

Acts 4 Study Guide

Review:

Acts 1: Jesus Christ (in His resurrected body) spends 40 more days teaching, showing proofs of His resurrection, and giving direction of “next steps” for the church to be built. (**Verses 1-8**). **Verses 9-11** detail Jesus’ ascension into heaven and angels describe how He will return a 2nd time. Jesus’ followers gather in the Upper Room and proceed to fill Judas’ position with Matthias as well as explaining what happened to Judas.

Acts 2: (Verses 1-41) At Pentecost (50 days after Passover and Jesus’ crucifixion; 10 days after Jesus bodily ascended - He ascends after those 40 days of teaching), all of Jesus’ followers were still gathered together waiting for what Jesus promised. Devout Jews came from all over to Jerusalem for Pentecost (also known Feast of Weeks/ Booths). These devout Jews witnessed a sign of flames of tongues visually over Jesus’ followers (came like a wind noise) that enabled them to declare God’s mighty deeds in these devout Jews’ own native language. Reminder, up until this point, God’s Word was only heard in Hebrew and Aramaic. Peter stands up (most likely from prayer position with others) and explains, through Old Testament prophecy, what they are seeing. Peter then shows how they killed their Messiah by crucifying Jesus. They are convicted and ask what to do. Peter tells them to “repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Peter tells them this is for everyone who does that in order to become God’s child. 3,000 souls are added. In **Verses 42-47**, we learn of the church beginnings as they continued to devote themselves to the apostles teaching (which will become our New Testament), to fellowship, to breaking of bread and to prayer. The church begins to take care of each other as they have need and the Lord adds to their number.

Acts 3: (Verses 1-26) - On the way to the temple, Peter and John intersect with a beggar who was lame from birth. After Jesus healing them *through* Peter and John, many marvel at how they could do this healing. This sign/miracle was in front of many people (witnesses) who had known this lame man over the years and allows for Peter to share the gospel to a large crowd. The actual healing is not the miracle; but the manifestation of it. The true miracle is that God is using these common fishermen to be His spokespeople - His mouth. Peter shows, through the Old Testament history how Jesus was their Christ and how they killed Him. Peter concludes by telling them that Jesus, the Christ (their Messiah) was sent first to the Jewish nation as a blessing so that they will have the opportunity to turn from their wicked ways (i.e. rejecting Jesus, God’s Son).

Scriptures in Study Guide:

Scriptures this week are in the CSB (Christian Standard Bible). To make things easier, the actual verses will be included in your daily lessons to help you with the missing words. If you have any questions, write them down and we can talk about them in Sunday School.

Day 1 (Acts 4: 1-7)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 4** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

4 **1** The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. **2** They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. **3** They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. **4** But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand. **5** The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. **6** Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. **7** They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

Verse 1:

- The priests and the _____ of the temple _____ and the Sadducees came up to _____ and John while they were speaking to the _____.
- **Questions:**
 - What groups of people came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people?

 - Looking back at **Acts 3:17-20**, Who did Peter and John say that Jesus was and what would they need to do to be forgiven :

Verse 2:

- They were greatly _____ because the apostles were teaching the _____, proclaiming in Jesus the _____ of the dead.
- **Question** - Why were the priests, captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees greatly disturbed?

Note: the Sadducees had the power of the temple at this time and made their wealth from their position through Rome. It was in their positional interest to remove disruptions in order to not bring unwanted attention from Rome. They only looked at the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Old Testament (OT) that Moses wrote) as inspired by God. Other OT books were seen, by the Sadducees, as man's writing of history. Due to this fact, Sadducees did not believe in:

- the "resurrection of the dead" (**Matthew 22:23, Mark 12:18-27, Acts 23:8**),
- an afterlife (believing that the soul perished at death denying any penalty or reward after physical world life)
- The existence of a spiritual world (such as angels/demons); **Acts 23:8**

Verse 3:

- They _____ Peter and John and, because it was _____, they _____ them in jail until the _____ day.
- **Questions:**
 - Who did the priests, captain of the guard, and the Sadducees seize? _____
 - Since it was evening, where did they put Peter and John until the next day? _____

Note: by telling us "it was evening", this gives us a timeline of "how long" Peter and John spoke and taught the people. Notice that they began at 3 pm (**see Acts 3:1**)

Verse 4:

- But _____ who heard _____ message believed; _____ the number of men _____ believed _____ to _____ five thousand.
- **Questions:**
 - Even though Peter and John were put in jail, how many believed the message? _____
 - Write out **Romans 10:17**: _____
- Notice in **Acts 4:4** “how they believed the message”? How was it? “But many who _____ the message

Verse 5:

- The next _____ the rulers, the _____ and the teachers of the law _____ in Jerusalem.
- **Question** - Who met in Jerusalem the next day? _____

Verse 6:

- Annas the _____ priest was there, _____ so were Caiaphas, John, _____ and others of the high priest’s _____.
- **Questions:**
 - Who are the people who are named in **verse 6**? _____
 - They are all part of what family? _____
- **Note:** a high priest was suppose to be the person set aside by God through the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron. At the time of Jesus, it had become a political office within the temple.

Verse 7:

- They _____ Peter and John _____ before them _____ began to _____ them: “By what power _____ what name did _____ do this?”
 - **Questions:**
 - Who did Annas, Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the others of the high priest’s family have brought before them? _____
 - What did they question Peter and John about? _____
 - Write out **Mark 11:27-28**: _____
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Note: this will be the beginning of the apostles’ and fellow believers’ persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ. As noted in **Mark 11:27-28** that you wrote out above, Jesus also faced this from the Jewish leaders. Jesus’ followers were witnesses of this, but not partakers at that point in the accusations. They will now share in this to “give an answer” of why they do what they do and to be vessels that God will use to spread His message of Jesus as their Messiah (in addition to an invitation to be saved from their sins).

- Write out **1 Peter 3:15**: _____
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Note: Pray and ask God to guide you in how He can prepare you to be ready to give an answer for Him. This isn’t always as drastic as what Peter and John faced here. It is when anyone leans in to ask why we react or sometimes don’t react the way the world says we can. This is what the apostle Paul means in **1 Corinthians 10:23** - “All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. The world may say I have that “right” or “I deserve” something. But does it strengthen and grow my understanding of God and His Spirit’s power within me? It’s tough to trust in those situations because we want to “fix” or vindicate”. It is when we recognize that a Sovereign God has ordered these events and we pray that God will give us the strength to be obedient to what He has planned.

Day 2 (Acts 4:8-14)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 4** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! **9** If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, **10** then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. **11** Jesus is "'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.'" **12** Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." **13** When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. **14** But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

Verse 8:

- _____ Peter, filled _____ the Holy Spirit, _____ to them: "Rulers _____ elders of _____ people!
- **Questions:**
- Who are the people that Peter addresses here? _____ and _____ of the people!
- Who was Peter filled with? _____
- Write out **Matthew 4:4**: _____
- Write out **2 Timothy 3:16-17**: _____

- If we look at **Matthew 4:4** and **2 Timothy 3:16-17** together, how is a Christian daily filled with the Holy Spirit?

Verse 9-10:

- If we are _____ called to account _____ for an act of kindness _____ to a man who _____ lame and are _____ asked how he _____ healed.
- then _____ this, you _____ all the people _____ Israel: It is _____ the name of _____ Christ of Nazareth, whom _____ crucified but whom _____ raised _____ the dead, _____ this man _____ before you healed.
- **Questions:**
- What does Peter question why he and John are being called into account today?
 - For an _____ of _____ shown to a _____ who was _____
 - And being _____ how the lame man was _____.
- If those are the questions they are asking, then how does Peter explain this healing?
 - It is by the _____ of _____ of _____
- What does Peter say that these rulers and elders of the people as well as all of the people of Israel did to Jesus of Nazareth? _____
- What did God do even though they crucified Jesus of Nazareth? _____
- That same power from God that raised Jesus from the dead, has done what to this former lame man? _____

Note: notice that Peter is confronting them with their rejection of Jesus and the actions that their rejection took. He points to the physical of what they know and see (you crucified Jesus, He was raised, you know this man was lame, you can physically see he's no longer lame) and will move, through Scripture, to offer them salvation through repentance and acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah.

Verse 11:

- _____ is “the stone _____ builders _____, which has _____ the cornerstone.’
- **Questions:**
- What does Peter call Jesus? The _____ you _____
- What has Jesus become now? _____

Note: a cornerstone was a principal stone that would guide the worker in how to build the structure. Jesus is the cornerstone of the “church”. Remember that Acts is our history of how the church began. For a Jewish person, the word, cornerstone, also indicated Messiah as prophesied in the OT. They cannot mistake Peter’s implication here that Jesus is their Messiah. (See **Isaiah 28:16**)

Verse 12:

- _____ is found in _____ one else, for there is no other _____ under heaven _____ to mankind by _____ we must be _____.”
- **Questions:**
- Is salvation found in anyone else than Jesus? _____
- There is no other name under heaven given to who by which we must be saved? _____
- Write out **John 3:16:** _____
- **According to John 3:16**, did Jesus, God’s Son, die for all of the world? _____
- What must, however, those of the world believe in order to have eternal life and become God’s child? _____
- Write out **Genesis 15:6:** _____

Verse 13:

- When they _____ the courage of _____ and John and realized _____ they were unschooled, ordinary _____, they were _____ and they _____ note that these men had _____ with Jesus.
- **Questions:**
 - What did these Jewish leaders see of Peter and John? _____
 - Why were these Jewish leaders astonished about Peter and John? _____
 - Who did these Jewish leaders taken note of Who these men had been with? _____

Verse 14:

- But _____ they _____ see the man _____ had been healed _____ there with them, there _____ nothing they could _____.
 - **Question:** What physical evidence could the Jewish leaders see? _____
 - Write out **Matthew 13:14** that explains what we are seeing within these Jewish leaders: _____
- _____
- _____

Day 3 (Acts 4:15-22)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 4** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

15 So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. **16** “What are we going to do with these men?” they asked. “Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. **17** But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name.” **18** Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. **19** But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! **20** As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” **21** After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. **22** For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

Verse 15:

• _____ they ordered _____ to withdraw _____ the Sanhedrin _____ then conferred _____

• **Questions:**

- Where did the Jewish leaders order for Peter and John to be withdrawn from? _____
- What was the Jewish leaders’ purpose for having Peter and John withdrawn from the Sanhedrin?
_____.

Note: Sanhedrin was known as the “high court” for the Israelites (much like our Supreme Court today). It originated from God’s law through Moses to have 70 judges over the land. In Jesus’ time there were 71, with the remaining one being the present high priest to break any tie votes. Again, at this point, it was more political than religious.

Verse 16:

• “What _____ we going to do _____ these men?” they asked. “_____ living in Jerusalem _____ they have performed a notable _____, and we cannot _____ it.

• **Questions:**

- What was the question that they asked each other? _____
- What was the statement that they made about what “everyone living in Jerusalem knows”

- What did they, these Jewish leaders, say that they could not do? _____

Verse 17:

• But to _____ this thing from _____ any further _____ the people, we must _____ them to _____ no longer to _____ in this name.”

• **Questions:**

- What do these Jewish leaders want to stop? _____
- What do they decide to do to stop the spread of other people learning of this healing?

- What would you say that these Jewish leaders are going to “use” to “stop the spread” of this truth?

• Write out Jesus words to His followers in **Matthew 10:19-20:** _____

Verse 18:

• Then they _____ them in _____ and commanded them _____ to speak or _____ at all in the _____ of Jesus.

• **Question:** what did these Jewish leaders command them not to do? Not to _____ or _____
_____ in the _____ of _____.

Verse 19-20:

- But Peter and _____ replied, “Which is _____ in God’s eyes: to _____ to you, or to _____?”
- You _____ the judges!
- As for _____, we cannot _____ speaking about _____ we have seen _____ heard.”
- **Questions:**
 - What did Peter and John reply to the Jewish leaders’ commands? _____
 - What can Peter and John not help speaking about? What we have _____ and _____.

Verse 21:

- _____ further threats they _____ them go.
- They could _____ decide how to _____ them, because _____ the people were _____ God for what had _____.
- **Questions:**
 - What did the Jewish leaders do before they let Peter and John go? _____
 - Why couldn’t the Jewish leaders decide how to punish Peter and John? _____

Verse 22:

- For the _____ who _____ miraculously _____ was over forty years old.
- **Question:** how old was the man who was miraculously healed? _____.

Day 4 (Acts 4:23-31)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 4** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. **24** When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. **25** You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: “Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? **26** The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.’ **27** Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. **28** They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. **29** Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. **30** Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” **31** After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Verse 23:

- On _____ release, Peter _____ John went back to _____ own people and reported _____ that the _____ priests and the elders had _____ to them.
- **Questions:**
 - Where did Peter and John go back to? _____
 - What did Peter and John report to their own people (fellow believers)? _____

Verse 24:

- _____ they heard this, they _____ their voices _____ in prayer to _____. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you _____ the heavens and the earth and the sea, and _____ in them.
- **Questions:**
 - When they (Peter and John’s own people, fellow believers) heard this, how did they raise their voices together to God? In _____
 - How did they address the Lord? _____ Lord.

Acts 4:24 (cont'd):

- What did they state that the Sovereign Lord made? _____
- Write out **Jeremiah 32:17**: _____

Verse 25:

- You _____ by the Holy Spirit _____ the mouth of _____ servant, our father _____: “Why do the nations _____ and the peoples _____ in vain?”
- **Questions:**
 - In their congregational prayer, how did they say that God spoke through the mouth of their father David? By the _____
 - In this **verse (25)**, what is the question that the Holy Spirit had David write down about the nations and the peoples? _____

Verse 26:

- _____ kings _____ the earth _____ up and the rulers _____ together _____ the Lord and _____ his anointed one.’
- **Questions:**
 - Who rise up of the earth? _____
 - Who do the rulers band together against? _____ and against _____

Verse 27:

- Indeed _____ and Pontius Pilate _____ together _____ the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this _____ to conspire against _____ - holy servant Jesus, _____ you anointed.
- **Questions:**
 - Who met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel? _____ and _____
 - Whom did they conspire against? _____
 - How do they refer to Jesus? as God’s _____ whom God _____
- Write out **Luke 23:12**: _____

Verse 28:

- They _____ what _____ power and _____ had decided beforehand should _____.
- **Questions:**
 - Who was actually controlling all of what happened to Jesus Christ at this trial and crucifixion? _____
 - Whose power did all of this? _____
 - When was all of this decided when this should happen? _____
- Write out **John 19:10-11**: _____

Verse 29:

- Now, Lord, _____ their threats _____ enable your _____ to speak your _____ with _____ boldness.
- **Questions:**
 - What are they asking the Lord to consider? their _____
 - How are they asking the Lord to enable them to speak His Word? _____

Verse 30:

- Stretch _____ your hand to _____ and perform _____ and wonders _____ the name of your _____ servant Jesus.”
- **Questions:**
 - What are they asking for the Lord to do with His hand?
 - _____ you your hand to _____
 - _____ signs and _____
 - They are asking that all of this will be done through the Name of Who? _____

Verse 31:

- _____ they prayed, the _____ where they _____ meeting was _____.
- And they were _____ filled with the _____ Spirit and _____ the word of God _____.
- **Questions:**
 - What happened to the place they were meeting? _____
 - What happened when they all were filled with the Holy Spirit? _____
 - What did they pray for to God in **Acts 4:29**? _____
 - In **Acts 4:30**, they asked for a tangible sign to encourage them to speak boldly. Did they receive that answer in **Acts 4:31**? _____

Note: many times we, as humans, are drawn to the physical signs and wonders and miss the tangible “reason” for them in the book of Acts. We are not to put our faith in any physical sign and wonder, nor (as we will learn in **Acts 8:18-24**) are we to go after these physical areas. We can, of course, pray for God to intervene within our life circumstance. The result, however, is up to the Sovereign Lord. Sovereign means He gets to say. It is His plan, His way. This manifestation was an answer to Jesus’ followers that God heard their prayer and would give them the boldness they would need in the face of physical persecution as they continued to serve in building His church.

Day 5 (Acts 4:32-37)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word. Read **Acts 4** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. **33** With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all **34** that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales **35** and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need. **36** Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”), **37** sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.

Verse 32:

- All the _____ were _____ in heart and mind.
- No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.
- **Questions:**
 - All the believers were one in what? _____ and _____
 - According to **Philippians.2:1-2**, Whose heart and mind should all believers be one in? _____
 - How many of these believers claimed their possessions as their own? _____
 - What did they do with everything they had? _____

Note: This does not mean that they sold all that they had because then eventually they, themselves, would be in need and a burden upon others. What this means is that they lived “below their means” so that they would be prepared to help those in need who God brought across their path. We, as the body of Christ, need to remember that all resources (money, skills, job, etc) are all for the Lord’s use and we must be ready to not claim any for our own use.

Verse 33:

- With great _____ the apostles _____ to testify to the resurrection _____ the Lord Jesus.
- And God's grace was so _____ at work in them _____
- **Questions:**
 - What were the apostles able to continue to testify to with great power? _____
 - What was so powerfully working in them all? _____
- Write out **Philippians 2:13:** _____

Verse 34-35:

- that _____ were _____ needy persons among _____.
- For _____ time to time those who _____ land or houses sold them, _____ the money from the sales _____ put it _____ the apostles' _____, and it was distributed to _____ who had need.
- **Questions:**
 - What was there not among them? no _____
 - What would happen from time to time with those who owned land or houses? _____
 - Where would they bring the money from the sales of their land or houses? _____
 - When this money was laid at the apostles' feet, who was it distributed to? _____

Verse 36-37:

- Joseph, a _____ from Cyprus, whom the _____ called Barnabas (which _____ "son of encouragement"),
- sold a _____ he owned and brought the _____ and put it _____ the apostles' feet.
- **Questions:**
 - Who was Joseph? _____
 - What was the name that the apostles called Joseph? _____
 - What does the name Barnabas mean? _____ of _____
 - What did Joseph (Barnabas) sell? _____
 - Where did Joseph (Barnabas) put the money from the sale of the field? _____

Note: Keep in mind what Joseph (who from this point will be referred to as Barnabas) has done here. His selfless generosity will encourage others to trust God as their provision by moving them to help those in need. Not all, however, will do this with the same selfless motive. As we move into **Acts 5**, we will see how others imitate behavior for their own selfish motives; instead of a sacrifice to strengthen the body of Christ. All sacrifice and deceptive motives are before an all-knowing God. He will not be mocked **Galatians 6:7**. He will deal with those who profane His name by pretending to be His for their own selfish gain.