

“We Cannot But Speak!”
Acts 4:1-22

Introduction:

1. As We Get Back To Our Journey Through Acts:
 - Tonight - We Will Head To:
 - Acts 4 - Where The Apostles - Peter & John:
 - Are Still At The Temple!
 - And After The Healing Of The Lame Man, Peter Was Able To Preach The Gospel:
 - At Solomon’s Porch!
 - And It Is Clear That There Was:
 - A Great Multitude There - Listening To His Words!
 - So Great - In Fact - That:
 - According To 4:1 - “As they spake unto the people – the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them!”
 - The “Captain Of The Temple” Was The Head Of The “Temple Guard” - And He Was There To Maintain Order!
 2. But Instead Of Coming Upon:
 - A Riot Or An Insurrection:
 - They Came Upon Two Fishermen From Galilee:
 - Teaching The Crowd About:
 - A Doctrine That Offended The Priests & The Sadducees!
 - The Doctrine Of The Resurrection!
 - And So - According 4:2-3:
 - “Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. / And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide!”
 - So - Peter & John Were Arrested:
 - And Put “In Hold” - In Order To Be Examined & Tried For What They Had Done & For What They Had Said!
 - However - As We See In 4:4:
 - There Was Really Nothing They Could Do!
 - For Jesus Was Already At Work!
 - And - “Many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand!”
 3. Well - On The Next Day - We Read:
 - 4:5-7 - “And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, / 6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred 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 ye done this?”
 - And Once Again - God Gives Peter:
- 1. *Another Opportunity!***
- A Third Opportunity:
 - To Preach The Gospel!
 - And The Content Of His Message Is Found In 4:8-12!
 - Where We Can Find:
 - ***Peter’s Ability:***
 - That Is - When Peter Spake:
 - His Ability & Power To Do So:
 - Came From God The Holy Spirit!
 - As - 4:8 - He Was “Filled With The Holy Ghost!”
 - This Was A Fulfilment:
 - Of Jesus Own Promise To His Disciples:
 - In Luke 21:14-15 - “Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: / For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist!”
 - And So - Peter’s Words:
 - And Peter’s Ability:

- Were Not His Own!
- But Jesus Was Using Peter & Speaking Through Peter!
- We Also Find:

- Peter's Address:

- In 4:8 - "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel!"
 - Again - Who All Was There?
 - Look Back At 4:5-6 - "And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, / And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem!"
- This Group Of Rulers & Elders:
 - Was Nothing Less Than:
 - A Meeting Of The Great Jewish Sanhedrin!
 - The 70 Or 72 Men - Consisting Of Religious & Political Leaders - Who Would Judge & Settle Matters Of Importance For The Jewish People!
 - What An Intimidating Audience!
- But It Was The Same Audience:
 - That Jesus Met:
 - On The Night Of His Own Arrest:
 - There In Jerusalem!
 - For We Meet These Same Men In Mark 14:53-55 - Even As - "They led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes!" / 54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. / 55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none!"
 - So There Is Peter - And John - Standing Before The Same Council That - Just Weeks Before:
 - Condemned Jesus To Be Worthy Of Death & Turned Him Over To Pilate To Be Crucified!
- And Yet - This Time:
 - Peter Was Fearless!
 - Because He Presents The Same Message:
 - To This Inner Circle Of Jewish Leaders:
 - Even Offering Them Forgiveness & Salvation Through Jesus!
- And We See This In:

- Peter's Appeal:

- Once Again - Peter Tells Them About Jesus - About:
 - The Life Of Jesus!
 - The Death Of Jesus!
 - The Resurrection Of Jesus!
 - And The Continuing Work Of Jesus!
 - 4:10-12 - "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole!"
- But He Also Continues To Point Out:
 - The Responsibility They Had In Jesus' Execution:
 - 4:10 - "Whom Ye Crucified!"
- Now - If You Go Back To Peter's Other Messages:
 - This Is Something He Brings Out Each Time:
 - To Different Groups!
- In His First Message - On The Day Of Pentecost:
 - He Is Speaking To A Diverse Group:
 - Of Jews - From All Over The World:
 - Many Who Had Only Come To Jerusalem Recently!
 - And Yet - In 2:23 - He Tells Them That:
 - "Ye Have Taken" - Jesus - "And By Wicked Hands Have Crucified And Slain!"
 - They Were Responsible For The Death Of Jesus!
- In His Second Message - In The Temple At Solomon's Porch:
 - He Is Speaking To A Group:
 - Primarily Of Jews From Jerusalem!

- And Again - He Tells Them:
 - In 3:14-15 - “But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; / And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses!”
 - They Were Responsible For The Death Of Jesus As Well!
- And Now - In Peter’s Third Message - Before The Great Sanhedrin:
 - He Likewise Tells Them:
 - 4:10 - “Whom Ye Crucified!”
 - They *Especially* Were Responsible For The Death Of Jesus!
- This Shows Us That:
 - Everyone *Was* – And Everyone *Is*:
 - Responsible & Is To Blame:
 - For The Death Of Jesus!
 - Because It Was Their Sin:
 - And Our Sin - And My Sin:
 - That Nailed Jesus To That Old Rugged Cross!
- But Then - We Also Find:
 - ***Peter’s Analysis:***
 - He Explains The Death Of Jesus:
 - In Terms They Would Have Understood:
 - In Terms Of Old Testament Prophecy - As He Quotes From Psalm 118 - In 4:11 - “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner!”
 - The Rejection Of Jesus:
 - As Their Rock - Was Prophesied!
 - But, Ultimately, It Was Done So That Now:
 - They Might *All* Receive Him & Be Built Upon Him!
 - Because - As He Peter Went On:
 - 4:12 - “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved!”
 - This Great Opportunity & This Great Message Then Led To:

2. ***Another Opposition!***

- In 4:13-18 - The Sanhedrin Council Tried To Figure Out:
 - What To Do - “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. / 14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. / 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, / 16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. / 17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name!”
 - How Did These Jewish Leaders Respond?
 - We See:
- Their Great Surprise!
 - 3:13 - They “Marvelled!”
 - They Were Surprised Because Of Their Courage!
 - Perhaps John & Peter:
 - Were As Surprised As The Council Was!
 - After All:
 - Hadn’t They:
 - Deserted Jesus:
 - In The Garden Of Gethsemane - When He Was Arrested?
 - Matthew 26:56 - “Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled!”
 - Hadn’t Peter:
 - Denied Jesus:
 - At His Own Trial Before This Same Sanhedrin?
 - Matthew 26:72 - He Even “Denied with an oath, I do not know the man!”
 - Hadn’t Some Of Them Also:

- Doubted Jesus:
 - Even After His Resurrection?
 - Matthew 28:17 - “And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted!”
- But Now - They Were Determined:
 - To Tell Them About Jesus:
 - No Matter What The Cost!
- They Were Surprised Because Of Their Comprehension!
 - They Saw Peter & John As:
 - “Unlearned & Ignorant Men!”
 - How Could They Speak The Way They Did?
 - They Wondered:
 - Where Did They Come From?
 - Neither Of Them Came From Any Great Or Noble Family In Israel! They Were Simple Fishermen From Galilee!
 - They Wondered:
 - Where Was Their School?
 - Little Did They Know That They Were Taught In Rocking Boats, In Windy Fields, On Dusty Roads & In High Mountains!
 - They Wondered:
 - Who Was Their Teacher?
 - And Yet - They Still Did Not Recognize That It Was The Same Jesus Whom They Had Killed!
 - And They Wondered:
 - What Was Their Authority?
 - And Wasn’t This The Same Question Asked Of Jesus?
 - Matthew 21:23 - “And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?”
- But Then - It Finally Occurred To Them!
 - 4:13 - “And they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus!”
 - But Instead Of Heeding Peter’s Message:
 - We See:
- Their Great Scheme:
 - To Silence Him:
 - And John & Even The Formerly Lame Man!
 - And So - 4:18 - “And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus!”
 - And Then - We See:

3. ***Another Obligation!***

- Not Only Of Peter & John:
 - But For All Who Believe In & Belong To Jesus!
 - 4:19-20 - “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. / 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard!”
 - Because Of All They:
 - Had Seen - With Their Own Eyes - And:
 - Because Of All They Had Heard:
 - With Their Own Ears:
 - They Were Convinced About The Truth About Jesus!
 - And So - They Resolved:
 - 4:20 - “We Cannot But Speak!”
- We Too Must Be Ready:
 - To Speak!
 - No Matter Where!
 - No Matter Who!
 - Think About:
 - Where Peter & John Were!

- They Were In The Middle Of The Great Council Of The Sanhedrin!
 - Would Have Been Very Intimidating!
- Think About:
 - Who Peter & John Were Speaking To!
 - The Same People Who Had Tried & Convicted Jesus Just A Month Or Two Earlier!
 - We Too Must Be Ready!
- We Too Must Be Resolved!
 - Do We Have The Same Resolve As Peter & John?
 - “We Cannot But Speak!”
 - What Would It Take:
 - Or - What Does It Take:
 - To Silence You About Jesus & His Work In Your Life?
 - We Must Be Resolved!
- We Too Must Rely:
 - Upon The Holy Spirit:
 - To Give Us The:
 - Courage & Conviction & Clarity:
 - That We Need To - “Stand Up, Stand Up For Jesus!”
- Because This Too Is Our Obligation:
 - As Christians:
 - And As A Church!

Conclusion:

1. May Our Resolve Reflect:
 - The Resolve Of Paul As Well:
 - Who Wrote - In 1 Corinthians 9:16 - “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”
2. May Our Resolve Reflect:
 - The Resolve Of Jeremiah:
 - Who Said - In Jeremiah 20:9 - “But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay!”
3. May Our Resolve Reflect:
 - The Resolve Of Peter & John!
 - Who Said - “We Cannot But Speak!”
 - “We Cannot But Speak The Things Which We Have Seen And Heard” – About Jesus!

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