

The Witnessing Church

Acts 4:8-13

Acts 4:5-13

On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?”

Acts 4:5-13, cont.

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well.

Acts 4:5-13, cont.

This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Characteristics of the Early Church

- **The early church was not a withdrawn, apathetic, defeated people**
- **They were compassionate;**
- **Involved with the world;**
- **Confident and courageous.**

“My Witnesses”

- **“This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.” (Luke 24:46-47.)**
- **“And you also will bear witness” (John 15:27)**
- **“A witness with us of his resurrection” (Acts 1:22)**
- **“A witness of Christ’s sufferings” (1 Peter 5:1)**

The Witnessing Church

- **A Compassionate Church**
- **A Christ-centered Church**
- **A Courageous Church**

1. A Compassionate Church

- Love for one another
- “While we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8)
- Love for a lost world, lost people
- A beggar, crippled from birth – Peter and John looked straight at him.
- “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk,” (Acts 3:6).

Before the Sanhedrin

- **“Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well” (Acts 4:8-10).**

Christian Compassion

- **Christians ought to be a compassionate people.**
- **It was not because they “ought to” that Peter and John stopped. It was because love had changed their hearts and how they saw people.**
- **Love is a practical and not a theoretical matter. It starts with seeing people in a different light.**

2. A Christ-centered Witness

- Peter before the crowd on Solomon's Portico (Acts 3:12-26).**
- God in the name of Jesus healed the man.**
- Jesus was raised from the dead, and Jesus is "the holy and righteous One" and the "author of life."**
- "Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19-20)**

Before the Sanhedrin

- **“This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone (Ps. 118:22). And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:11-12).**
- **“Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation” (Isaiah 28:16).**

The Cross of Christ

- Moses and the serpent in the wilderness. (John 3:14-15 and Num. 21:8-9).
- Christ said, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die” (John 12:32-33).



The Christ-centered Church

- **“To know Christ and to make Him known.”**
- **Believes in the Biblical Christ**
- **Knows Christ personally through faith**
- **Abides in Christ**
- **Lives out the character and love of Christ**
- **Shares the biblical Christ in deed and word**

3. A Courageous Witness

- **“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).**
- **“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20).**

Christian Courageous Love

- True love is “patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful” (1 Cor. 13:4-5).
- That “we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way” (1 Tim. 2:2).
- In Acts the accusation against the ministry of Paul and Silas, that they had “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6).

The Witnessing Church

- **Our witness is to take on the character of Christ – to know Him – and to fulfill His mission – to make Him known.**
- **Courageous Christ-centered Compassion.**
- **God is making us people of compassion, people who love Christ and seek to be like Him in character and in mission, people who are courageous and committed to follow Christ.**