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**Peter and John Before the Sanhedrin: Freedom to Testify**

**June 2021**

***4****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.*

A gang of non-believers who were in office came to bully Peter and John by arresting them. Notice that none of the groups came by themselves. It looks to me that they knew they didn’t have as much power as Peter and John did since they were using the power of God, so these priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadduccees, who didn’t believe in Christ’s resurrection or the Holy Spirit collaborated to try to stop Peter and John from helping the Christian church to grow.

Peter and John were still on fire from the Holy Spirit, and over 5000 people joined the church because they witnessed this fire from the Holy Spirit.

Are you allowing others to see the power and the fire of the Holy Spirit on you?

***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?”*

The next day, they added even more people to their gang. This time, they added the elders, law instructors, and members of the high priest’s family as a Sanhedrin council. These councils usually had at least 71 sages who served political, religious, and judicial functions for the Jewish community. They were used to having power because of their positions, so that is the reason that they asked, “By what power or what name did you do this?”

They were looking for the leaders.

Have you ever watched a movie or television show where lawyers and police officers were looking for the leaders of a crime ring, instead of the people who were at the lowest level of the organization? The goal is to take out the leader, like killing a queen bee or ant, so that the entire colony might die.

Who is your sovereign leader? Who are your other leaders? What do you lead?

***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.’[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%204&version=NIV#fen-NIV-27034a)*]*

***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.”*

Peter was full of the Holy Spirit, so he was able to answer their questions as a logical rebuke and a testimony about Christ rising from the dead and giving him the power to heal because of His ascension and gift of the Holy Spirit.

Salvation comes from Jesus, and The Holy Spirit comes with an anointing for Peter and John.

What is your anointing? Do you have faith? Do you have knowledge and/or wisdom? Do you have the gifts of tongues by speaking or interpreting? Do you prophesy? Do you heal others? Can you discern spirits? Can you perform miracles like Peter and John? You can find these 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.

***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.****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.”*

Who can believe in Jesus? Anyone! One doesn’t need a high education. Peter and John were unschooled. The members of the Sanhedrin Council had trouble believing this truth because they had to obtain educations in law and the faith to hold their positions. They asked themselves, “What are we going to do with these men?” They wanted to halt the spread of the faith among the people because they would lose power over the people.

They were not willing to lose their power over these people. They were used to this arrangement, and they didn’t want Jesus’ followers to come in and free the people to live by God’s light and love.

Who wants to have power over you? Have you given it to them? What will you do to take back your power?

**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.”

The council asked Peter and John to stop proclaiming the gospel to the people of the land, but Peter and John refused to do so. They couldn’t help but tell the truth of what they’d witnessed.

What miracles in your life do you have to talk about? What gifts do you have to share?

***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.*

The council threatened Peter and John, but they could not figure out a way to punish them because all of the people who witnessed God’s glory through these men were praising God and joining the church because a man who had suffered for over forty years was healed.

God did that! God used Peter and John to grow His church.

Will you allow God to use you for His divine purpose? His purpose is different from the world’s purpose, and He wants us to be a living sacrifice according to Romans 12:1. He wants us to transform by renewing our minds to figure out His will according to Romans 12:2. He will show us our motivation and redemptive gifts in Romans 12:6-8 of prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, or showing mercy.

This is my prayer. Since Jesus has already died for our sins and rose from the dead with all power in His hand and forgiveness of our sins, won’t you honor Him with serving in His kingdom of righteousness? Won’t you fight the good fight of the Lord since He fought against everlasting death for you? Join Him and enter into His gates with thanksgiving and praise! Amen!

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