SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES



DEEP DIVE

Acts

Chapter Four, Verses 1–37

No Other Name — two fishermen before the high priests, a prayer that shook the room, and a church of one heart and soul

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

The men who condemned Jesus now face His fishermen, and cannot answer them; ordered to be silent, the apostles go home and pray, not for safety but for boldness, and the place where they are gathered is shaken. Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Luke's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Acts 4:1–37

arrest · council · prayer · one heart

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Four movements from the temple arrest to the generosity of Barnabas

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"Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus." — Acts 4:13

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Acts 4:1–37

No Other Name — Arrested for a healing, Peter and John tell Israel's rulers that salvation is in Jesus alone — and will not stop speaking

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Acts 4 in 4 movements, in Luke's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the passage so you can see where Luke is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word — R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle — MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · ACTS 4:12

"And △there is salvation in no one else; for there is △no other name under heaven that has been given among men ▭by which we must be saved."

† Before the Passage

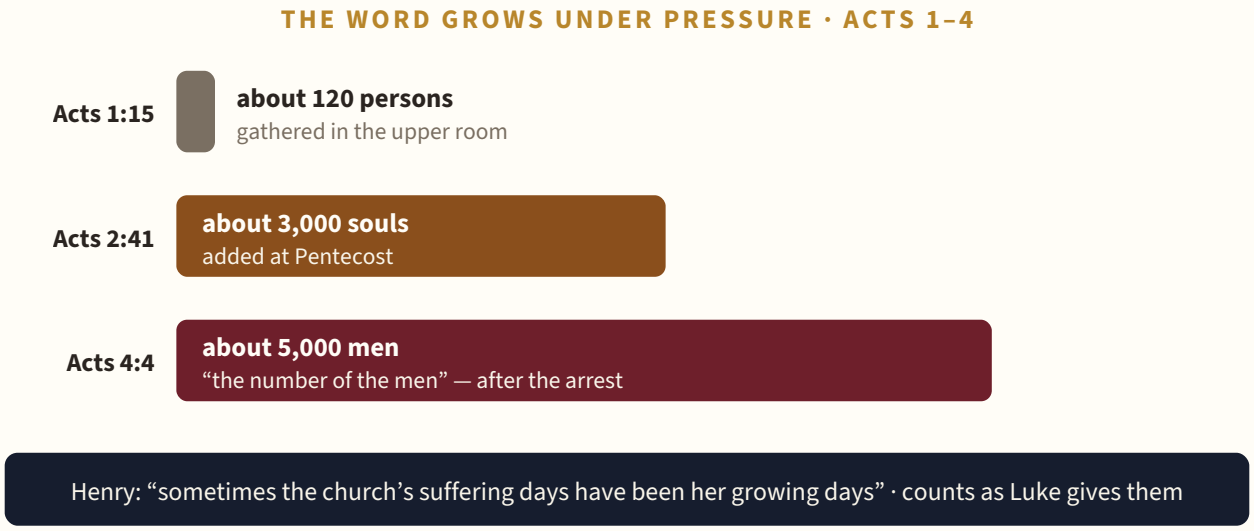
Acts 4 is the same afternoon as Acts 3. Peter is still preaching in Solomon's portico, the healed man is still clinging to him, and the crowd is still amazed. For the first time in Acts the gospel meets official opposition. Guzik: "Normally, this would be an intimidating experience for Peter and John." Henry sees God's wisdom in the order of trials: "See how God trains up his servants for sufferings by degrees." Chapter 5 will bring prison, an angel and a flogging; chapter 4 brings a night in jail and a warning.

The opposition comes from the temple establishment: the priests, "the captain of the temple guard" (the officer next in rank to the high priest, in charge of temple order) and the Sadducees (v. 1). The Sadducees held the high-priestly families and denied the resurrection — Guzik: "they did not believe in the afterlife or the resurrection at all" — so apostles "proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (v. 2) struck at both their doctrine and their authority.

The next morning the Sanhedrin meets: "their rulers and elders and scribes," with "Annas the high priest … and Caiaphas and John and Alexander" (vv. 5–6). These are the men who tried Jesus. Annas had been high priest and was still honored with the title; Caiaphas, his son-in-law, "was high priest that year" of the crucifixion (John 18:13). Peter, who had denied Jesus in Annas's courtyard a few weeks earlier, now stands before the same court.

The chapter ends with two pictures of the young church. Released, the apostles go to "their own companions" and pray Psalm 2 back to God (vv. 23–31). Then Luke steps back for a summary like 2:42–47: one heart and soul, shared property, great power, great grace, and no one in need (vv. 32–35). He closes on one man — Joseph of Cyprus, called Barnabas — who will matter greatly later in Acts (9:27; 11:22–26; 13:1–3). His generosity sets up the dark contrast of Ananias and Sapphira in 5:1–11.

FIGURE · THE WORD GROWS



Compare the bars: the church Luke counts in Acts 1, 2 and 4 keeps growing, and the largest number comes on the day the apostles were jailed.

I
MOVEMENT

ACTS 4:1–12

By What Name?

An arrest at evening, five thousand believers, and Peter before the court that condemned Jesus

[1] As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, [2] being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and △ proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. [3] And they laid hands on them and ⚠ put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening. [4] But ☆ many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be ◷ about five thousand. [5] On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; [6] and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent. [7] When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "◷ By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" [8] Then Peter, △ filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of

> *the people, [9] if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, [10] let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health. [11] "He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone. [12] "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."*
>
> ACTS 4:1–12

> *"The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone."*
>
> PSALM 118:22

> *"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."*
>
> JOHN 14:6

FIGURE · WHO'S WHO AT THE HEARING

WHO'S WHO AT THE HEARING · ACTS 4:1–22

THE COUNCIL (SANHEDRIN)

Annas the high priest (v6)
former high priest; Jesus was taken to him first (John 18:13)

Caiaphas (v6)
Annas's son-in-law, high priest the year of the cross

John and Alexander (v6)
high-priestly family; otherwise unknown

rulers, elders and scribes (v5)

priests, captain of the temple guard, Sadducees (v1) — deny the resurrection

ON TRIAL "IN THE CENTER" (v7)

Peter, "filled with the Holy Spirit" (v8)
weeks ago he denied Jesus in Annas's courtyard

John (vv13, 19)
"uneducated and untrained" — "been with Jesus"

the healed man, "standing with them" (v14)
"more than forty years old" (v22)

Spurgeon: "Converts shut the mouths of adversaries."

THE HEARING IN FOUR LINES

Q: "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" (v7)
A: "by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised" (v10)
Verdict: "they had nothing to say in reply" (v14) — so they forbid the name (v18)
Reply: "we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard" (v20)

On the left, the court that condemned Jesus; on the right, the two fishermen and the healed man; the dark panel gives the whole hearing in four quotations.

ἐξουθενηθείς

EXOUTHENĒTHEIS · "REJECTED" · G1848

From *exoutheneō*, to treat as nothing, to despise. Psalm 118:22 in the Greek Old Testament says the builders "rejected" (*apodokimazō*, tested and threw out), and Jesus quoted it that way (Luke 20:17). Peter sharpens the word: you did not just reject this stone, you counted Him as nothing — "by you, THE BUILDERS." Luke uses the same verb for Herod and his soldiers who "treating Him with contempt" (Luke 23:11). The despised stone is now the "chief corner" (*kephalē gōnias*, G2776, G1137), the head of the corner.

ὄνομα · σωτηρία

ONOMA · SŌTĒRIA · "NAME · SALVATION" · G3686 · G4991

The council's question is "in what name?" (v. 7), and "name" runs through the chapter — seven times in the NASB (vv. 7, 10 twice, 12, 17, 18, 30). A name in Scripture stands for the person and his authority. Verse 12 puts it with *sōtēria*, salvation, deliverance, and the necessity of *dei* (G1163): there is no other name "by which we must be saved." The word for physical healing in verse 9 ("made well," *sōzō*) is the root of verse 12's "saved" — the healed man is a picture of a greater salvation.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik sees a show of force: the temple police, priests and Sadducees descend, and "The entire atmosphere was intended to make them afraid." The Sadducees were stung because "they did not believe in the afterlife or the resurrection at all." But the night in jail changed nothing: "Opposition did not slow the church down at all" — five thousand men believed. Before the council, "This was a scene of power and intimidation," yet "The tone of Peter's reply shows that he was not intimidated by this court." And Peter's claim is total: "Peter didn't merely proclaim Jesus as a way of salvation, but as the only way of salvation."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "No Other Name" (18 Jan 2004) sets verse 12 against the creed of our culture: "There is no tenet more basic to the secular culture we live in than that of religious tolerance." He tells of defending Christ's uniqueness before a hostile professor — "I sank down into the chair trying to find some protection." If Christ is the only way, it is because only He satisfies both God's justice and His mercy. Offense at the claim reveals us: "If we are offended by what the Lord God Almighty speaks, then the problem is not with Him, but with us." "Beloved, if you are a Christian, you should be prepared to die for that affirmation."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's exposition notes that the arrest did not cancel the sermon's fruit — many believed: "Just as grand a result came of it." Preachers should take heart: "You cannot judge of the result of a sermon on the particular day that it is preached." Peter's answer to the council is boldness itself, declaring that the name heals, that the rulers are guilty of Christ's death, and that salvation is in no other. Spurgeon's rule from it: "Under all circumstances, let the servant of God behave himself boldly."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry notes that the preachers "faithfully deliver the doctrine of Christ," and are arrested for it — "This is charged upon them as a crime, which was the best service they could do to God or men." God brings His servants along gently: "See how God trains up his servants for sufferings by degrees." And the arrest did not shrink the church: "sometimes the church's suffering days have been her growing days." The healed man stands as "a monument of the power of the Lord Jesus," and the doctrine is plain: "we cannot be saved but by Jesus Christ."

II
MOVEMENT

ACTS 4:13–22

They Had Been with Jesus

Untrained men, a miracle no one could deny, and the question of whom to obey

13 *Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.* 14 *And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply.* 15 *But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another,* 16 *saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.* 17 *"But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name."* 18 *And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all 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 give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge;* 20 *for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."* 21 *When they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which to punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened;* 22 *for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.*

ACTS 4:13–22

"But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."

ACTS 5:29

παρρησία

PARRĒSIA · "CONFIDENCE, BOLDNESS" · G3954

From *pas* (all) and *rhēsis* (speech): saying everything, plain and open speech without fear. It was the free citizen's right to speak his mind in the assembly. Luke uses it three times in this chapter — the council sees it (v. 13), the church asks for it (v. 29), and God gives it (v. 31) — and as the last word of Acts: Paul preaching "with all openness, unhindered" (28:31). The NASB renders it "confidence" in vv. 13, 29 and "boldness" in v. 31.

ἀγράμματοι · ἰδιῶται

AGRAMMATOI · IDIŌTAI · G62 · G2399

Agrammatos, "uneducated," literally "without letters," is found only here in the New Testament: men without rabbinic schooling. *Idiōtēs*, "untrained," is a private person, a layman, not a professional (1 Corinthians 14:16; 2 Corinthians 11:6). Neither word means stupid. The court's experts were amazed that two Galilean fishermen handled the Scriptures like this — and then placed them: these men had been with Jesus. Guzik: they were educated in the two ways that mattered most.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik grants the council's point and turns it: Peter and John had no formal training, "Yet they were educated in two more important ways: they knew the Scriptures, and they had been with Jesus." The healed man standing there settled the facts: "This miracle was examined by doubters and stood up as a genuine miracle." So the council could not deny it, only forbid it — and Guzik names the motive: "Their fear of the preaching of Jesus was rooted in their own sinful self-interest, not in any desire to protect the people."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "Obeying God or Man?" (25 Jan 2004) begins with men who stood against tyranny, then turns to the council, amazed at the apostles' courage — "And they realized that they had been with Jesus." "Peter and John were in the worst of all possible conflicts of ethics: a conflict between ruling authorities." Christians normally submit, Sproul says, but must disobey when men command what God forbids or forbid what God commands. "We can never use the excuse, "I'm just obeying orders," as a license or an excuse for sin." Yet submission is not set aside for mere inconvenience: "That is why it is important for us to understand in our daily lives what God commands and what God forbids."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon asks of the apostles' courage, "Where else could such holy courage have been learned?" In "Christ's People — Imitators of Him" on verse 13 he says the world should read Christ in us. Christ "never knew the fear of man," and His boldness was never harsh: "Let courage be the brass; let love be the gold." The secret is beholding Him: "I behold Christ, and I become like Christ." The healed man was the best argument — "Converts shut the mouths of adversaries" — and the apostles could not keep quiet: "He must speak." "Take care of your secret life."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry marks the council's embarrassment: with the healed man before them, "they had nothing to say against it." The apostles' boldness gave them away: "One may know that they have been in the mount by the shining of their faces" — like Moses coming down from Sinai. Henry admits what worldly caution would advise: "The prudence of the serpent would have directed them to be silent." But they appealed to the council's own consciences: whether it is right to obey men rather than God, you judge.

III
MOVEMENT

ACTS 4:23–31

Grant Your Servants Boldness

The church prays Psalm 2, owns God's sovereign purpose, and the place is shaken

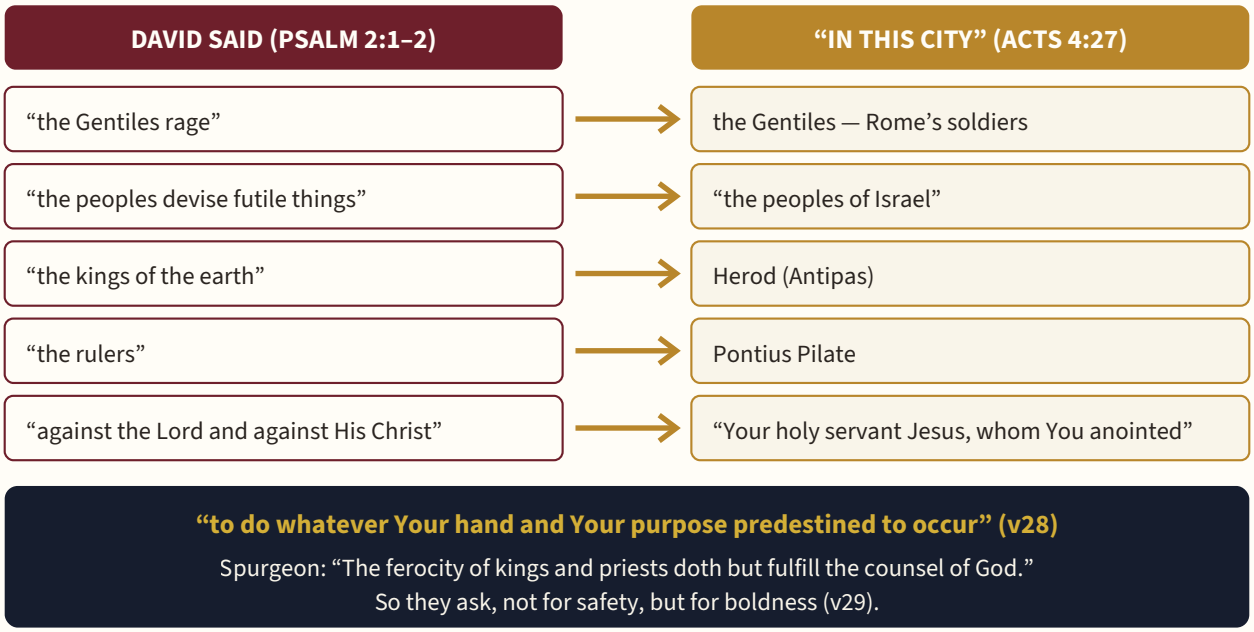
23 *When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the*
elders had said to them. 24 *And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said,*
"O Lord, it is You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, 25 *who*
by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, 'WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE,
AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS? 26 *'THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS*
WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.' 27 *"For truly in this city there were*
gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along
with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 *to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.*
29 *"And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with*
all confidence, 30 *while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of*
Your holy servant Jesus." 31 *And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken,*
and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

ACTS 4:23–31

"Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand
And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,"

PSALM 2:1–2

FIGURE · PSALM 2 READ AS NEWS



Read each row left to right: the church matched every line of David's psalm to the people who gathered against Jesus in Jerusalem — and saw God's hand behind it all.

δέσποτα

DESPOTA · "O LORD" · G1203

Not the usual *kyrios* but *despotēs* — the master with absolute authority, the owner of slaves. Simeon used it: "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant" (Luke 2:29); so do the martyrs under the altar (Revelation 6:10). The church begins its prayer by naming God Sovereign Master and Creator (v. 24), and then calls itself "Your bond-servants" (v. 29, *doulos*). A threatened church starts with who is in charge.

προώρισεν

PROŌRISEN · "PREDESTINED" · G4309

From *pro* (before) and *horizō* (to mark a boundary, from which "horizon"): to set the limits beforehand. Found in six New Testament verses (here; Romans 8:29–30; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:5, 11). The worst crime in history happened inside lines God had drawn — "whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur" — just as Peter said at Pentecost: "delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God" (2:23). The rulers were guilty and God was sovereign, both at once. Verse 31's "shaken" is *saleuō* (G4531).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that the believers did not panic; they prayed from Scripture and from confidence in God's control: "They prayed with power and confidence because they knew God was in control." They asked for boldness, not for the threats to stop. He adds a caution about the signs they asked for: "It is a snare to long to be used to do miraculous things." The shaking was a sign of God's power, but not a shrine: "Those walls didn't change, nor did that become a special holy place where the Spirit of God always dwelt."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "Holy Boldness" (1 Feb 2004) hears the prayer begin with God's rule: "Every Christian believed in the sovereignty of God, and they believed in it absolutely." "The early church had no debates about Calvinism and Arminianism." "Psalm 2 captures the separation of the state from God in antiquity," and Herod, Pilate, Gentiles and Israel all did what God's hand had determined. Sproul remembers that Peter had lately been "huddling in the corner cursing," and credits the change to the risen Christ: "The resurrection galvanized the faith of the early church." Then he turns to us: "If anything marks the church of the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is cowardliness." "Where is that boldness among us?"

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon notes where the apostles went when released: to their own people. "You can always tell a man by his company." In the prayer he is struck by verse 28: "How strangely this doctrine of predestination comes in just there!" Yet it is the comfort of the persecuted, for the rage of men cannot break God's plan: "The ferocity of kings and priests doth but fulfill the counsel of God." "The wildest discord makes harmony in the ear of God."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry approves the apostles' return to the believers: "Christ's followers do best in company, provided it be in their own company." Their prayer asks for courage more than for relief — "In threatening times, our care should not be so much that troubles may be prevented" as that we may go on with our work. If the enemies are bold, the friends of Christ should be bolder: "Are they daring that fight against Christ? For shame, let not us be sneaking that are for him."

IV
MOVEMENT

ACTS 4:32–37

One Heart and Soul

Great power, great grace, no one in need, and a man called the Son of Encouragement

32 *And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that*
anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. 33 *And with great*
power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon
them all. 34 *For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would*
sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales 35 *and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to*
each as any had need. 36 *Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles*
(which translated means Son of Encouragement), 37 *and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the*
money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

ACTS 4:32–37

"And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need."

ACTS 2:44–45

κοινά

KOINA · "COMMON" · G2839

Koinos, shared, held in common — the root of *koinōnia*, fellowship (2:42). Notice what verse 32 actually says: "not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own." They still owned things; they refused to say "mine" when a brother was in need. The tense of verses 34–35 ("would sell … and bring … and lay") describes a repeated practice as needs arose, not a single pooling of all property. Peter will say to Ananias that his land and its price were his own to keep (5:4).

παράκλησις

PARAKLĒSIS · "ENCOURAGEMENT" · G3874

A calling alongside: encouragement, comfort, exhortation — kin to *paraklētos*, the Helper (John 14:16). The apostles renamed Joseph "Son of Encouragement" (KJV "consolation"), a Hebrew way of saying the thing marked him. Luke shows it again and again: Barnabas stands up for the new convert Saul (9:27), sees grace at Antioch and "began to encourage them all" (11:23), and is "a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (11:24).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik reads the unity as the Spirit's doing: "This unity was a wonderful evidence of the work of God's Spirit among them." The need was real — "Remember, many of these Jerusalem Christians lived as refugees from abroad, having responded to the gospel on Pentecost." He rejects a political reading: "It isn't accurate to see this as an early form of communism." It was voluntary, from time to time, as needs came up — and it did not stay pure: "Unfortunately, this generosity of the early Christians soon began to be abused." Barnabas was so generous with encouragement that the apostles named him for it.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "Lying Donors" (8 Feb 2004) treats 4:32–5:11 as one scene. The sharing was free: "They were not required to do it." Barnabas sold his land and gave it all, more than God demanded, and "He is named "the son of encouragement."" Then the contrast: "We see an amazing contrast in this text between Barnabas on the one hand and Ananias and Sapphira on the other." They wanted the reputation without the sacrifice — "They gave a portion, acting as if they were giving it all, and kept the rest for themselves."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry delights in the picture: "They were all of one heart, and of one soul." He sees greed as the root of strife among men: "Men's holding their own, and grasping at more than their own, are the rise of wars and fightings." Where love governs, the manna rule of Exodus 16 returns: "Those that gather much have nothing over." Barnabas is set forth as the example of a generous heart, and the church's unity and grace as the fruit of Christ's work among them.

V
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

The rejected stone, the raging nations, and the name above every name

> *"But Jesus looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'?"*
>
> LUKE 20:17

> *"This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,""*
>
> 1 PETER 2:7

> *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,"*
>
> EPHESIANS 2:20

> *"For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,"*
>
> PHILIPPIANS 2:9-10

> *"this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."*
>
> ACTS 2:23

> *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich."*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 8:9

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik joins verse 12 to the rest of the apostles' preaching: Jesus not "a way of salvation, but ... the only way of salvation."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon hears the whole of Psalm 2 behind the church's prayer: the rage of kings and priests "doth but fulfill the counsel of God."

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers, one chapter. Guzik watches the intimidation fail and the church grow; Sproul presses the doctrine — the exclusive claim of Christ, the limits of obedience to rulers, the sovereignty of God; Spurgeon is moved by the boldness and by predestination showing up in a prayer meeting; Henry turns each scene into counsel for a suffering church. All four agree that Christ is the only Savior and that the sharing in verses 32–37 was love, not law — Guzik and Sproul say so outright.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · By what name?	Meant to frighten; opposition did not slow the church; the only way.	Tolerance is the culture's creed; be ready to die for this claim.	You cannot judge a sermon the day it is preached; behave boldly.	Suffering days, growing days; we cannot be saved but by Christ.
II · Been with Jesus	Untrained, but they knew the Scriptures and had been with Jesus.	Obey God when men command sin — but know what God commands.	Courage the brass, love the gold; behold Christ, become like Him.	You can tell they have been on the mount by their faces.
III · The prayer	God in control; ask boldness, not safety; walls are not holy.	Sovereignty believed absolutely; where is that boldness among us?	Predestination in a prayer meeting; discord is harmony to God.	Ask not chiefly that trouble be prevented; let us not be sneaking.
IV · One heart	Not communism; voluntary, as needs arose; soon abused.	Not required; Barnabas gave all; Ananias pretended to.	— (no Spurgeon comment on these verses sourced here)	Grasping causes wars; those that gather much have nothing over.

ACTS 4:1–37 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **Suffering days, growing days.** The apostles go to jail and the number of the men rises to about five thousand (4:3–4). Henry: "sometimes the church's suffering days have been her growing days." HENRY
- **The same court, a different Peter.** Weeks earlier Peter denied Jesus in Annas's courtyard; now, "filled with the Holy Spirit," he tells Annas and Caiaphas, "whom you crucified, whom God raised" (4:6–10). THE TEXT
- **They counted Him as nothing.** Peter's *exoutheneō* (4:11) is stronger than the psalm's "rejected": the builders treated the cornerstone as worthless. THE GREEK
- **Not a way — the way.** Guzik: "Peter didn't merely proclaim Jesus as a way of salvation, but as the only way of salvation." Sproul: if we are offended, "the problem is not with Him, but with us." SPROUL
- **Educated where it counts.** Uneducated and untrained, "Yet they were educated in two more important ways: they knew the Scriptures, and they had been with Jesus" (Guzik). GUZIK
- **A healed man is an argument.** With him standing there, "they had nothing to say in reply" (4:14). Spurgeon: "Converts shut the mouths of adversaries." SPURGEON
- **Obey God — and know what He says.** Sproul: never "I'm just obeying orders" as an excuse for sin, but no disobedience for mere inconvenience; we must know "what God commands and what God forbids." SPROUL
- **They prayed for boldness, not safety.** "Take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence" (4:29). Henry: "let not us be sneaking that are for him." THE TEXT

- **Sovereignty is a comfort.** “Whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur” (4:28). Spurgeon: “The wildest discord makes harmony in the ear of God.” SPURGEON
- **Not communism, but love.** “It isn’t accurate to see this as an early form of communism” (Guzik); “They were not required to do it” (Sproul). No one said “mine” when a brother was in need. GUZIK

† Questions for the Table

1 **The apostles were jailed and the church grew to five thousand men. Where has a hard season in my life become a growing season?**

Suffering days have been her growing days (Henry).

4:1–4; Rom 8:28

2 **Peter said there is “no other name under heaven … by which we must be saved.” Why is that claim hard for people today, and how would I explain it to a friend with love?**

Not a way of salvation, but the only way (Guzik).

4:12; John 14:6

3 **People could tell Peter and John “had been with Jesus.” What would people notice about me this week that shows I have been with Him?**

I behold Christ, and I become like Christ (Spurgeon).

4:13; 2 Cor 3:18

4 **“We cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” What have I seen Jesus do that I have kept to myself?**

He must speak (Spurgeon).

4:19–20

5 **When the church was threatened, they prayed for boldness instead of safety. What would change if I prayed that way about my own threats?**

Grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence.

4:24–31

6 **Barnabas was called the “Son of Encouragement.” Who needs me to be a Barnabas this week — and what could I give or say?**

Not required, but freely given (Sproul).

4:32–37; 9:27

Acts 4 puts two fishermen in front of the men who killed Jesus and lets them say the plainest sentence in the book: there is no other name. Threatened, the church prayed for boldness and got it; filled with the Spirit, it shared until no one was in need. Be with Jesus, and people will be able to tell.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) completed his *Commentary* himself through the Gospels and Acts. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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