

# What Should We Do If....?

Acts 3-5

9/6/20

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I think it's pretty safe to say that the last few months, well, maybe all of 2020 has been unnerving. From the coronavirus, a hotly debated election to legislation coming down from our elected officials that we know will put us at odds with our state government. It is easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of the now and lose sight of the things that we are to be doing as followers of Jesus. In Acts, the early church provides us great insight into what we should be doing during all seasons of life.

## **Peter Healed the Lame Man (Acts 3:1-10)**

For the early church, the problems all started when Peter healed a man sitting beside the temple gate. The man who could not walk had simply asked for money, but Peter decided to make him walk instead. So, of course, there was a crowd. Everybody wanted to see what had happened, and everybody wanted to hear from the man who made it happen. So Peter spoke.

## **Peter Answered The Crowd (Acts 3:11-26)**

Peter looked at the crowd that gathered around him. He looked at the man who now clung to his side and told them not to stare at him as if he had done this miracle by his own power or religiousness. It was not Peter's power that had healed the man. It was the power of Jesus. Jesus, who God had glorified had made a way for all who believe in Him to be made right with God.

## **Peter and John Speak To the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:1-22)**

The crowd continued to gather around Peter and John. The commotion must have been eye-catching because the priests, the temple guards, and the Sadducees' 'came upon them' as Peter was speaking. After a night in jail, Peter and John were brought before the highest court in Israel. The Sanhedrin wanted to know by what power or name Peter healed the man who couldn't walk. And so again, Peter explained. Jesus, whom they killed, was raised by God from the dead, and that only through Jesus could one be saved and made right with God. That didn't go over well.

## **The Believers Pray for Boldness 4:23-31**

Angry, but unable to do anything about it for fear of the crowd, Peter and John were released with a stern warning. They returned to their friends and recounted what had happened to them. Understanding the gravity of the situation, they lifted their voices together and prayed. What did they pray for? Boldness. Not protection, not deliverance, not more influence in the government. No, with certain punishment on the horizon, they prayed for the boldness to continue to proclaim Jesus without ceasing.

## **The Church Continued to Proclaim Jesus (Acts 5:12-16)**

Then what, did they cower to the threats of the Sanhedrin? No, they continued to meet the needs of the church, to serve their community, and to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus. The church didn't shrink because of the warning of the Sanhedrin. Rather, in answered prayer, it grew. This caught the eye of the religious leaders, but this time they called in all twelve of the apostles.

## **The Apostles Before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:17-42)**

Naturally, the Sanhedrin was violently angry. They had warned these men, but they didn't listen. Now they wanted blood, and if it wasn't for an aged teacher named Gamaliel, they may have attempted to kill them then and there. Instead, the apostles are beaten, 40 lashes minus one as they were allowed, and released with another warning. The opposition to the early church was growing.

When the twelve left, they again gathered. This time, they praised God for answering their prayers. How were their prayers answered? They continued to serve their brothers and sisters, to be a blessing to their community while proclaiming salvation in the name of Jesus.

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## **Announcements**

### **Operation Christmas Child:**

In spite of COVID, we will still be filling boxes this year. For those of you who will be filling your own boxes, now is a great time to find deals on school supplies.