or the apostles. Why do you think Ananias and Sapphira lied about giving all of the proceeds?

a. In what ways do people try to obtain undue credit or recognition?

- 1.) Although we may not drop dead as a consequence of misrepresenting our actions, what does Jeremiah 17:10 remind us?
4. What happened to Ananias and Sapphira?
 - a. How did their demise affect the church? verse 11
 - 1.) Why is it good to *fear* God?

MIRACLES AND PRISON: Read Acts 5:12-42

1. *And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people* (Acts 5:12). Read verses 13-16 and record the various results.
2. *Then the high priest rose up and all who were with him* (Acts 5:17). Share the sad contrast of their responses in verses 17,18.
3. *But an angel of the Lord brought them out ...* Acts 5:19. What did he tell them to do?
4. Recapping Acts 5:21-26: Peter and John obeyed the angel. They walked through the doors the angel had opened. *They entered the temple and taught.* When they could not be found in the prison, one came and told them they were *standing in the temple teaching the people.* *Then the captain went and brought them without violence for they feared the people.* The church *feared* God; the soldiers *feared* the people. Contrast these two kinds of fear.
5. Ponder Acts 5:28. What did the high priest ask Peter and John?
 - a. What did they acknowledge that these *apostles* had accomplished?
 - b. What did they declare to be the *apostles'* intention?
 - 1.) Although they did not understand the significance of what they had said, what does Colossians 1:14 teach us?

6. Summarize Peter's bold response in Acts 5:29-32.
7. Although the religious leaders were intent on killing Peter and John, a *Pharisee named Gamaliel* stepped forward and shared great wisdom (verses 35-39), culminating in the words of verse 39. Write Acts 5:39.
8. *And when they had called for the apostles and beaten them... (Acts 5:40). So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (verse 41). ... they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ (verse 42).* Review the words in italics in questions #1,2,3,4, and 8. Note the gamut of experiences of Peter and John; especially their response to how they had been treated. What do you learn from this?

REVIEW: Read Acts 4 and 5

1. What are some of the risks in telling others about Christ?
 - a. What are some of the benefits?
2. When we pray, why is it helpful to recall the things God has done in the past?
3. What did you learn from the example of the believers in the early church that you can apply to your life?
4. How is obeying God rather than man not grievous, but rather freeing?
5. In what ways have you been challenged or encouraged by this lesson?

how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,
- Hebrews 2:3

Observation Worksheet

Acts 4:1-37

¹ Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ² being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. ⁵ And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, ⁶ as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. ⁷ And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: ⁹ If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. ¹¹ This is the '*stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.*' ¹² Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." ¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, ¹⁶ saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them *is* evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny *it*. ¹⁷ But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." ¹⁸ And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. ²⁰ For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." ²¹ So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. ²² For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. ²³ And being let go, they went to their own *companions* and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. ²⁴ So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You *are* God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, ²⁵ who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: '*Why did the nations rage, and the people plot vain things? ²⁶ The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the LORD and against His Christ.*'" ²⁷ "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together ²⁸ to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. ²⁹ Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your

servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. ³² Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. ³³ And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ³⁵ and laid *them* at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. ³⁶ And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, ³⁷ having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

Acts 5:1-42

¹ But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. ² And he kept back *part* of the proceeds, his wife also being aware *of it*, and brought a certain part and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself? ⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." ⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. ⁶ And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried *him* out, and buried *him*. ⁷ Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much." ⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out." ¹⁰ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying *her* out, buried *her* by her husband. ¹¹ So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things. ¹² And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. ¹³ Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. ¹⁴ And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵ so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed. ¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all

those who *were* with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation,¹⁸ and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison.¹⁹ But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said,²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."²¹ And when they heard *that*, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.²² But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported,²³ saying, "Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside before the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!"²⁴ Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be.²⁵ So one came and told them, saying, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"²⁶ Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned.²⁷ And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council. And the high priest asked them,²⁸ saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"²⁹ But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.³⁰ The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.³¹ Him God has exalted to His right hand *to be* Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.³² And we are His witnesses to these things, and *so* also *is* the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."³³ When they heard *this*, they were furious and plotted to kill them.³⁴ Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while.³⁵ And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men.³⁶ For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing.³⁷ After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed.³⁸ And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing;³⁹ but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God."⁴⁰ And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.⁴¹ So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.⁴² And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ.