

**INTRODUCTION:** In Chapter 4 of the Acts of the Apostles, we are seeing the quintessential representation of Religion versus true Christianity. What follows is also a true response of true Christianity to organized religion. This often brings Christianity headlong with religion. A clear example of choose ye this day whom you are going to serve.

Here we see the fall out of the truths and facts versus the ultimate deception of religion. Finally we experience the joy of what happens when men and women obey God rather than men and how it could spiral to unlimited manifestation of spiritual power.

1 While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees.

2 These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead.

3 They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning. Matthew 22:23, 26:13-16, John 2:14-15

1. Are the priests supposed to be opposing the work of God?
2. Who are the people creating clogs in the work of spiritual progress today?
3. Is it not interesting that the people that are supposed to be the custodian of the knowledge of God are the people who are confronting the work of God?
4. How do men react when you challenge their faulty theology?

4 But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of believers now totaled about 5,000 men, not counting women and children. Matthew 8:11-12. Mark 13:5

1. Compare verse 4 to verse 2. While ordinary people believed and their lives were changed, the leaders became antagonistic
2. Why do many so called 'big' men of God or those that have been with God for so long belittle the great things of God?

5 The next day the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law met in Jerusalem.

6 Annas the high priest was there, along with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and other relatives of the high priest.

7 They brought in the two disciples and demanded, "By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?"

1. Why were the leaders so worried about the gospel being preached by the disciples? Are there people worried today when the true gospel is been preached? Who are they and what approach do they employ to stop it?

2. Why were they glossing over the good works and focusing on something else? Could it be their guilt was hunting them?
3. Have you done something in the past that you are trying to cover up?
4. How do we sometimes try to cover up our guilt?
5. How do Children sometimes try to cover up their guilt?

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

Let’s take note of the power that was moving Peter. [John 3:2](#).

There is very little you can do without the power of the Holy Spirit.

How do you get things done in your life as a believer. Is everything by power? [Zachariah 4:6](#)

9 are we being questioned today because we’ve done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed?

10 Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead.

Notice that they Sanhedrin did not dispute the resurrection of Jesus [II Cor 13:8](#)

11 For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says, ‘The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.’

12 There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

1. Let us again examine Peter’s response and also note that in most of these cases- the focus was always Christ. [John 12:32](#)
2. When a man of God draws attention away from Christ to himself or other personalities or institution, then something is wrong.
3. Peter was the one responding and there was no fight between John and Peter over who will speak. Could this be because the focus was not them but Jesus?

13 The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.

1. They found that they could not freeze Peter and John or make them bow down. [Matthew 10:28](#)
2. Do you begin to manipulate the word of God under threat if danger or any threat for that matter. Manipulating the word of God often leads to lying. [Matthew 5:37](#)
3. How are you recognized? [Acts 11:26](#)
4. What amazed the council? Does your life amaze your friends in the positive?

14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing right there among them, there was nothing the council could say.

1. What can anyone really do against the truth especially if that truth is beneficial to the people?
2. What is wrong with evidential Christianity in our days? II Tim 4:3
3. What will happen if the believers in a land become the agent of good in a land? Matthew 5:14,
4. Why do you think the Christians seem to be losing ground in our time to the non-believers?

15 So they ordered Peter and John out of the council chamber and conferred among themselves.

16 “What should we do with these men?” they asked each other. “We can’t deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it.

1. You do not have to struggle to prove or authenticate your Christianity.
2. Why do we sometime struggle to do this? II Kings 18, Acts 19:11-20

17 But to keep them from spreading their propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus’ name again.”

1. What was the Sanhedrin not able to Deny Vs 9-14? The Killing of Jesus, the resurrection, the miracle, etc.
2. What do you figure therefore was their real problem?

18 So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John replied, “Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him?

20 We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.”

1. Why do people find it difficult to testify? I John 1:1

21 The council then threatened them further, but they finally let them go because they didn’t know how to punish them without starting a riot. For everyone was praising God

22 for this miraculous sign—the healing of a man who had been lame for more than forty years.

23 As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said.

24 When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God: “O Sovereign Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—

25 you spoke long ago by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant, saying,

‘Why were the nations so angry? Why did they waste their time with futile plans?

26 The kings of the earth prepared for battle; the rulers gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah.'

27 "In fact, this has happened here in this very city! For Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate the governor, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were all united against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed.

1. Where in the Bible did they get this quote? Psalm .....
2. Let us thus recognize the importance of knowing God's word.

28 But everything they did was determined beforehand according to your will.

29 And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word.

30 Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

1. Can this become our regular prayer?

31 After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.

32 All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had.

33 The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. 34 There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them 35 and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need

36 For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means "Son of Encouragement"). He was from the tribe of Levi and came from the island of Cyprus. 37 He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles.

**I Cor 12:12. I Cor 1:10, II Cor 13:11**

1. This is one sign of unity what are other signs of true unity?
2. Is this still possible in our days
3. If any church does this today how could it be misused
4. What could you say was the secret of the success of the early church