

## Acts 3 - 4 Bible Study

1. How easy do you find it to talk about God with others? Is it easier or harder to talk about Jesus?

*Encourage people to give examples.*

2. Read Acts 3:1-10. Was this just a merciful kindness from God or was there something more to this miracle? Read Isa 35:3-6

*It was not **less** than an act of kindness (see 4:9) but it was more – it was a sign that the age of the Messiah has indeed begun with the person and work of Jesus. As God ‘accredited’ Jesus with miracles, so he accredits his apostles to show that their message about Jesus is genuine.*

3. Read Acts 3:11-26. Why shouldn’t the crowd have been surprised at what they saw (v12)? What does their surprise reveal?

*As Jews, they had the promises of God in the Old Testament, including Isa 35, and should have recognised the significance of what was happening. Their surprise reveals their unbelief at not expecting God to, some day at least, fulfil his promises.*

4. Had Peter gone to the temple to preach? Is there an example in this for us to follow? See 1 Peter 3:14-15?

*He and John went there to pray. The healing came in response to the beggar – they had not gone there to heal anyone. But when the crowd came wanting to know about what had happened, Peter used the opportunity to talk about Jesus – he was prepared to explain the reason for his hope – as he commands other believers in his letter.*

5. Read Acts 4:1-22. Was it a foregone conclusion that the Jewish leaders would respond negatively to the gospel? ie Was it a waste of time for Peter to tell it to them?

*No. See Acts 3:17-19; the leaders could have repented just as many in the crowd did. See also Acts 6:7. Though we are unsurprised that the leaders did not believe, we ought never to assume someone won’t believe – the gospel is for all!*

6. Peter had been at the high priest’s courtyard a few months earlier. Compare that time (read John 18:12-17) with this account in Acts 4. How do you account for the difference?

*The Holy Spirit has now been given. Peter is now changed by the Spirit and speaks by his working, so v8. See how Jesus prepared them for this, Luke 12:11-12.*

7. Read Acts 4:23-31. What do you think are the most significant things in the believers’ response? What things encourage you as a Christian in a hostile world?

*Included in this discussion could be: \* They responded with one mind (v24), \*They prayed together, \* They reminded themselves that God is Sovereign – as maker and ruler of the world (v24) which helps them put this situation in true perspective, \* They let Scripture shape their thinking and prayers (see Ps 2), \* They leave the threats of the Jews up to God but ask for themselves to be bold in continuing to do what God has asked (cf 4:20, 1:8 – NB They say God has commanded them, but in 1:8 the command was Jesus’. Obeying Jesus **is** obeying God), \* They speak God’s word boldly, as God’s Spirit enables them.*

8. Read Psalm 2. How does this help put the events in Acts into a right context? How does it help you in your context?

9. Do you feel very bold to talk to people about Jesus? In what ways or in what times are you tempted “not to speak ... in the name of Jesus”? can you think of practical ways this group can help you to speak with boldness? Write them down and pray in response to these ideas.