



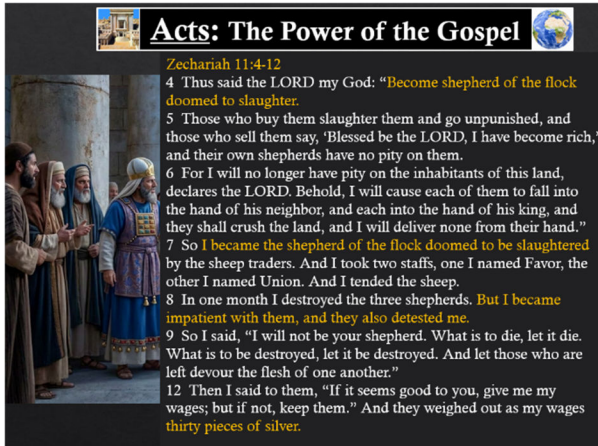
Introduction to Act 4

In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit descends upon the early church, empowering the disciples to become witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The scene is vivid: Peter, filled with the Spirit, addresses a crowd drawn by the sound of a rushing wind—a sensory detail that signals something extraordinary is happening. The disciples, gathered to celebrate Pentecost in the Upper Room, experience tongues of fire resting upon them. As people arrive, they hear the disciples praising God in over a dozen languages, a miracle that astonishes the listeners. Peter's dynamic preaching moves three thousand individuals to become followers of Christ, and they are baptized into the Church. Unified as a group, they continue worshiping at the Temple and growing in faith. Following these remarkable events, some time passed before the next significant moment in the life of the early church unfolded, marking a gradual progression in the narrative.

Peter and John, guided by the Spirit, go to the Temple and notice a lame beggar at the gate called Beautiful. Responding to his request for alms, Peter boldly tells him,

"I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise and walk!"

The man, lame since birth, is instantly healed and begins to leap for joy. His exuberant celebration draws a crowd from the Temple area, all eager to witness this amazing miracle. Peter then delivers his second evangelical message, proclaiming the *Name of Jesus* as the true source of the miracle. This moment is not only a demonstration of divine power but also a bold affirmation of Jesus' authority and mission. The crowd's reaction is mixed—wonder and excitement among many, but also hostility as word spreads to the Captain of the Temple, the scribes, and the priests, setting the stage for the events of Acts chapter four. Theologically, this episode underscores the early Church's conviction that the risen Jesus continues to act through His followers, challenging established religious authority and inviting all to faith.



One striking aspect of Chapter 3 is that Peter and John, witnesses to the leaders of Israel plotting against Jesus, now stand before these same leaders—Annas the High Priest, his son-in-law Caiaphas, and the Sadducees—who had orchestrated Jesus' arrest and crucifixion by Rome. Once again, these leaders are given a second chance to accept Jesus and repent for the murder of the Messiah. The first time, Peter had fled in fear, but now he stands boldly, proclaiming Jesus to the people and the leaders, offering them the opportunity to repent. This transformation in Peter demonstrates the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, marking a pivotal shift from fear to courage among Jesus' followers. Like Jesus, Peter and John must now face persecution for being "Witnesses" to the Gospel, showing how the Spirit emboldens believers to

confront opposition and advance the message of Christ. Peter urges the people to repent and turn to Jesus, so they can be saved and have their sins blotted out.

Acts 3:18-20

18 But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.

19 Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out,

20 that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,

Peter and John Arrested

Acts 4:1-4

1 And **as they were speaking** to the people, **the priests** and the **captain of the temple** and **the Sadducees**¹ came upon them,

2 greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in **Jesus the resurrection** from the dead.

3 And **they arrested** them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

4 But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about **five thousand**.

As Peter continued his message, which began in Acts 3:12, he called the people of Israel to repent and recognize that they had crucified the Messiah—just as the prophets had foretold. Peter explained that Jesus, the Messiah, was now resurrected and in Heaven, waiting for Israel's restoration. While Peter was still speaking these words, the Temple leadership arrived. News of his preaching was spreading quickly, drawing the attention of those in charge.

To understand the significance of this confrontation, it helps to know who the leaders were. The **priests** were direct descendants of Aaron. They managed the sacrifices and held the offices outlined in Mosaic law. While all priests were part of the tribe of Levi, not all Levites were priests. **Levites** handled the daily operations of the Temple, assisting with maintenance and logistical duties. The **captain of the temple** was the second highest authority after the High Priest, who at that time was Caiaphas. This captain oversaw Temple security and had previously been involved in the events leading up to Jesus' arrest, as mentioned in Luke 22:4.

¹ According to Josephus and the New Testament, the Sadducees believed:

Total Extinction: Death was the absolute end of consciousness. The soul perished along with the body.

No Rewards or Punishments: Since there was no life after death, there were no post-mortem rewards for the righteous or punishments for the wicked.

Rejection of Sheol as a "State": While earlier Israelite thought mentioned *Sheol* (a shadowy underworld), the Sadducees of the Second Temple period interpreted the Torah's silence on the afterlife as proof that God's covenant applied strictly to the living.

Another key group present was the **Sadducees**. They were a powerful party who held the office of High Priest and were responsible for Temple administration. The Sadducees followed only the Torah—the first five books of Moses—and rejected beliefs in resurrection, angels, spirits, and the teachings of the prophets. This set them apart from the Pharisees, who accepted additional scriptures and believed in resurrection and spiritual beings (see Acts 23:6-9 and Matthew 22:23-24).

The arrival of these leaders was significant because they had all played a role in the death and crucifixion of Jesus. Now, they were confronted by the miracle performed on the “**Lame Beggar**”—a man who had been unable to walk since birth. Peter’s message directly challenged the Sadducees’ beliefs, especially their denial of life after death and the resurrection.

The doctrine of resurrection is clearly taught in scripture, yet the Sadducees rejected it, along with the concept of the soul’s eternity. Isaiah, Job and Daniel all taught about the day of Resurrection, when the dead bodies would come back to life. Job looked forward to seeing his Redeemer with his own eyes after his skin was destroyed.



Isaiah 26:19

19 Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.

Daniel 12:2-3

2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.



Job 19:25-27

25 For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth.

26 And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God,
27 whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

Job looked forward to the resurrection

The events began at 3 PM and continued until after 6 PM, as the sun was setting. By this time, Peter, John, and the healed man—often called the “Lame Beggar”—were arrested and placed in custody. They were held overnight and brought before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council, the following day.

According to Acts 4:4, the number of men who believed had grown to about 5,000. If women and children are included, the total number of believers could have exceeded 10,000. This remarkable growth would have greatly alarmed the Sadducees, who were key members of the religious leadership and strongly opposed the teaching of the resurrection.

Peter and John Interrogated

Acts 4:5-16

5 On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem

6 with **Annas** the high priest and **Caiaphas** and **John** and **Alexander**, and all who were of the high-priestly family.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?”

8 Then Peter, filled with the **Holy Spirit**, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders,

9 if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,

10 let it be known to all of you 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 is standing before you well.

11 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which



The **Caiaphas ossuary** is one of twelve ossuaries or bone boxes, discovered in a burial cave in south Jerusalem in December 1990, two of which featured the name "Caiaphas". Inside the box were the bones of six individuals, including those of a 60-year-old male, which many scholars identify as the High Priest himself.

we must be saved."

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

14 But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition.

15 But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another,

16 saying, "What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

The council referred to here may have been the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin consisted of 71 members: 70 elders and the High Priest, who served as the 71st member. This same group of elders played a role in the trial of Jesus. **Scribes**² were the legal experts of Jewish society. They interpreted religious law, taught in synagogues, and often served as rabbis or teachers. Their expertise shaped how laws were applied and understood during legal proceedings, including significant events like the trial of Jesus.

Luke 22:66-67

66 When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people

gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their council, and they said,

67 "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe,

Annas had served as High Priest in the past (AD 6-15), his son-in-law was **Caiaphas** who was now the ruling High Priest (AD 18-36), **John** would later rule as High Priest from AD 36-37. They all played a prominent role in the rejection of the Messiah (John 18:12-32). Annas was the patriarch of the family, 5 of his sons were high priests, along with his son in law, Caiaphas. **Alexander** could be a relative of the High Priest, but there is no information of him, outside of this verse.

John 18:12-14

12 So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him.

13 First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

14 It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.

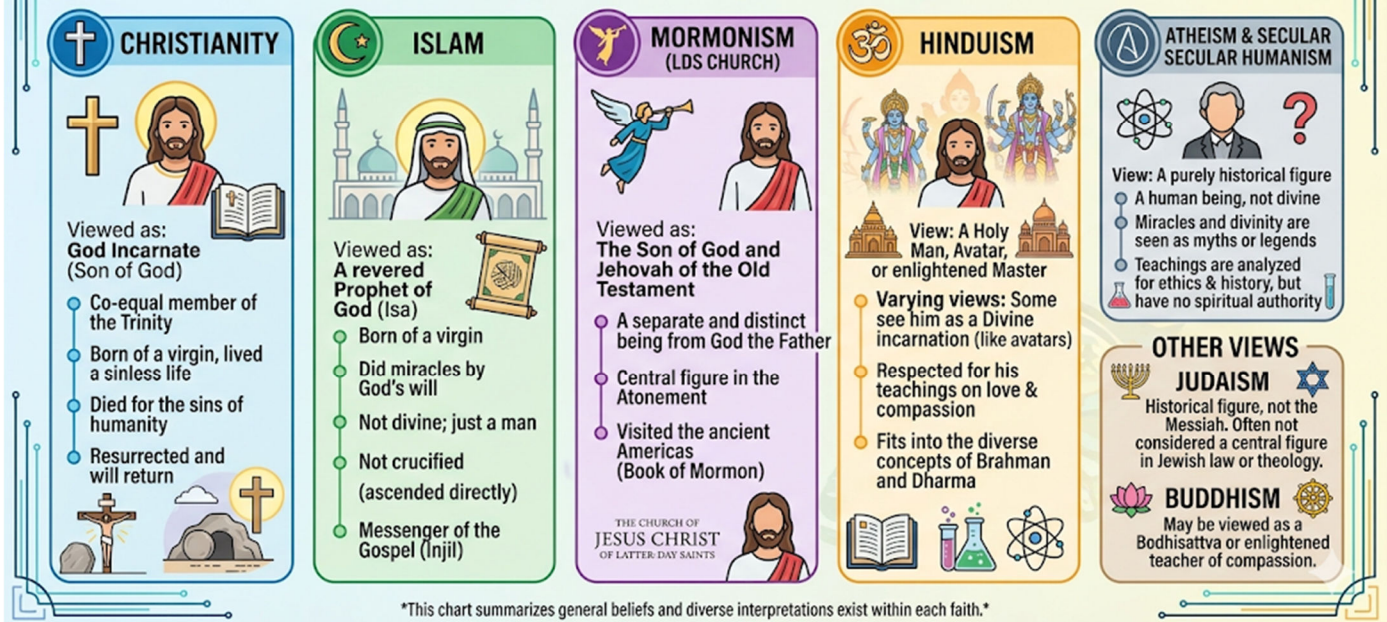
Peter, John, and the healed beggar were brought before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council, so the leaders could question them about the source of the "power" or authority by which the healing took place. Explaining miracles to them would be like trying to convince a modern atheist of supernatural events, since their beliefs fundamentally differed from those who accepted the supernatural. Later in Acts (Acts 23:6-9), the apostle Paul uses these divisions to his advantage; he declares his belief in the resurrection, aligning himself with the Pharisees and thus creating conflict with the Sadducees.

Building on this background, the focus shifts back to Peter's response. Despite standing before the same group that had handed Jesus over to the Romans just two or three months earlier, Peter

² [1] Scribes: In the New Testament era, the **scribes** (Greek: *grammateis*) were far more than just "copiers" of text. They were the **professional intellectual class** of Judea. While we often think of them in the context of the New Testament's "Scribes and Pharisees," they held a distinct and vital role in the functioning of Jewish society; □ **Legal Interpretation:** They decided how the ancient laws applied to contemporary life. For example, they determined exactly what constituted "work" on the Sabbath.

□ **Teaching:** Most scribes were also rabbis or "doctors of the law" who taught the youth and the public in the synagogues. □ **Preservation:** They were responsible for the meticulous copying of the Hebrew Scriptures, ensuring that not a single "jot or tittle" was lost.

DIFFERENT VIEWS OF JESUS: A COMPARISON ACROSS RELIGIONS & BELIEFS



answers their questions with remarkable boldness and confidence. Filled with the power of the **Holy Spirit**, Peter addresses the Sanhedrin as "**Rulers of the people and elders.**" This moment shows the transforming work of the Holy Spirit—Peter, who once denied knowing Jesus out of fear, now speaks courageously in public. The same Spirit who empowered Peter can also embolden us today, turning fear into confidence as we stand for our faith. One of the Holy Spirit's ministries is to strengthen believers from within, helping us respond wisely when the world challenges what we believe.

John 14:26

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The crippled man standing before the Sanhedrin serves as the exhibit in the court trial—a living demonstration of the fulfillment of God's Word. Peter acts as God's lawyer before disobedient Israel. He presents evidence of Jesus through the healed man. Just as the crippled man was transformed, we too are evidence of Jesus to a fallen and lost world searching for hope. Peter boldly proclaims the power in the **name of Jesus**. This phrase appears ten times in the book of Acts, emphasizing its significance and authority in both physical and spiritual realms. For example, in Acts 3:6, Peter says, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk," and the man is healed. Other instances include Acts 4:7, where the Sanhedrin asks, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" and Acts 4:10, where Peter declares, "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well." These verses illustrate the repeated use and power of the name of Jesus throughout Acts.

The Name of Jesus

The name of Jesus is the spiritual key that unlocks authority in the spiritual realm. All the host of heaven must submit to the name of Jesus.

Philippians 2:9-11

9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,



11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Because all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus, and he has transferred that authority to his church, we are empowered to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. When we make ourselves available, God will provide opportunities for us to testify about him. Throughout Peter's two sermons in Acts (Acts 2:14–39 and Acts 3:12–26), he consistently emphasizes the importance of knowing the identity of Jesus. It is not enough

to simply know that a man named Jesus lived two thousand years ago; we must understand who he truly is. For example, while Islam regards Jesus as a prophet, Christianity teaches that he is the Son of God and Savior. Mormonism presents a different understanding of Jesus, and secular perspectives may see him as merely a historical figure or moral teacher. These distinctions are crucial to understanding the power behind his name. The power of the name of Jesus is directly tied to the person of Jesus himself. Peter makes this clear by telling the Sanhedrin, **“Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.”**

Peter wants the Sanhedrin to understand that Jesus is the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, as foretold by the prophets—the prophets foretold that the Messiah would die for our sins. Knowing this is essential to grasping the true significance of Jesus' identity and authority.

Acts 2:23-24

23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Acts 3:17-19

17 “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.

18 But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.

19 Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out,

Using scripture as a proof text, quoting Psalm 118, he lets them know they were in error by rejecting Jesus, in fact he is showing them how they fulfilled by the prophecy of David. They were *the builders that rejected* the “Cornerstone”. It is not enough to know there is a guy named Jesus, we need to know the identity of Jesus, and who he is.

Psalms 118:22-23

22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Jesus is the Only Way

Christianity is exclusive, there is only one way to Heaven, Jesus is not an option, he is the ONLY WAY. This is a hard concept for some to grasp in our pluralist world, where everyone's opinions are equally valid. Anybody who claims to have the “Truth” is classified as a bigot by secularists. Peter is unapologetic, he proclaims there is **“salvation in no one else”** and **“no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”**

Jesus declared his Salvation is exclusive; it only comes through Him:

John 3:36

36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

John 14:6

6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Peter spoke with **boldness**, because he had the confidence from the Holy Spirit, one of the promises of the Spirit, is that we would become the vessel through whom God speaks. The Greek word for *Boldness* is *parrhesia*, *παρρησία*; all out spokenness, that is, *frankness*, *bluntness*, *publicity*; by implication *assurance*:

God loves to confound the wise by the simple, Peter and John were uneducated Galileans, before the most sophisticated body in Judea, and they spoke with confidence and knowledge. We must remember this is not human effort, but *Holy Spirit Power* at work. Jesus was the source behind the miracle and the knowledge.



An unexplainable Miracle had occurred, Jesus was given the credit, they **could not deny** the event, their only choice was to accept or reject the claims. How to explain this miracle, the Sanhedrin rejects the Power of the name of Jesus, they made their choice. They were given the option to see the power of the name of Jesus, and know his salvation, they were fulfilling, their Holy Spirit mission, "To be my witnesses". We have the same commission to the world around us.

Forbidden to Speak the Name of Jesus

Acts 4:17-22

17 But in order **that it may spread no further** among the people, let us warn them to **speak no more to anyone in this name.**"

18 So they called them and **charged them not to speak** or teach at all **in the name of Jesus.**

19 But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is **right in the sight of God to listen to you** rather than to **God**, you must judge,

20 for **we cannot but speak** of what we have seen and heard."

21 And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened.

22 **For the man** on whom this sign of healing was performed was **more than forty years old.**

Here we see the lines being drawn in the sand that will continue to the Second Coming, remember the Holy Spirit gives the church Power, but for what? To be "My Witnesses", the Church has been given power to carry the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole world, starting in

Jerusalem. Now the challenge and opposition begin. Satan's goal is to prevent the Gospel, how does he do it? His goal is to blind the lost: To prevent them from hearing the message is primary, Satan has many tools at his disposal.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ,



who is the image of God.

The heart of the Good News is that Jesus died for our sins, offering salvation through His sacrifice. Satan's primary strategy to prevent the spread of this message is to use fear, rejection, threats

of death, and loss. Throughout history—and even today—governments and authorities have actively tried to silence those who proclaim the Gospel.

Understanding these tactics helps us recognize that opposition is not just personal—it is a deliberate attempt by Satan to keep people from hearing the truth about Jesus. When someone rejects you for your faith or when you face hostility for taking a stand aligned with God's will, it's easy to feel isolated or discouraged. But if we remember what's really at stake—the eternal destiny of those who have yet to hear the Gospel—we see persecution for what it is: Satan's effort to keep people spiritually blind and lost.

Recognizing that persecution is simply Satan's attempt to keep people from the truth empowers us to stand firm in our faith and continue sharing the Gospel with courage. Let this awareness strengthen your resolve, knowing that every act of boldness brings the light of Christ into places where it's needed most.

Human Government vs. God

Peter confronts the authorities with a clear choice: should we obey you or obey God? This dilemma echoes throughout Scripture. Daniel faced a similar test when the Persian government banned prayer for thirty days, threatening death by lions for anyone who disobeyed. As a prominent official, Daniel could not hide his faith, nor did he attempt to. Instead, he chose to trust God, openly praying despite the law and risking his life. God's deliverance came, but Daniel's commitment was unwavering—he valued obedience above fear, knowing that following God matters more than the threat of death.

This theme continues in the early church; the apostles later defied the Sanhedrin's commands, and Stephen became the first martyr for refusing to silence the Gospel (Acts 6–7). Ultimately, both Peter and Paul would give their lives for the message they had seen and heard, compelled by the Spirit to speak boldly. Just as miracles confirmed God's power—such as the healing of a man over forty years old, which even the Sanhedrin could not deny—these examples remind us that obedience to God often requires courage in the face of human opposition. For believers today, these stories call us to stand firm in our faith, trusting God's strength when we encounter challenges or pressure to compromise. The same Spirit who empowered Peter and Daniel equips us to proclaim truth, even when the cost is high.

The Believers Pray for Boldness

Acts 4:23-31

23 When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them,

25 who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?

26 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his **Anointed**—

27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both **Herod** and **Pontius Pilate**, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to **continue to speak** your word **with all boldness**,

30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

31 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**.

To live victoriously as a believer means to walk in faith, confidence, and obedience to God even when facing opposition. Victorious living is not about material success but about remaining steadfast in Christ, experiencing peace, strength, and purpose through Him regardless of circumstances (see Romans 8:37). The mission of the Gospel is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, to share our faith

with others, to serve those in need, and to live according to biblical principles such as love, forgiveness, and holiness (see Matthew 28:19–20; Matthew 22:37–39). Believers must recognize that there is real opposition—Satan, called “the god of this age,” seeks to blind people to the truth of Christ and works through worldly systems and governments to resist God’s plan (2 Corinthians 4:4). Our struggle is ultimately not against people, but against spiritual forces that oppose God’s kingdom (Ephesians 6:12). Understanding both the call of the Gospel and the reality of spiritual opposition equips believers to stand firm and live out their faith with boldness and hope.

1 Peter 5:8

8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

The young church saw this as victory, because it was a test, would Peter and John cower in fear, or would this rise as God’s warriors bringing the Gospel to the opposition. Knowing that God owns the world, and God made the heaven and the earth, he is control of the world, removes the pressure from the faithful saint, we can relax in our circumstances when we know God is control.

Also understanding the “Spiritual War” we are engaged in removes our stress, quoting from the 2nd Psalm, when you know you are on God’s side, you can look forward to eventual victory regardless of the temporary circumstances like prison, disease or death, we know what the end game is. The rulers set themselves against The LORD and his Messiah, the Hebrew word for anointed is *māshîyach*, the conflict was foretold to come. When you know you are God’s team, you have nothing to fear, you know all persecutions are temporary.

When the early church faced threats and challenges, it became a defining moment—a test of faith. Would Peter and John shrink back in fear, or would they stand strong as God’s messengers, boldly sharing the Gospel even in the face of opposition? These moments reveal our true trust in God.

We can find true confidence and peace knowing that God is in control of everything. He is the Creator of heaven and earth, and nothing happens outside His knowledge or authority. Because God rules over all, we don’t have to be overwhelmed by circumstances. We can rest assured that our lives are secure in His hands.

The “Spiritual War” is the ongoing battle between good and evil, where believers contend against forces that oppose God’s will. This struggle isn’t just against people or physical challenges—it’s a deeper conflict against spiritual forces that try to undermine faith and distract us from God’s purpose (see Ephesians 6:12). Every generation of Christians faces this spiritual opposition, whether it comes in the form of temptation, discouragement, or outright persecution.

Psalm 2 is especially significant because it foretells that rulers and nations will stand against the Lord and His Anointed One—the Messiah, Jesus Christ. This psalm reminds us that opposition to God was predicted long ago, and it assures us that, in the end, God’s purposes will prevail. While the world may rage and plot against God, those who belong to Him are promised ultimate victory. For example, even when Peter and John were threatened with imprisonment, they trusted God’s plan and continued to speak boldly.

Remembering God’s promises can fill us with hope in the middle of our own hardships. When I think about believers throughout history—whether it was the apostles facing prison, or missionaries serving in dangerous places—I’m encouraged by their unwavering faith. They drew strength from knowing that every trial was temporary and that God would see them through. In my own life, reflecting on God’s faithfulness has helped me endure difficult seasons with courage, reminding me that I am never alone, and that every challenge is an opportunity to grow closer to Him.

No matter what we face, we can choose hope and steadfastness. God’s control and His promises assure us that spiritual battles are not the end of the story. With our eyes fixed on Him, we can stand firm, speak boldly, and trust that victory is certain for all who belong to Christ.

Psalms 2:1-2

1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

Throughout history, figures such as Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and even the people of Israel have stood in opposition to God's Messiah, Jesus Christ—a resistance that Scripture assures us will persist until the end of the age (see Psalm 2:1-2; Acts 4:27).

True boldness for the believer is not based on personality or circumstances but is rooted in this God-given authority and mission. Boldness is the unwavering courage to speak and act for Christ, even when it is unpopular or dangerous, because we know who we are and Whose we are. As Acts 4:31 recounts, the early believers “were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.” Their boldness sprang from their assurance that God had called and empowered them for His mission.

The stark difference between believers and non-believers is not measured by earthly status, wealth, or acclaim. Jesus Himself said, “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?” (Mark 8:36). The poorest believer, secure in Christ, possesses eternal riches and true hope, far surpassing the fleeting success of the wealthiest person without God. Paul wrote in Romans 8:17, “Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.” This inheritance is a reality for all who trust in Jesus.

When we fully comprehend our authority and position in Christ, boldness becomes a natural response. We are empowered to face any opposition, knowing that nothing in this world can ultimately harm us or separate us from God's love (Romans 8:38-39). With this confidence, we can live with hope, speak the truth with courage, and press on with unwavering faith—secure in the knowledge of who we are and where we are going.

The Had Everything in Common

Acts 4:32-37

32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had **everything in common**.

33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold

35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus,

37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

The early church saw themselves as God's team and were focused on spreading the Gospel to the lost world. They shared all their possessions and resources, believing that everything belonged to God and was to be used for the good of the community. This meant that no one claimed their belongings as their own; instead, everything was held in common and distributed according to each person's needs.