

# Acts 4:1-22

## Enter: The Opposition

**Scripture:** Acts 4:1-22

**Memory Verse:** Acts 4:12b “...there is no other name [besides Jesus] under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

**Lesson Focus:** While last week we saw the first healing miracle of the church draw people in to be saved, this week the same miracle also draws in the opposition to launch the persecution of the church. We pray the kids will be inspired by the boldness of the apostles and also encouraged to be bolder for Jesus in their own witness.

**Activities and Crafts:** Peter and John preaching Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Good News Book

**Starter Activity:** “Crippled” Relay

The Scripture we are studying this weekend directly follows from our study from last week where a crippled man was miraculously healed. Therefore, consider playing a “crippled” relay race to remind the kids about this.

Divide the group into two or more teams depending upon the number of kids in your class on one side of the area. On the other side put up signs that say “Jesus”, one for each team. \* The kids on each team will need to go toward “Jesus” crippled, but then they will come back “healed” (running) to tag the next one on the team. \* Here are few ideas:

- 1) Have kids hop on one foot toward Jesus and then run back.
- 2) Have kids go in pairs with one giving a piggyback ride and then both run back.
- 3) Pre-select two or more volunteer kids from each team to be “crippled” and assign four kids to carry that kid to Jesus and then have them all run back (please remind the kids to be careful if you choose this option!)

Afterwards, transition into the lesson with some discussion.

This relay game that we played reminds me about something amazing that we saw happen in our study of Acts last week.

Q: What was that? A: A man born crippled (who had never walked) was miraculously healed by God thru Peter and John! (**Acts 3:6-8**) \*

That miracle was a “billboard” to grab people’s attention so that they would hear the gospel and be saved. And that is exactly what happened! But not everyone was happy about this! As the early church grew, so also did the opposition. \* Let’s take a look!

## Bible Study:

**Acts 4:1:** Peter and John are preaching the gospel to a large group of people who were drawn in by the miracle but then suddenly the religious leaders show up. Uh-oh!

Q: What do you think is going to happen next? Let's find out! \*

**Acts 4:2-3:** They were so disturbed, \* or upset, by them teaching and preaching about Jesus's death and resurrection that they arrested them! Here is the very first recorded instance of persecution toward followers of Jesus!

Q: What does persecution mean? A: It means to be wrongly harmed, thrown in jail, or even killed because of what you believe. And for Christians it is because of Jesus. \*

Imagine if someone came into RMC kids church this very minute and arrested me and led me out in handcuffs because I'm teaching you about Jesus Christ from the Bible! \* Well, this is actually happening today in other nations of the world like China and North Korea!! \*

**Acts 4:4:** Wow! Even though Peter and John were unjustly arrested (and the healed guy too!), look at the good that came out of it.

Q: How many have now heard, believed, and become followers of Jesus? A: 5000! Since the promised Holy Spirit came, in a short amount of time the early church grew from 120 (chapter 1), to 3000 (chapter 2), and now to 5000 people (chapters 3-4)!

**Acts 4:5-7:** Imagine being Peter, John, and the healed guy right now. They are completely surrounded by all of the religious leader bosses, even many of the same one's that crucified Jesus Himself. This doesn't look good for them! \* And as they are asked this question, this is the perfect opportunity for them to surrender and play it safe.

Q: Do you think that's what they are going to do?

**Acts 4:8-10:** NO WAY! He looks like them right in the eye and lays out the facts about Jesus's death and resurrection and that He is the reason this man is healed.

Q: But Who empowered Peter to be so bold? A: The Holy Spirit! For he was filled or "fizzing" with the Holy Spirit! \*

You might remember last week how we compared this miracle to a "billboard" which points people to something greater than itself. \* That is exactly what Peter continues to do but now to a different and more serious audience.

**Acts 4:11:** At first it seemed like Peter, John, and the healed guy were the one's on trial. But notice how Peter has turned things around and put THEM on trial for murdering and rejecting Jesus their Messiah!

**Acts 4:12:** He wraps up his message with a strong statement that echoes something famous that Jesus Himself said in **John 14:6:** That HE is the ONLY way to be saved! \* While He invites ALL to come and be saved, it is ONLY those who repent of their sin and believe/trust in Jesus who are saved! This is a very important gospel truth! \*

The gospel means *good news*. But if it is good news, why has sharing it so often brought persecution with it? **Teachers:** Consider pausing and walking through this gospel acrostic with your kids and explain how people oppose these parts of the gospel:

**G**o: **Matthew 28:19** -> Go to all nations. But nations like N Korea don't want it!

**O**nly-Way: **John 14:6** -> Jesus is the ONLY way. No one enters but through Him.

**S**on of God: **John 3:16** -> He's the ONLY way because He ALONE paid for sin.

**P**ride: **Jeremiah 17:9** -> People don't like being told they have a sin problem.

**E**vil: **John 3:19** -> People naturally do what is evil and selfish! \*

**L**ake of Fire: **Revelation 20:15** -> Eternal punishment makes people uncomfortable.

**Acts 4:13:** First, the religious leaders' glance at Peter and John with their jaws dropped to the floor wondering how it could be possible that these unschooled nobodies are "schooling" them. \*

**Acts 4:14:** Second, and still with their jaws dropped to the floor, they glance at the formerly crippled guy standing next to them (remember he had never stood before in his life until today!) and they have absolutely nothing to say!

**Acts 4:15-18:** And then finally, they huddle in private on what they are going to do. \*

Q: What did they decide to do? A: They threatened Peter and John with more persecution to try and get them to stop talking about Jesus. Oh, if they would only repent and believe! But their hearts were HARD. \* This is unbelievable unbelief!

Q: Do you think these threats are going to work?

**Acts 4:19-20:** NO WAY! They have been commanded by God to BE disciples of Jesus, who MAKE and SEND disciples of Jesus. And no amount of persecution was going to stop them from following orders from God! \*

**Acts 4:21-22:** It appears that with the large crowds on the side of the good guys, the religious leaders let them go anyway! This is just the beginning of the persecution. As we continue through the book of Acts the persecution is going to grow more and more fierce. But guess what grows even more fiercely? The spread of the gospel!

**Key Point:** And that is only true because believers continued to faithfully share the gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit even in the midst of persecution. And that story continues today. Maybe this is the first time you have heard the gospel. Would you respond to it today? You have sinned against God and need to be saved from the punishment you deserve. Jesus is the ONLY one who can save you! Trust in Him today!

For you believing kids, as you go back to school, pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to give you courage to help you be a witness and share the good news of Jesus's death and resurrection for sinners with those around you!

# FIND THE TREASURE



**Read Acts 4:12**  
 Why is Jesus the only way  
 we can be saved?

**PARENT CHALLENGE**  
 If the gospel is "good news", why  
 does sharing it bring persecution?

**Read Acts 4:20**  
 Who can you share the  
 gospel with this week?

