

Peter and John have healed the lame man at the gate of the temple courtyard and have begun preaching to the crowd that has gathered as a result. The Jewish rulers are displeased with fact that Peter is preaching Jesus Christ and so they arrest and interrogate the two apostles. However, the Holy Spirit turns the situation into another opportunity for Peter and John to witness for Jesus Christ.

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1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

**“And as they spake unto the people”** – Peter, accompanied by John, was still preaching to the crowd (Acts 3:12-26) that had gathered after the healing of the lame man (Acts 3:1-11). They were interrupted by the Jewish officials.

**“the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them”** – The priests were the descendants of Aaron who served in the temple offering sacrifices for the people. The captain of the temple was the chief of the temple police and was responsible for enforcing order at the temple. They were part of the multitude that arrested Jesus (Luke 22:52). The Sadducees were the liberal sect of their day because they rejected all things supernatural.

**“Being grieved [displeased; offended] that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead”** – The priests had crucified Jesus as a blasphemer and so they did not like the idea that Peter and John were preaching that Jesus had risen from the dead. The captain of the temple was there to enforce the will of the priests by performing the arrest. The Sadducees did not like the idea that Peter and John were preaching the resurrection or anything else supernatural. Apparently the size of the crowd had attracted the attention of these officials and they had become displeased when they heard what was being said.

**“And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide”** – Peter and John were arrested and imprisoned overnight because it was already too late in the day to assemble the Sanhedrin for a hearing since Jewish law did not permit trials at night. Their plan was to deal with Peter and John the next day.

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4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

Peter and John had been arrested, but not before many that heard Peter’s preaching had believed. The preaching of the truth empowered by the Holy Spirit will have an effect (**Isa. 55:11** “*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*”). The result was that around 5,000 men believed in Jesus Christ and were saved.

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5 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.

The people listed here comprise the members of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body governing Jewish affairs. Caiaphas was the current high priest and his father-in-law Annas was the previous high priest. Annas still wielded a great deal of influence, even retaining his title as high priest. The gather together at Jerusalem in order to convene a court session in which Peter and John were to explain themselves.

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7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

You might expect the Greek word for “power” used here to be the one meaning “authority” but it’s not. It is *dunamis*, which refers to miraculous power. By asking “by what name,” the Sanhedrin is asking whose authority gave them the right to heal this man. They cannot deny that a miracle has been done (v. 14), so they can only demand that the apostles identify the source of the miraculous power that healed the man and the authority that they had to exercise that power.

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8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; 10 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.

**“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel”** – Peter was not alone in having to answer for his and John’s actions. The Holy Spirit was with him and supplied the appropriate response, just as Jesus said that the Spirit would do: **Luke 12:11-12** “*And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.*” Peter acknowledges that he is addressing the leaders of Israel, who represent and speak for the nation as a whole.

**“If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole”** – Peter characterizes the lame man’s healing as a “good deed” even though the Sanhedrin had arrested him and John as if they had committed a crime. The Sanhedrin want to know how the healing was accomplished and Peter is ready to tell them.

**“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”** – Peter, with the boldness provided by the Holy Spirit, wants not only the Sanhedrin, but all of Israel to know the truth. The crucifixion of Jesus was still a recent memory in their minds and Peter reminds them of Who they crucified and the fact that God had raised Him from the dead.

**“even by him doth this man stand here before you whole”** – Apparently the healed man was standing there with Peter and John. Peter makes it very clear that it was the power of Jesus Christ that had healed this man and he wants all of Israel to know.

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11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

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Peter references Psalm 118:22, a psalm where the writer is praising God for saving him from his enemies. In the original context, this quoted verse seems to be speaking of the LORD taking the righteous, who have been rejected by the wicked, and placing them in a position of honor and glory. Peter, as do other NT writers (and Jesus Himself), uses it here to say that these Jewish leaders have rejected Jesus as the Christ (the Messiah) but God has made Him the “cornerstone” (a position of honor). Everything in a building is built on or in reference to the cornerstone. Everything in the church is built on and is aligned in reference to Jesus Christ.

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12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

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Salvation is not a buffet where people can choose what they want to eat and ignore the rests. God has not provided many ways to salvation for us to choose from. Rather, there is only one name that God has given through which men can be saved: Jesus Christ.

**John 14:6** “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” **1 John 5:11-12** “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

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13 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.

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**“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John”** – These men were not timid like someone who was not fully devoted to their cause. The members of the Sanhedrin saw that Peter and John did not hesitate or shrink back from speaking in the name of Jesus.

**“and perceived that they were unlearned [illiterate or untrained] and ignorant [uneducated] men”** – They realized that Peter and James were uneducated since they had not attended any rabbinical schools or studied under any prominent rabbis. These were common men who did not teach like the Jewish rabbis of the day.

**“they marvelled”** – The Sanhedrin members were amazed that such uneducated men could speak with such confidence and have such understanding of the scriptures. Common men of the day typically could not do that.

**“and they took knowledge [to understand; to perceive] of them, that they had been with Jesus”** – As the Sanhedrin listened to Peter and John, they started noticing something familiar. They had not been able to successfully challenge Jesus’ teachings because of His knowledge of the scriptures and they started realizing that the same may very well be true of Peter and John, whom they realized had been with Jesus.

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14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

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**“And beholding the man which was healed standing with them”** – The man who had been healed of his lameness (Acts 3:2-10) was also present at this hearing. Either he had also been arrested or else he was there in order to provide testimony on what had happened.

**“they could say nothing against it”** – They could not disprove the fact that a legitimate healing had occurred. This man had been lame his entire life and was well known to lay daily at the temple gate begging. Thus, he could not have been hired by Peter and John to pretend to be lame and then be “healed” by the apostles. Also, they were looking at the man standing in front of them, something he could not do if he were still lame. Therefore, the incontestable facts were that this man had been lame and now he was not. They had no grounds to contradict Peter and John’s assertion that this man had been healed by the power of Jesus Christ.