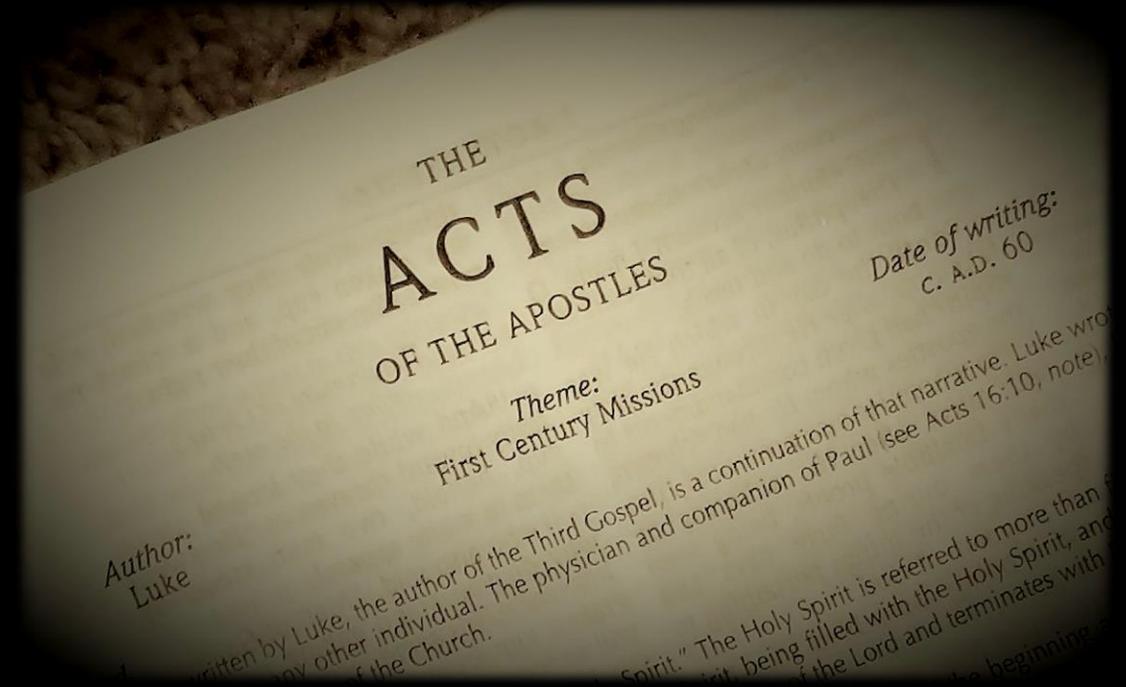


Verse by Verse

Acts 4



Previously in *Acts*

Previously in Acts

- In **Acts 1**, Jesus ascended into heaven, but left his disciples with a promise of the Holy Spirit's coming.
- In **Acts 2**, the Holy Spirit descended upon the gathered disciples on the day of Pentecost.
- As a result, Peter told a large crowd about Christ.
- In **Acts 3**, there was a remarkable healing – a man lame from birth was healed.

Acts 4 Introduction

Acts 4 Introduction

- In response to the healing through Peter and John, there is **opposition** from the religious leaders.
- This will turn into an opportunity to share Christ with the Jewish Council or *Sanhedrin*.
- We will also look at a congregational prayer followed by their practice of sharing possessions.

Acts 4 Key Verse

Acts 4 Key Verse

- Acts 4:31 (ESV)

And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4 Outline

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1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22
2. Prayer 4:23-31
3. Sharing 4:32-37

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- 4:1-2 The **priests**, who were **Sadducees**, held the authority in the Jerusalem Temple.
- They did not believe in the **resurrection**, which would make preaching Christ especially irritating to them.

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- 4:4 As a result of the lame man's healing and the apostles teaching the church grew.
- The number is now 5000 men, which presumably does not include women or children.
- We might easily double that number to 10,000.

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- 4:5-6 This would be the **Sanhedrin**, the Jewish ruling council, though it does not use that name here.
- This is the **same group** that sent Jesus to Pilate, demanding that he be **sentenced to death**.

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- 4:7-11 Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit
- We saw the disciples filled with the Holy Spirit back in Acts 2, but Peter receives a fresh filling here.
- The result is that he clearly and boldly proclaims Jesus before the Sanhedrin.

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- 4:12 no one else ... no other name
- These words emphasize the unique role of Jesus Christ in saving us from our sin.
- This is just as offensive to many today as it was when Peter declared it.
- Faith in Christ is not an optional belief, but the required means by which we receive eternal life.

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- **4:13** This verse could be another key verse.
- **Boldness** – They were courageous before these leaders.
- **Uneducated, common** – Unlike Paul, these apostles were not trained rabbis or scholars.
- **They had been with Jesus** – That was their secret. And what better education could anyone have?

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- 4:14-17 The Council has a real problem.
- They dislike what the apostles are doing and teaching.
- Yet what they are doing is not really wrong
- Healing a man is helpful and there was no law (yet) against preaching Christ.

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22

- 4:18-22 Again, the boldness of Peter and John is truly impressive.
- The man ... was over forty years old. And remember he was lame from birth.
- Certainly all of Jerusalem understood that a miracle had occurred through the ministry of the apostles.

2. Prayer 4:23-31

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- This is an exemplary prayer.
 1. It is scriptural.
 2. It emphasizes the power and sovereignty of God.
 3. Its requests are mainly about the disciples' ability to fulfill the Great Commission.

2. Prayer 4:23-31

- In other words, this prayer by the church is focused on God's glory.
- So often, our prayers focus mainly on ourselves and our personal needs.
- It is fine to pray about our needs, but we can still learn a lot from this early example of prayer by the church.

2. Prayer 4:23-31

- 4:30 stretch out your hand to heal
- I plan to end with a video clip of a friend of mine named Sai.
- He is from a Hindu family in India, but we were students together in Chicago.
- He tells about his father's healing and his family's conversion to Christ.

2. Prayer 4:23-31

- 4:31 Here is our key verse.
- Let's read it again.
- This verse alone gives us the basis for a good prayer.

3. Sharing 4:32-37

3. Sharing 4:32-37

- 4:32-35 There are people who have described this as something like **Christian Communism**.
- They look at the economic equality and sharing and somehow this reminds them of **Karl Marx**.
- **This is misguided for at least two reasons.**

3. Sharing 4:32-37

- Why the early church's sharing is not Christian Communism and has nothing to do with Marx.
 1. This was spontaneous and voluntary.
- Marxism forces people to give up what they have.
 2. This was based on Christian fellowship and their shared faith in Christ.
- Marxism opposes religion and imposes its views upon all the non-Marxists in their community.

3. Sharing 4:32-37

- The sharing itself, however, is good.
- We should do more of it.
- Our church sets aside 10% to support missionaries and 1% to meet urgent needs (Benevolence).
- This is in addition to the Project Love food pantry.
- You can give designated offerings to all of these funds whenever you want.

3. Sharing 4:32-37

- 4:36-37 This man Barnabas will turn out to be one of the main characters in the book of Acts.

An Example of Healing and Conversion

Acts 4 What We Just Read

Acts 4 What We Just Read

1. Opposition and Witness 4:1-22
2. Prayer 4:23-31
3. Sharing 4:32-37

Acts 4 Key Verse

Acts 4 Key Verse

- Acts 4:31 (ESV)

And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4 Key Points

Acts 4 Key Points

1. The church can expect opposition to the gospel even when we do good works.
2. Our prayers should emphasize the glory of God and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.
3. A Spirit-filled church will make an effort to meet one another's needs.

Acts 4 A Prayer

Acts 4 A Prayer

- Heavenly Father,
- We thank you for these examples from the history of the earliest church in Jerusalem.
- We know that you have called us to share the gospel even as they did and to carry out a ministry of doing good to others.
- Help us to do so even in the face of opposition whenever it comes.

Acts 4 A Prayer

- Help us also to keep our ministries before you in prayer. We desire to see your name glorified and the Great Commission fulfilled.
- Please also show us ways that we can most effectively meet one another's needs, so that there will be no needy people among us.
- In Christ,
- Amen

Acts 4 References

1. Video with Sai's personal story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W13PoYKu60Y&feature=youtu.be>