**Acts 4:1**

\*Publicity of the healing drew a crowd including the religious authorities over the Temple and Solomon’s Porch (cf. 3:11). The priests along with the captain (*strategos* [10x]), who was commander of the Levites who kept guard in and around the temple, and the secular and anti-resurrection Sadducees, discovered religious “impropriety” in the sacred place.

\*The Sadducees had been publicly rebuked by the Lord Jesus (Mt. 22:23-24, 31-33). Now they were back.

**Acts 4:2**

\*They were grieved or literally “worked up with anger” because of the preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. Of course, Peter and John had the divine mandate to preach in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38; 3:6). The Judeo-Christian faith is all about Jesus!

\*Furthermore, the *Tanak* taught the Jews about the coming resurrection (Job 19:26; Ps. 16:9-10; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:1-2) and Jesus was *“the first born from the dead”* (Col. 1:18). All resurrections followed His! Everyone in Jerusalem knew something unusual happened relative to the death and resurrection of the Lord. What happened to His body; the Temple Veil; the resurrected saints wandering around Jerusalem?

**Acts 4:3**

\*Two quick actions occurred to Peter and John by the incensed religionists. They took their anger out on the Lord Jesus Christ by laying hands on (literally threw their hands over) the preachers and in the hold of prison. Since it was eventide they needed to stay overnight.

\*For the first time the apostles were imprisoned for preaching the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord. In the Garden of Gethsemane they were not arrested (Jn. 18:8) but soon fled (Mk. 14:50-52).

\*Paul said, *“Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound”* (II Tim. 2:9).

**Act 4:4**

\*From the preaching of word of God by the apostles, many believed, and according to Luke’s count there were about five thousand men, heads of their household who became disciples and church members (cf. Acts 2:41).

\*The Jerusalem Baptist Church grew rapidly from the one hundred and twenty and then three thousand more, and finally an additional five thousand men. The church membership could easily have reached close to twenty thousand members in such a short time. The history of the Baptist movement went from thousands to a little flock to the apostles plus Mark, to just the Lord, to one hundred, to three thousand, to at least five thousand more. Then came Saul!

**Acts 4:5-6**

\*This “Jesus” movement caused a great stir among the religious leaders of Israel. Luke recorded the religious officials as rulers, elders, scribes, Annas the high priest, Caiaphas his son-in-law, John, Alexander, and kindred of the high priest! There may have been at least one hundred religious and political leaders with very important and insightful wannabes!

**Acts 4:7**

\*The apostles Peter and John along with the lame man (v.10) were encircled by the august audience of awful people and questioned about their power and the *“name”* (see Jn. 18:4-7) by which they healed!

**Acts 4:8**

\*Peter had prepared himself spiritually for his impromptu sermon by being *“filled with the Holy Ghost.”* The expression is Lukan and occurs in Lk. 1:15, 42, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 6:5; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9, 52.

\*Spirit-filled living is the normative Christian life (Eph. 5:18 ff.). In preparation for ministry, Peter followed the example of Ezra: *“For Ezra* ***had prepared his heart*** *to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments”* (Ezra 7:10),

**Acts 4:9**

\*Addressing the rulers and elders, Peter turned the threatening interrogation of an evil criminal act into the gracious examination of a supernatural miracle. Don’t ignore the good deed of the totally spiritual and physical healing of the impotent man! He is made whole (*sesostai* [only use in NT of the perfect passive verb *sozo*]).

\*Peter asked a simple question: *“by what means is he made whole?”*

**Acts 4:10**

\*Using an imperative, Peter declared to everyone that the means of the miracle was *“by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,”* keeping the focus on the **name** of the Lord, and not on the name of the lame man! Cf. Mk. 9:41!

\*He uttered three staccato-like activities, bringing the truth in a compressed expression: *“crucified,”* *“raised,”* and *“stand”* (perfect tense).” The still standing former lame man could not be ignored. Peter did not back off of the grievous sin of Israel (See Acts 2:23 and 2:36). He preached for conviction of sin and the need for repentance. Of course, the rub for the Sadducees was the resurrection (Lk. 20:27 and 39-40)!

**Acts 4:11-12**

\*The apostle targumed the well-known messianic prophecy of Ps. 118:22. The Lord had cited the passage earlier to the Pharisees (Mt. 21:42-44), and the spiritually-dense Pharisees recognized that He spoke of them and decided to kill Jesus (Mt. 21:45-46).

\*The earlier question about the authority to heal but also the authority to save was the Person behind the name, the “dreaded and hated” name Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus is the Saviour of the world—one Saviour known by one Name.

\*He used three negatives to establish truth in the exclusive name: *“neither,” “any,”* and *“none.”*

\*The exclusive universalism of the name *“Jesus”* (“Jehovah saves”) prepared the Jews from the *Tana*k (Ex. 6:3; Dt. 12:5, 11).

**Acts 4:13**

\*The spiritually dull religionists recognized something different about Peter and John. Rather than being able to intimidate the Baptists, the leaders noticed their boldness, their exclusive use of the *Tanak* since they were unlearned and ignorant men (not trained by a “Gamaliel” [see Amos 7:14-15; Ps. 119:98-100]), and recognized the aura of supernatural power, having been with Jesus (cf. Jn. 18:4 ff.)!

**Acts 4:14**

The obvious object of the resurrection power of Jesus of Nazareth was the lame man still standing. This was a powerful piece of evidence in the alleged court (“why does he keep standing?”). The Lord had promised to give His disciples words to say (Lk. 21:15).

**Acts 4:15**

\*The author of Acts recorded the response to the convicting preaching of Peter. The members of the *“council”* (*sunedrion* = *“Sanhedrin”* [22x]) called for a private meeting. The Sanhedrin was the Jewish Supreme Court based on Moses and the seventy elders (Num. 11:16-17) and included Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathaea, and Gamaliel.

\*Emphatically, Luke reported that the members had an exclusive, private, and secret conference on how to handle the preachers.

**Acts 4:16-17**

\*The Christian Gentile received his *Gospel of Luke* material from *“eyewitnesses/ministers”* (Lk. 1:2). \*Who was the source for the *verbatim* wording of Acts 4:16-17? Obviously, the source was some member of the Sanhedrin. It could not have been Nicodemus or Joseph, and certainly not Gamaliel!

\*Since Luke wrote *Acts* about thirty years after the events recorded in *Acts* (c. AD 60), and since he got to know Paul intimately, the inspired conversation came from the ex-henchman of the Sanhedrin, Saul of Tarsus!

\*The secret counsel included doing something, recognizing “a notable miracle” and the impossibility of denying it (see Acts 26:26), and realizing the options of either incarceration (for a good deed!) or mere threatening.

\*They did not threaten about performing miracles or preaching, but about preaching in *“this name”* = Jesus (Acts 5:28; 9:21)!

\*The *Book of Acts* sets the pattern for Baptist churches to face when national peace and safety is diminished (I Tim. 2:2). The stages are the following: 1) Threats (Acts 4:17); 2) Imprisonment (Acts 5:18); 3) Physical Assault (Acts 5:40); 4) Unlawful Murder (Acts 7:54-60); and 5) Full Persecution (Acts 8:1 ff.). Nevertheless, the Lord’s Baptist assemblies spread and increased.

**Acts 4:18**

\*The Sanhedrin gave a strong threat to the Apostles not to speak or teach *“in the name of Jesus”* (did the Sanhedrin have to say “*Jesus”*?). The highest authority in all Israel had spoken and given commandment to the Jerusalem Baptist Church! What?! Jehovah is the Highest Authority over the Baptist Assembly (Eph. 1:20-23)! *“We ought to obey God rather than men”* (Acts 5:29).

\*Apparently, working miracles was still allowed!

**Acts 4:19-20**

\*Peter, how real is the Scripture *“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe”* (Prov. 29:25) to you? Who will Peter and John want to please (*“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ”* [Gal. 1:10])?

\*Peter quickly answered with truth in his heart and boldness in his words. What is the right judgment and Who is ultimately the Right Judge? The Apostle seemed to ask if the council members would judge them as extensions of God (cf. Jn. 10:34-35).

\*The apostles asserted their allegiance to the question *“judge ye,”* as all men must (Gen. 19:24)! \*Peter’s literal reply was “we cannot not be speaking.” As witnesses of the resurrected Lord and His ascension, and now of the healing of the lame man, the apostles were fixed on the Lord and truth (Ps. 57:7).

**Acts 4:21-22**

\*How did the Sanhedrin judge Peter’s question (v. 19)? Ignoration! They were spiritually blind (Mt. 15:14). Recognizing that acquittal was obvious, the elite judges threatened them more, and released the bold preachers. The physician narrating the episode added the age of the healed lame man; he was over forty with lameness from birth (v. 2)! Certainly, this added salt to the spiritual wound hemorrhaging from the prestigious members of the Sanhedrin.

**Acts 4:23**

\*The pastor of the Jerusalem Baptist Assembly and head of the apostolate and John went back to their *“own company”* (*idious* [peculiar, private] > i.e., Baptists) to report what the Jewish leaders had forbade them to say; i.e., “Jesus.”

\*Now that the growing assembly of Baptists of several tens of thousands recognized their opposition, they went to prayer and the Scriptures.

**Acts 4:24**

\*The *ekklesia* was united in truth and worship and demonstrated this in powerful, spirit-filled prayer (cf. also Acts 1:14; 5:12; 8:6; 15:25). The world system was against the Lord’s *ekklesia*! Pity the world system (Eph. 1:22-23)!

\*The united Baptist church employed a pastiche of verses (Neh. 9:6a; Ps. 146:6; Isa. 37:16) affirming that the *“Lord”* (*despotes* [10x > II Pet. 2:1]) as Creator and Sovereign is over all the cosmos.

**Acts 4:25-26**

\*They continued, saying that this same Lord spoke through *“the mouth”* of David and gave the inspired paraphrased wording of Ps. 2:1-2. *NET* omits *“mouth.”* No mouth, no words, just a “message!”

\*The hatred of the globalists finds harmony with Satan and his Antichrist, as the origin of this enmity (Gen. 3:15) will culminate in the final Gog/Magog uprising (Rev. 20:7-9).

**Acts 4:27-28**

\*The perfected Jews recognized that Ps. 2:1-2 referred to Jehovah, the Messiah, and to *“thy holy child Jesus.”* They recognized the full life of Christ, from infanthood under Herod (Mt. 2:1-4; Lk. 1:35) to adulthood under Pontius Pilate, that Jesus was the divinely anointed One.

\*The modern versions miss the point, translating the Greek *ton hagion paida* as “holy servant.” Of course, He was a servant, but His life began as the holy child!

\*The ungodly were limited by the Lord from doing anything but what He predetermined for them (cf. Ps. 76:10 and Acts 2:23).

**Acts 4:29-30**

\*The Baptists asked two requests of the Lord. 1) Would He look upon the threatenings as Jesus had promised coming tribulation (Jn. 16:33)? 2) Would He grant the Baptist church members *“all boldness”* to preach the word of God as did Peter and John (cf. v. 13)? They did not request that the threats would be removed!

\*They trusted that signs and wonders would continue to be done *“by the name of thy holy child Jesus.”*

**Acts 4:31**

\*The Lord answered prayer immediately since the place of where they *“were assembled”* (perfect passive > had been…still were) received a localized earthquake (Mt. 27:54; 28:2), and all were Spirit-filled (see 2:4 to 11:24), and spake the word with boldness!

**Acts 4:32**

\*The thousands of Baptists were united against apostate Judaism and for the Lord Jesus Christ and His ecclesiological movement! As the Spirit-filled multitudes were in harmony with God they were also in unity with one another. Their love for the Lord manifested in their love for their Baptist brethren (Eph. 5:18)!

\*The Jerusalem Baptist Church showed normative Christian living by obeying the two great commandments—love Lord and love Christians (Mt. 22:37-40).

\*All Christians have a soteriological unity in common salvation and should have an ecclesiological unity within the assembly, as Paul averred (Eph. 4:2 and 4:13).

\*Luke revisited the practice of Christian communalism (vv. 2:44-45), the *ekklesia* carried out the command of the *Tanak* (Dt. 15:4). They advocated *voluntary sharing* but not *abolition of ownership*!

**Acts 4:33**

\*The apostles continue to preach the gospel with the focus on the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

\*The Lord promised Holy Ghost power to energize their witnessing (1:8, 22) and fulfilled His promise (3:15, 22). The grace of God was upon His church as they fulfilled the Great Commission in unity.

**Acts 4:34**

\*Hedged between two literary bookends (2:44-45 and 5:1-11) was the discussion about Christian communalism and its benevolent intent and its inherent danger.

\*Since the economic status within the church varied among members, material distribution among church came from the united hearts of charity. None lacked.

\*The Jews had real estate in lands or houses and showed that they loved God more than mammon (Mt. 6:24; I Tim. 6:10)!

**Acts 4:35**

\*As the members sold their possessions they gave the proceeds to the leaders of the church—the apostles. From this vast pool of wealth the apostles distributed money to those in financial need according to their need.

\*Presumably, as hostility became more evident to the church members, some may have lost employment or customers. Economic persecution has always been one form of persecution from the world.

\*These acts of charity set up the potential of undermining personal responsibility and freedom by appealing to the old nature (cf. II Thes. 3:6-15).

**Acts 4:36-37**

\*Luke gave two examples of communalism; one of generosity and one of greed (cf. 5:1-11)!

\*The Bible advises to the wealthy and the wise, warning against mammon (Eccl. 10:19) and promoting financial wisdom (Lk. 16:9-11).

\*In his first example, the physician gave the names, spiritual gift, tribe, and nationality of this godly church member.

\*This spiritual man was Joses who was nicknamed because of the obvious manifestation of his gift of exhortation (*“consolation” = paraklesis*). Spiritual gifts are easily recognizable. Pastors have the spiritual insight to know with confidence everyone’s spiritual gift (Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 2:16)!

\*He was of the tribe of Levi, from Cyprus Island (cf. Acts 13:4), and was a wealthy landowner.

\*This spiritual man submitted himself and his wealth to the leaders of the assembly (Heb. 13:17)!