

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 21ST–22ND, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

OPPOSITION (ACTS 4:1–12) “WHILE THEY WERE SPEAKING...”

As Peter and John were preaching to those who witnessed the lame man's healing, “the priests, the captain of the temple police, and the Sadducees confronted them.

- The Sadducees believed the Messiah was an ideal lifestyle, not a person, and didn't believe in a resurrection, immortality, or angels.

THROWN IN JAIL OVERNIGHT

Peter and John were “seized” and put in jail until the next day. This is the first act of opposition we see against the Church.

- The opposition did not seem to squelch the message, as Luke records that the Church grew by another 2,000 people, making it roughly 5,000 people total.

AN OLD ADVERSARY

The Sanhedrin, which was in constant opposition to Jesus, now convenes to oppose the work of the disciples. This council was made up of the Pharisees (right), Sadducees (left), and scribes (teachers of the law).

- Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, and the “high-priestly family” were also there.

“BY WHAT POWER OR IN WHAT NAME...?”

A better question couldn't have been asked to set Peter and John up to witness to the most powerful people in Jerusalem. In this moment, Peter “was filled with the Holy Spirit.”

- **If we walk with Jesus, the Holy Spirit will fill and enable us to face opposition in a manner that honors God.**

A SIMPLE MAN SPEAKS WITH ELOQUENT AUTHORITY

An uneducated fisherman not accustomed to public speaking formally addresses the council and “all of the people of Israel” about a “good deed” done in the name of Jesus Christ.

- Salvation, wisdom, and power only come from Jesus. **It is only by His provision that we are able to do anything of significance**

JESUS AS THE CORNERSTONE

Peter reiterates what he told the crowd the day before but adds in a crucial prophecy from Psalm 118:22.

- The cornerstone is the most fundamental part of a foundation. The religious leaders (builders) rejected Jesus, making their institution spiritually powerless.

“THERE IS SALVATION IN NO ONE ELSE...”

The trial wasn't about healing; it was about where the power and authority for it derived. It would have been easy to be vague and say, “God did it,” but they proclaimed the name of Jesus.

- **This is still the tension today. Who defines morality? Who is able to fix us? Who is in charge? There is only one path.**

COURAGE (ACTS 4:13–22) UNEDUCATED AND UNTRAINED?

Peter and John spoke with clarity and boldness. They had no formal education or training under the rabbis, but they had spent three and a half years under the instruction of Jesus.

- Education is great, but **fundamental wisdom and the way we are to live come from Christ's example and His Word.**

THE EVIDENCE WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF THEM

The Sanhedrin couldn't deny the miracle because the man stood right in front of them. **The question isn't about evidence but our willingness to see it and our humility to submit to a higher authority.**

- **“Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind” (C.S. Lewis).**

ACCEPTING JESUS MEANS I AM NOT IN CHARGE

Accepting Jesus means life changes. The Sanhedrin tried to prohibit Peter and John from “speak[ing] and teach[ing]... in the name of Jesus” because it would upend their control.

- **Many are lost and foolishly settle for chaos because they refuse to let the Bible steer them and let Jesus be in control.**

“WE ARE UNABLE TO STOP”

Not only did Peter and John **love Jesus more than anything**, but they **had witnessed His power** and knew that **He is the Creator and Judge** of mankind.

- We use tact and love, but **with this knowledge, how could anyone cower when they're told to suppress the truth?**

RELIGION AND POLITICS

One of the great downfalls of the Jewish religious leaders is that they allowed politics to infiltrate their religion.

- Peter and John were released because the people were “all giving glory to God.” The Sanhedrin wanted to harm them, but they had to appease the people.

THE HELPER (ACTS 4:23–31) REPORTING BACK TO THE CHURCH

Peter and John returned and “reported everything” to “their own people.” Though this was a victory, they immediately went back into prayer and asked for Jesus' help.

- They acknowledged God as Master and Creator. Knowing Jesus is the Master and Creator reminds us **He can do anything.**

HE IS AN INVOLVED CREATOR

It is one thing to acknowledge an intelligent designer but another to know His name. **To know Jesus is the Creator means we must accept His Word and instruction.**

- This shouldn't be scary because **God is engaged with and cares about His creation. He knows all and wants to lead us.**

WE HAVE BEEN TOLD ABOUT OPPOSITION

Luke quotes Psalm 2, about persecution from nonbelievers. This shows that God's people have, and always will, face persecution.

- Some will hate us because of our faith (Matthew 10). **We are not to look for or brag about opposition but to pray Jesus strengthens us to continue to do His work through it.**

PRAYING FOR “SIGNS AND WONDERS”?

If Jesus said, “an evil generation demands a sign,” why do the disciples pray for them here? Peter and John were praying that the gospel would be validated through miracles in the face of persecution.

- God still does miracles, but now we also have access to the Bible.

“THE PLACE...WAS SHAKEN”

There is no reason to believe this isn't literal because we will read about something similar in Acts 16 with Paul and Silas.

- Notice they were continually getting filled up with the Spirit. **It is only in continual relationship with Jesus that we can live and “speak the word of God boldly.”**

ONLY THROUGH JESUS

- **Jesus is the only name and pathway by which we can be saved, changed, empowered, and restored.**
- **Trust in and obedience to Jesus will enable us to live out the truth, not buckle to opposition, and have a meaningful existence that blesses others.**

PRIDE AND SELFISHNESS DESTROY

- The evidence of God and the practicality of His Word are evident, if we choose to see it.
- The problem is **many are unwilling to see the truth because they are too prideful to submit to a higher authority and too selfish to exchange their empty desires for the desires of Jesus.**

REMEMBERING WHAT IS ETERNAL

- Even in the face of opposition and the temptation to be selfish or prideful, we can remain strong if we will **put Jesus first, remember what He has done for us, and remember that He is Creator and Judge.**
- **The fear of a temporary world melts when we know and lean on an eternal Savior.**

CONTINUAL INFILLING

- **Jesus works in and through us when we are full of His Spirit.** We receive the Holy Spirit when we put our faith in Jesus (Eph. 1:13), but in order **to overflow, we must be in consistent prayer, study, and obedience.**
- **When we are full of God, He shakes things up and does amazing work in our lives.**

ARE WE CONTENT WITH SALVATION?

- Are we people satisfied with just avoiding Hell? Do we want more? Do we long to please Jesus and be a blessing to those around us? Have we let complacency and selfishness creep into our faith?