



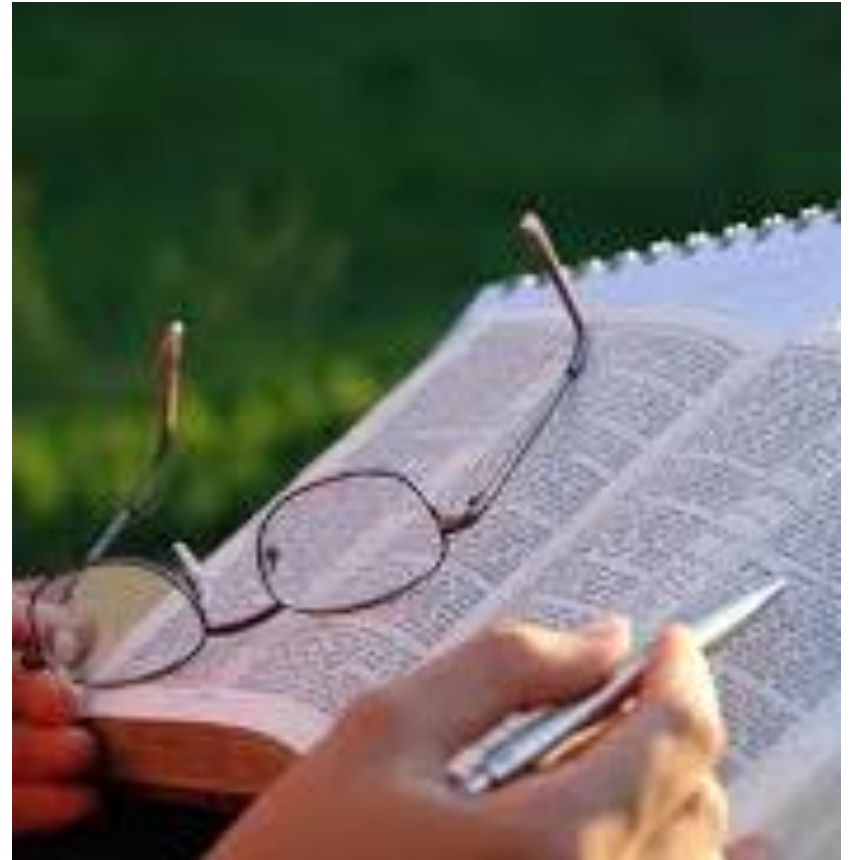
The CHURCH Series

Part 3 – Persecution!

Memory Verse

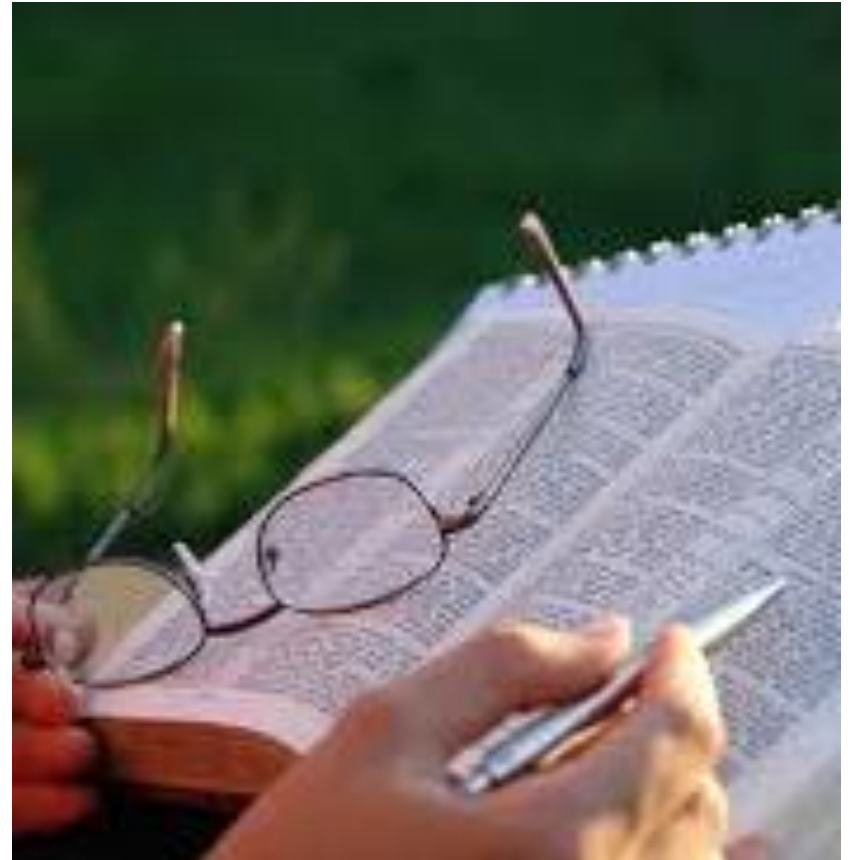
- When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
- ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.
- ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them.
- ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:1-40 (NKJV)



Introduction...

- From the first two chapters of the Book of Acts, all we see are positives.
- The new movement was gathering momentum as 3000 souls were added to the church.
- There were house to house meetings and Jerusalem was buzzing with news of this new religious movement.
- We now step into the third chapter where we will see the whiplash from the enemy after a notable miracle.



Acts Chapter 3

- *Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.*
- *²And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful,*
- *to ask alms from those who entered the temple;*
Acts 3:1-2



Prayer is Key...

- **Regular Prayer Habits:** Peter and John were on their way to the temple at the time of prayer (Acts 3:1).
- This shows their dedication to regular prayer, highlighting the importance of maintaining a disciplined prayer life.
- **Prayer and Power:** The miracle performed happened in the context of a life devoted to prayer.
- This suggests a strong link between a vibrant prayer life and experiencing God's power and guidance.



Immediately....

- ⁶ Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you:
- In the **name of Jesus Christ** of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”
- ⁷ And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up,
- and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.
Acts 3:6-7

Acts 3:3

³ Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.



In the Name...

- Peter and John heal a lame man at the temple gate called Beautiful,
- demonstrating the power of Jesus' name.
- This miracle shows that through faith in Jesus, extraordinary things can happen.

Acts 3:3

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.



In the Name...

- Extraordinary things happen in that name JESUS
- Peter and John were NOT expecting to perform any miracles that day.
- God orchestrates miracles as led by the Spirit of God. That is one way you can discern the fake from the genuine.
- The healing of the lame man emphasizes the importance of having faith and acting upon it.
- Peter and John did not offer money but gave what they had—the power of Jesus



JESUS!

- The apostles' willingness to help the man reflects God's compassion and care for those who are suffering.
- Believers are called to show compassion and offer help to those in need.
- Peter and John recognized the man's need and responded accordingly (Acts 3:4-5).
- Being sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading can open opportunities for ministry and miracles.



Leaping!

- *⁸ So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—*
 - *walking, leaping, and praising God.*
 - *⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God.*
 - *¹⁰ Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple;*
 - *and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.*
- Acts 3:8-10



Walking & Leaping...

- Whatever God does, speaks for itself!
- God is very strategic
- This was a man everyone already knew.
- No fake miracles
- It touched everyone because everybody knew him for years.
- His healing touched the memories of everyone in Jerusalem!



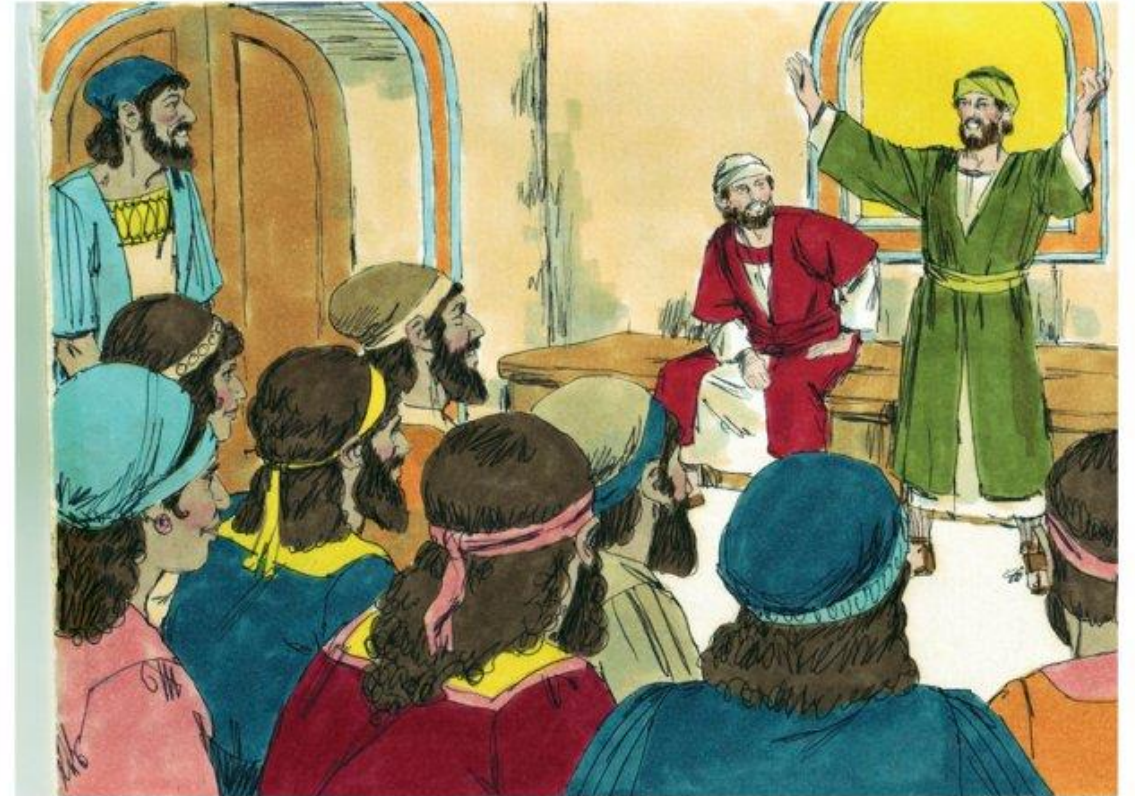
Men of Israel...

- *11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John,*
 - *all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.*
 - *12 So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people:*
 - *“Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?”*
- Acts 3:11-12



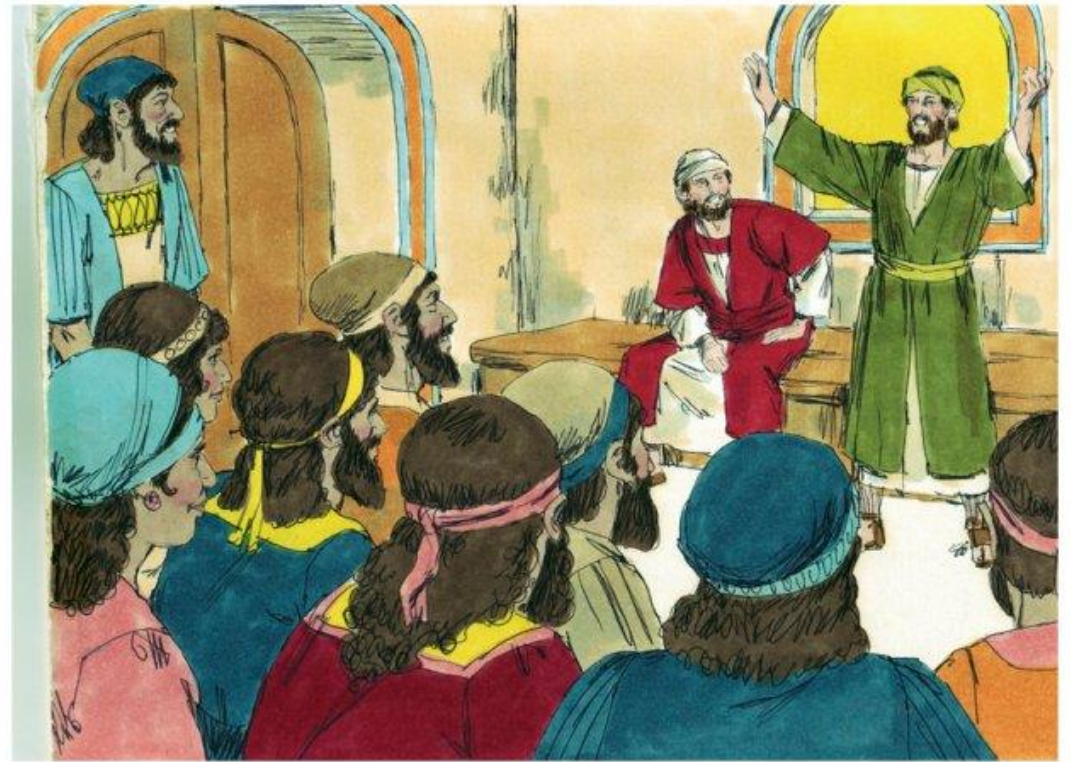
Men of Israel...!

- The natural response of human beings to a miracle whether fake or genuine is always amazement!
- The supernatural is always a crowd puller.
- That's why fake ministers use this to attract and deceive the people.
- The Gospel and miracles or the supernatural go together



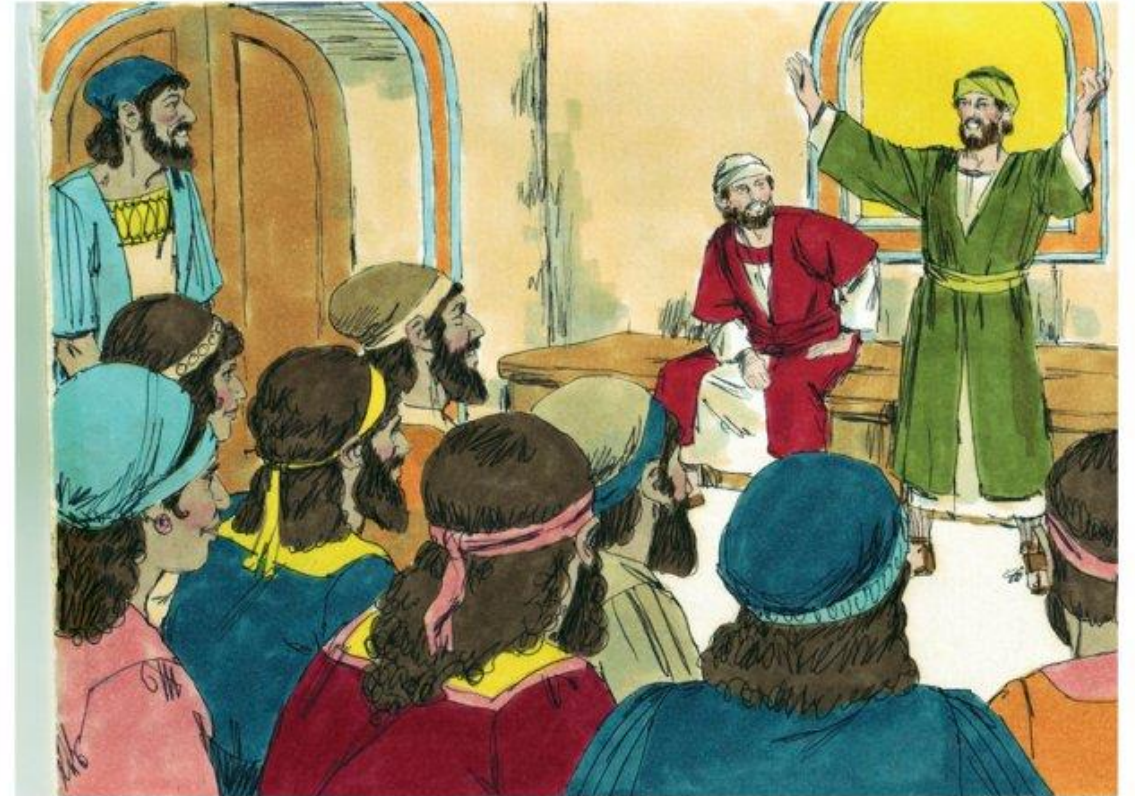
Men of Israel...

- Peter immediately directs the crowd's amazement to God, not taking any personal credit for the miracle (Acts 3:12-13).
- This teaches the importance of humility and giving God the glory for His works.
- Believers should always acknowledge that any good work or miracle is from God,
- fostering a humble and dependent attitude.



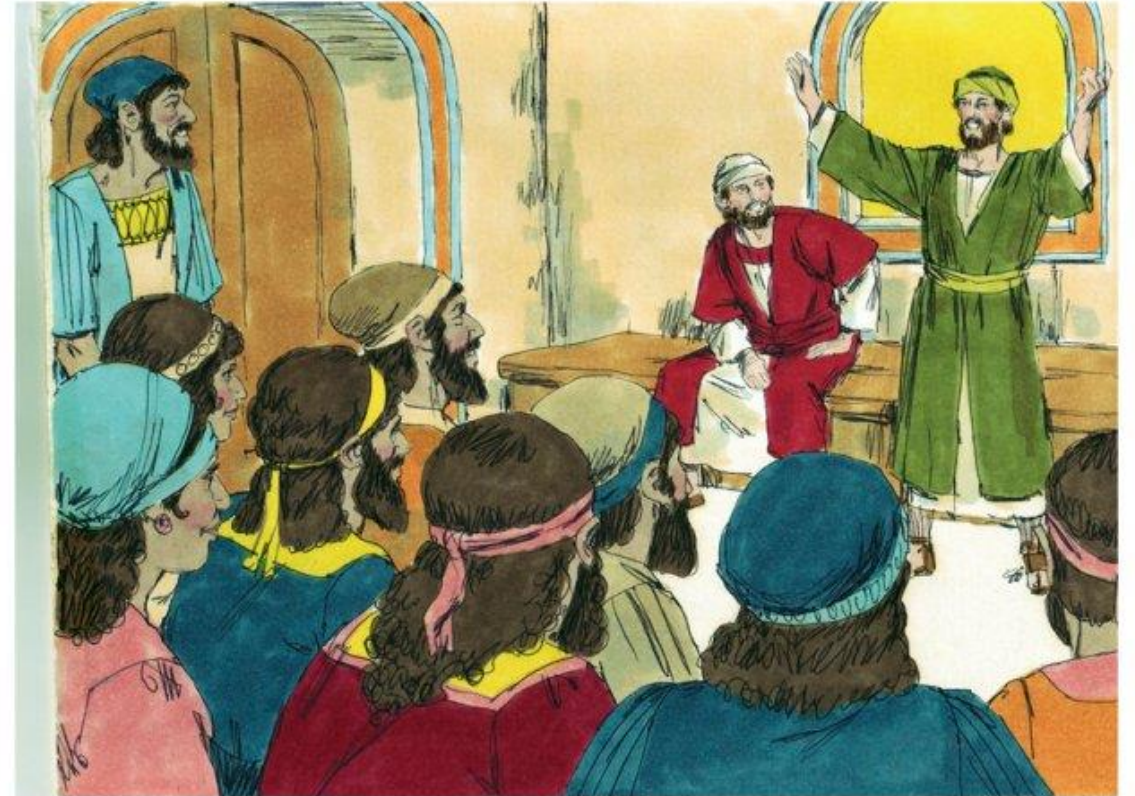
Men of Israel...

- Peter uses the Hebrew Scriptures to explain the events and point to Jesus as the Messiah (Acts 3:18, 22-24).
- This highlights the importance of grounding one's faith and witnessing in Scripture.
- Understanding and explaining how Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies can strengthen faith and provide a compelling reason for belief in Jesus.



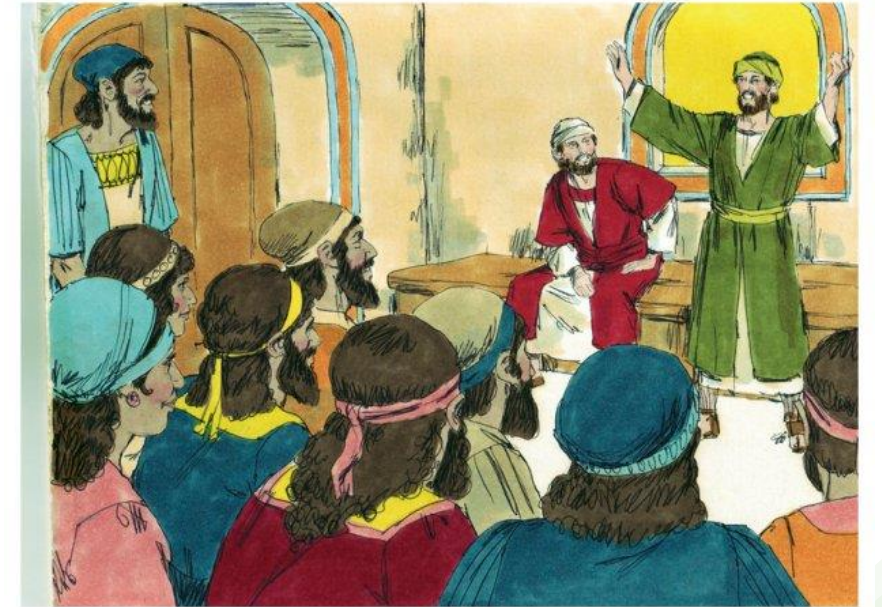
Men of Israel...

- Peter's boldness in speaking to the crowd despite the potential for backlash
- encourages believers to be courageous in sharing their faith
- This is now the second Gospel presentation, and both have been in the public space.
- When was the last time you shared your faith in public?



Men of Israel...

- ²³ And it shall be *that* every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.
- Peter's sermon was not seeker friendly!
- It was direct but effective.
- We all need to learn that the Gospel delivers for itself.
- You do not need to garnish it!!



Attacked...!

- *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.*
Acts 4:1-3



Whose Authority?

- 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?"
Acts 4:4-7



The Name of JESUS!

- Peter and John boldly proclaim the resurrection of Jesus
- despite being arrested and threatened by the religious authorities (Acts 4:1-3, 13).
- This teaches believers to stand firm and be courageous
- in sharing their faith, even in the face of opposition.



BOLD!

- Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, speaks with boldness and wisdom (Acts 4:8-12).
- This highlights the importance of relying on the Holy Spirit
- for courage and the right words when witnessing.
- Christians have to be courageous in the face of intimidation and bullying tactics



BOLD!

- Chapter 4 shows the spiritual attack upon the church because of momentum
- Nowhere does it say the devil did this or that
- This is how satan works. We will see this several times in this book.
- The pattern is, after success and breakthrough, there was a backlash.



BOLDNESS!!

- *18 So 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*
Acts 4:18-21





BOLDNESS

- Threats
- Intimidation
- Violence
- Restrictions
- Bullying
- Abuse of power
- These are all the ways in which the enemy can use to persecute Christians.
- This is a recurring theme all through the ages up till now.

Courage!!

- Upon their release, Peter and John return to the believers and pray together for boldness (Acts 4:23-24).
- This underscores the power and importance of corporate prayer in the life of the church.
- The believers quote Psalm 2 in their prayer, recognizing God's sovereignty and the fulfilment of prophecy (Acts 4:25-26).
- Using Scripture in prayer can strengthen faith and align requests with God's will.



STAND!

- Rather than praying for the removal of persecution, they pray for boldness to speak God's word (Acts 4:29).
- This teaches believers to prioritize boldness in witnessing over personal comfort and safety.
- God responds to their prayer by filling them with the Holy Spirit
- and enabling them to speak the word of God boldly (Acts 4:31).
- This shows that God empowers and answers prayers for boldness in witness.



The Kingdom Church

- 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,



Generosity...

- 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.



The KINGDOM Church...

- Holiness unto the Lord
- Corporate Leadership (No single senior pastor)
- The supernatural power of God
- United Believers
- All ages and genders involved
- Uncommon generosity
- Poverty is eradicated through sharing
- Daily Church, not weekly
- House to House community
- Holy Communion – Jesus
- Humility and Thanksgiving
- Joyful Church
- Relevant to those outside the Church
- Growing daily



Memory Verse

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