



WARM-UP

We recommend you choose 1 or 2 of the following questions.

When was the last time you had a run-in with an authority figure? How did it go?

Have you ever been in a jail? How did it make you feel?

Share an example of something bold that you have done, want to do, or have seen done.

WORD

"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...They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand."

- Acts 4:1, 3-4 (NIV)

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 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, 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."

- Acts 4: 8-10 (NIV)

"Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

- Acts 4: 18-20 (NIV)



WORD CONTINUED...

"Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 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."

- Acts 4:29-31 (NIV)

INTRODUCTION

In the fourth chapter of Acts we see the continued fulfillment of **Acts 1:8**: *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses..."*

Throughout the book of Acts we see this promise fulfilled again and again, something which continued throughout the history of the church and is continuing around the world today. We also see the beginning of the persecution of the church, another phenomenon which continues to this day.

As we discuss this chapter together, we'll see that it covers age-old themes that are central to the Christian faith. Our hope is that together, we'll discover how to apply these values to lives.

DISCUSSION

1. Read vs.1, 3-4. Why do you think the religious leaders arrested Peter and John? How do you think the other believers felt when Peter and John got arrested?
2. Read vs. 8-10. In verse 9, Peter declares that kindness is why they ministered miraculous healing to the lame man. Take a moment to discuss what it might have been like in the time of Jesus, to have never walked since the day you were born.



DISCUSSION CONTINUED...

3. Read verses 18-20. Have you ever felt pressured not to talk about Jesus? How did you respond? How did Peter and John respond to being told not to talk about what they had seen Jesus do?
4. Read verses 29-31. The disciples responded to opposition against telling people about Jesus by praying, which caused them to be filled with the Holy Spirit, which in turn brought them back full circle to once again boldly speaking the Word of God. What's the connection between prayer and living boldly for God?
5. In what ways is the Holy Spirit active in these verses? What does it mean to be 'filled with the Holy Spirit'?

APPLICATION

1. Where do you feel the most opposition against sharing your faith in Jesus? After reading and discussing Acts 4, how might you now respond to that opposition?
2. In verse 10, Peter clearly connects this miraculous act of kindness with the name of Jesus. Is there a person or situation in your life that is in need of an act of kindness in the name of Jesus?
3. What can you do this week to raise the level of your prayers and raise the level of your boldness for God?

PRAYER

1. Pray for the people and situations in your life that need an act of kindness, a miracle from God. Ask God to give you an opportunity to do an act of kindness.



PRAYER CONTINUED...

2. Pray for the places and situations in your life where you feel the most opposition to talking about God. Ask God for wisdom on when and how to respond to the opposition.
3. Ask God for boldness to share Jesus with others this week.