SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

Acts 4

No Other Name — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

The men who killed Jesus try to silence His followers, and fail: Peter tells them there is no other name by which we must be saved. Threatened, the church prays for boldness, God shakes the room, and a Spirit-filled people share until no one is in need.

00 The Text

ACTS 4 (NASB95), MARKED

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

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."

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.

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.

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.

Marked in the text

- **v2** “proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead” — God — His character & actions
- **v3** “put them in jail” — Sin / warning
- **v4** “many of those who had heard the message believed” — Promise / blessing
- **v4** “about five thousand” — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** “By what power, or in what name” — Time / place / contrast
- **v10** “whom you crucified” — Sin / warning
- **v10** “whom God raised from the dead” — God — His character & actions
- **v11** “WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone” — God — His character & actions
- **v12** “there is salvation in no one else” — God — His character & actions

- **v12** “by which we must be saved” — Command / instruction
- **v13** “uneducated and untrained men” — Time / place / contrast
- **v13** “having been with Jesus” — Promise / blessing
- **v14** “they had nothing to say in reply” — Time / place / contrast
- **v18** “not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus” — Sin / warning
- **v19** “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God” — Command / instruction
- **v20** “we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard” — Command / instruction
- **v24** “with one accord” — Time / place / contrast
- **v24** “it is You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur” — God — His character & actions
- **v29** “take note of their threats” — Sin / warning
- **v29** “speak Your word with all confidence” — Command / instruction
- **v31** “the place where they had gathered together was shaken” — God — His character & actions
- **v32** “of one heart and soul” — Promise / blessing
- **v32** “all things were common property to them” — Time / place / contrast
- **v33** “abundant grace was upon them all” — Promise / blessing
- **v34** “there was not a needy person among them” — Promise / blessing
- **v36** “Son of Encouragement” — Time / place / contrast
- **v37** “laid it at the apostles’ feet” — Command / instruction
- **v7** “name” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v8** “filled with the Holy Spirit” — God — His character & actions (every occurrence)
- **v13** “confidence” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v13** “boldness” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

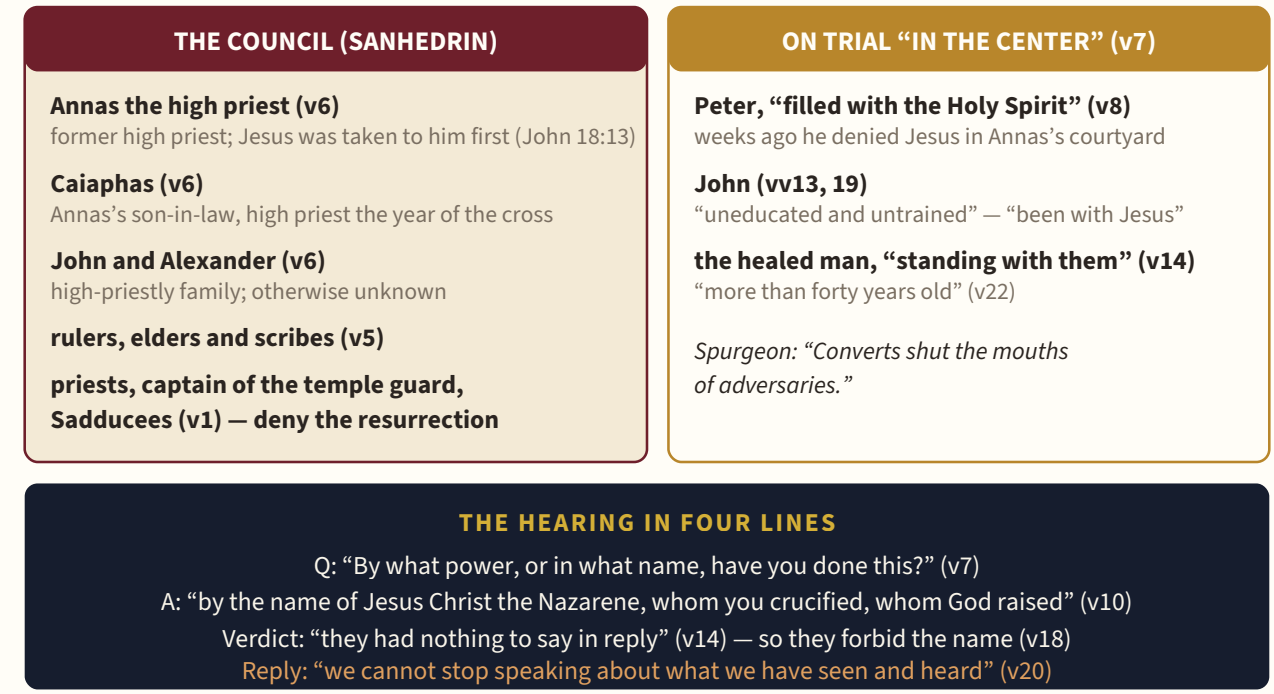
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · ACTS 4:20

"for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

FIGURE · WHO'S WHO AT THE HEARING



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.

Setting. The same afternoon as chapter 3, at Solomon's portico. The priests, the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees arrest Peter and John at evening (vv1–3). The next day they stand before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem — Annas, Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the high-priestly family (vv5–6). Released, they return to the believers, who pray (vv23–31). Luke closes with a summary of the church's common life and the gift of Barnabas, a Levite from Cyprus (vv32–37).

Structure:

- vv1–4 — **the arrest:** the leaders are disturbed at the preaching of the resurrection in Jesus (vv1–2); jail until morning (v3); yet many believe — about five thousand men (v4).
- vv5–12 — **the answer:** the council gathers (vv5–6); "By what power, or in what name?" (v7); Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit (v8): by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised (vv9–10); the stone rejected by the builders (v11); no other name (v12).

- vv13–22 — **the threat:** confidence, uneducated men, "been with Jesus" (v13); the healed man standing there — nothing to say (v14); the private conference (vv15–17); "not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus" (v18); "you be the judge … we cannot stop speaking" (vv19–20); more threats, release, the people glorifying God (vv21–22).
- vv23–31 — **the prayer:** report to their companions (v23); "O Lord, it is You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH" (v24); Psalm 2 (vv25–26); Herod, Pilate, Gentiles, Israel — what Your hand predestined (vv27–28); "take note of their threats, and grant … all confidence" (vv29–30); the place shaken, all filled, speaking with boldness (v31).
- vv32–37 — **one heart:** one heart and soul, nothing "his own" (v32); great power, abundant grace (v33); no needy person — proceeds laid at the apostles' feet (vv34–35); Barnabas, Son of Encouragement, sells a field (vv36–37).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "name" ×7 — vv7, 10 (×2), 12, 17, 18, 30.
- "Jesus" ×7 — vv2, 10, 13, 18, 27, 30, 33.
- "speak / speaking / spoke" ×6 — vv1, 17, 18, 20, 29, 31.
- "people" ×6 — vv1, 2, 8, 10, 17, 21 (plus "PEOPLES" v25 and "peoples" v27).
- "God" ×6 — vv10, 19 (×2), 21, 24, 31.
- "heal / healed / healing / well / health" ×5 — vv9, 10, 14, 22, 30.
- "sold / sell / sales / proceeds / money" ×5 — vv34 (×3), 37 (×2).
- "servant / bond-servants" ×4 — vv25, 27, 29, 30.
- "confidence / boldness" ×3 — vv13, 29, 31 (all *parrēsia*).
- "filled with the Holy Spirit" ×2 — vv8, 31; "Holy Spirit" ×3 — vv8, 25, 31.
- "gathered (together)" ×4 — vv5, 26, 27, 31; "threats / threatened / warn" ×3 — vv17, 21, 29.
- "heard" ×3 — vv4, 20, 24; "elders" ×3 — vv5, 8, 23; "resurrection" ×2 — vv2, 33.
- "laid / lay … at the apostles' feet" ×2 — vv35, 37; "miracle" ×2 — vv16, 22.

Contrasts: The builders ⟷ the chief corner stone (v11). No other name ⟷ this name (vv10, 12). Uneducated and untrained ⟷ confidence, been with Jesus (v13). Give heed to you ⟷ to God (v19). Speak no longer ⟷ we cannot stop speaking (vv17, 20). The rulers gathered against His Christ ⟷ God's hand and purpose (vv26–28). Their threats ⟷ Your word with all confidence (v29). Their own companions ⟷ the Council (vv15, 23). His own ⟷ common property (v32). Needy ⟷ distributed to each as any had need (vv34–35).

Shape of the chapter: two halves that mirror each other. In the council chamber the rulers gather, threaten and forbid the name (1–22). In the believers' room the church gathers, prays and is filled to speak the name (23–31). Then a closing panel shows what that Spirit-filled people looked like on an ordinary day (32–37).

Chapter theme (my words): The name of Jesus cannot be silenced, because it is the only name that saves. When the world threatens, the church prays for boldness, trusts God's sovereign hand, and loves one another with open hands.

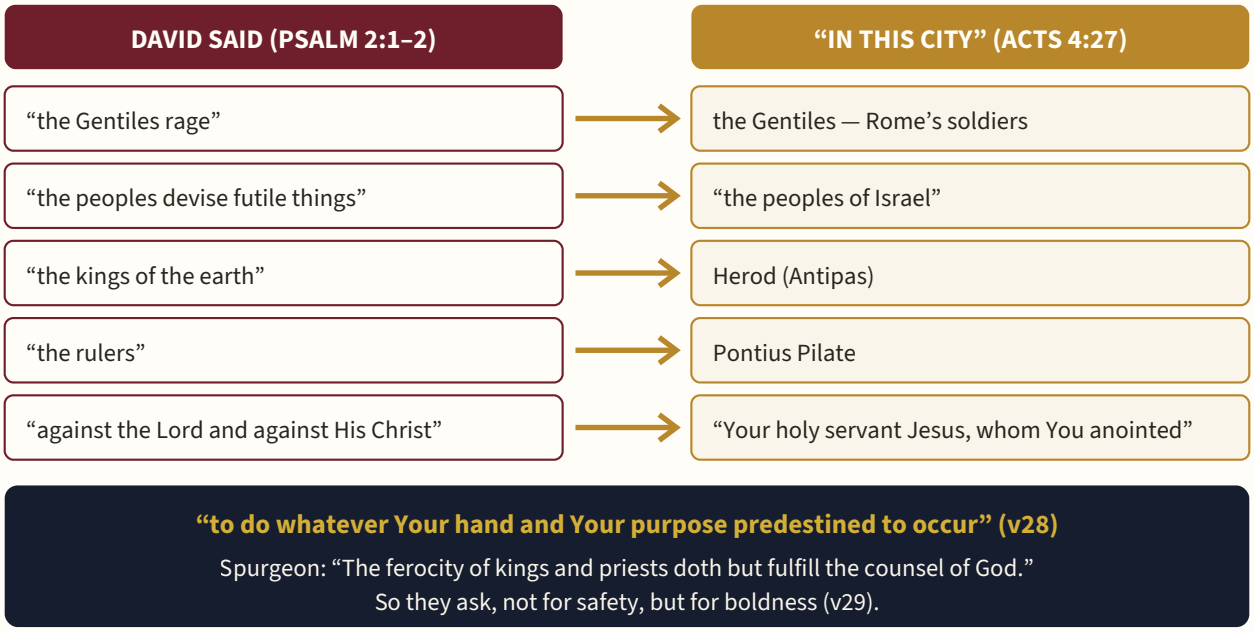
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · ACTS 4:28

"to do △whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur."

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.

Why were the Sadducees so disturbed (vv1–2)? They controlled the temple and denied the resurrection — Guzik: "they did not believe in the afterlife or the resurrection at all." Preaching "in Jesus the resurrection from the dead" challenged both their doctrine and their verdict on Jesus. Guzik: "The entire atmosphere was intended to make them afraid." Henry: "See how God trains up his servants for sufferings by degrees."

Is it fair to say Jesus is the only way (v12)? Peter says it to the highest religious court of his nation. Guzik: "Peter didn't merely proclaim Jesus as a way of salvation, but as the only way of salvation." Sproul names our culture's creed — "There is no tenet more basic to the secular culture we live in than that of religious tolerance" — and answers that only Christ satisfies God's justice and mercy together: "If we are offended by what the Lord God Almighty speaks, then the problem is not with Him, but with us." Henry: "we cannot be saved but by Jesus Christ."

What does "they had been with Jesus" mean (v13)? The council recognized them as Jesus' men — the same boldness, the same handling of Scripture. Guzik: "they knew the Scriptures, and they had been with Jesus." Henry: "One may know that they have been in the mount by the shining of their faces." Spurgeon: "I behold Christ, and I become like Christ."

When may a Christian disobey authority (vv19–20)? Sproul is careful: we normally submit, but when men command what God forbids or forbid what God commands, we obey God — never hiding behind "I'm just obeying orders." But this is not a license for disobedience when we are merely inconvenienced. Peter and John do not riot; they answer respectfully, accept the threat and keep preaching (and 5:29 will say it outright).

Why pray Psalm 2 (vv25–28)? The psalm describes nations and rulers raging against the LORD and His Anointed, and the church sees it fulfilled in Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel. Sproul: "Psalm 2 captures the separation of the state from God in antiquity." For me there is also a forward look: Psalm 2 ends with the Son ruling the nations with a rod of iron (2:8–9) — a reign still to come. The cross was the rulers' worst, and it was inside God's plan.

How can God predestine what wicked men do (v28)? The church simply says both: the rulers "were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus" (v27) — they are guilty — and they did "whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur" (v28). Sproul: "Every Christian believed in the sovereignty of God, and they believed in it absolutely." Spurgeon: "How strangely this doctrine of predestination comes in just there!" — and it is there to comfort a threatened church.

Was the shaking a pattern to seek? Guzik warns: "It is a snare to long to be used to do miraculous things," and the room did not become a holy place. The point of the filling was speech: "began to speak the word of God with boldness" (v31).

Was verses 32–35 Christian communism? No. Guzik: "It isn't accurate to see this as an early form of communism." Sproul: "They were not required to do it." People still owned houses and land; they gave as needs arose, and Peter tells Ananias his property was his own (5:4). The miracle was the heart — "not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own."

Why single out Barnabas (vv36–37)? He is the positive example before the negative one of Ananias and Sapphira (Sproul's "amazing contrast"), and he will be the man who brings Saul to the apostles (9:27) and encourages the church at Antioch (11:23).

Word study (Greek):

- **rejected — *exoutheneō* (G1848):** to treat as nothing (v11; Luke 23:11).
- **chief corner — *kephalē* (G2776) + *gōnia* (G1137):** head of the corner (Ps 118:22).
- **name — *onoma* (G3686):** person and authority; ×7 in the chapter.
- **salvation — *sōtēria* (G4991):** deliverance; "must" — *dei* (G1163) (v12).
- **confidence, boldness — *parrēsia* (G3954):** free, open speech (vv13, 29, 31; 28:31).
- **uneducated — *agrammatos* (G62):** without letters; only here.
- **untrained — *idiōtēs* (G2399):** layman, not a professional.
- **Lord — *despotēs* (G1203):** Sovereign Master (v24; Luke 2:29; Rev 6:10).
- **predestined — *proorizō* (G4309):** to mark out beforehand (v28; Rom 8:29–30; Eph 1:5, 11).
- **shaken — *saleuō* (G4531):** v31.
- **common — *koinos* (G2839):** shared (v32; 2:44).
- **Encouragement — *paraklēsis* (G3874):** called alongside (v36).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Suffering days, growing days** (Henry).
2. **The same court, a different Peter** (4:6–10).
3. **They counted Him as nothing** — *exoutheneō* (4:11).
4. **Not a way — the way** (Guzik, Sproul).
5. **Educated where it counts** — the Scriptures and being with Jesus (Guzik).
6. **A healed man is an argument** (Spurgeon).
7. **Obey God — and know what He says** (Sproul).
8. **They prayed for boldness, not safety** (4:29).
9. **Sovereignty is a comfort** (Spurgeon, Sproul).
10. **Not communism, but love** (Guzik, Sproul).

Cross-references: Exod 16:18; 34:29–35; Ps 2:1–9; 118:22; Isa 28:16; Matt 10:19–20; 21:42; Luke 2:29; 12:11–12; 20:17; 21:14–15; 23:11; John 14:6; 18:13; Acts 1:8; 2:23, 42–47; 5:1–11, 29; 9:27; 11:22–24; 28:31; Rom 8:28–30; 13:1–7; 2 Cor 8:9; Eph 1:11; 2:20; Phil 2:9–11; 1 Pet 2:7; 1 Tim 2:5.

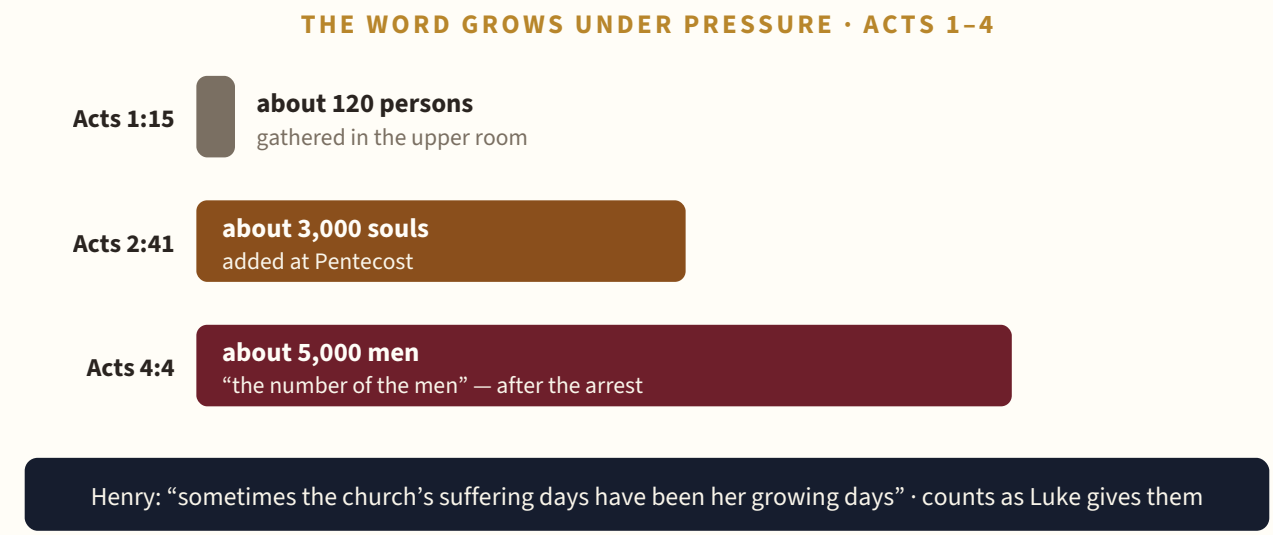
03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · ACTS 4:29

"And now, Lord, ⚠ take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence,"

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.

Example to follow — Peter before Annas. A few weeks earlier Peter cursed and denied Jesus to a servant girl in this high priest's courtyard. Now, filled with the Holy Spirit, he tells the same men to their faces, "whom you crucified, whom God raised." Many of the men I serve carry a failure they think disqualifies them. Peter's story says Jesus restores denied-Him men and sends them back into the same courtyard. I will tell one man this week that his worst failure is not the end of his story.

Truth to confess — there is no other name. I have softened this when it was awkward, as if Jesus were one option among many. He is not. No program, no higher power in general, no amount of trying saves a man — only Jesus. I will say it plainly and kindly when it comes up.

Command to obey — keep speaking. "We cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." I have seen Jesus pull men out of addiction, out of despair, out of prison in their hearts. I will tell one of those stories to someone who needs it.

Promise to trust — God's hand is over the threats. Herod, Pilate and the mob did only what God's hand had marked out. Whatever is threatening me this week is inside His lines. So I will pray the way they did: not "take it away" first, but "take note of their threats, and grant … all confidence."

Example to follow — Barnabas. He sold a field and laid the money down, and the apostles named him for how he lifted people up. I will look for one need in our group I can meet with what I have, and one man I can encourage by name.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

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? (4:1–4; Rom 8:28) *Suffering days have been her growing days (Henry).*
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? (4:12; John 14:6) *Not a way of salvation, but the only way (Guzik).*
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? (4:13; 2 Cor 3:18) *I behold Christ, and I become like Christ (Spurgeon).*
4. "We cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." What have I seen Jesus do that I have kept to myself? (4:19–20) *He must speak (Spurgeon).*
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? (4:24–31) *Grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence.*
6. Barnabas was called the "Son of Encouragement." Who needs me to be a Barnabas this week — and what could I give or say? (4:32–37; 9:27) *Not required, but freely given (Sproul).*

Worship. Sovereign Lord, You made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. The nations raged and the rulers gathered against Your Anointed, and they did only what Your hand had determined. The stone they counted as nothing You have made the chief corner stone, and there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You restored Peter and sent him back to face the men he feared; restore me and send me too. Let people see that I have been with You. Take note of what threatens me, and grant me all confidence to speak Your word. Fill me with Your Spirit, open my hands to my brothers in need, and make me a son of encouragement. Amen.

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