

The Aftermath of a Miracle – Acts 4:1-31

There is a very pessimistic saying that goes like this: “No good deed goes unpunished.” It basically says that even those who try and do good find that their deeds are not well received, and bad can come out of their good. At first glance this might be thought this describes the consequences for Peter and John after they reached out in faith and let Jesus work a miracle through them. One would think everyone would be excited and celebrating that a man born crippled now walked and praised God. But not all are happy. Not all understand. And Peter and John are arrested. Unfair? Not according to Peter and John! See how they respond in our lesson today!

Prison Bound

Text: Acts 4:1-4

1. Peter preached a powerful sermon after sign of the healing of the lame man. Crowds gathered in the temple courts to hear.
 - a. Who also joined the crowd according to verse 1?
 - b. Who is not listed as coming to hear Peter?
 - c. How did the Sadducees respond to the preaching of Peter (vs. 2)?
 - d. What bothered them most about his preaching? Why? (refer to Acts 23:8 for background)
2. How did the religious leaders respond to Peter’s great sermon (vs. 3)?
3. Did the arrest have any affect on the crowds (or the effect desired by the religious leaders)? Explain. (cf. vs. 4)
4. How big is the church in Jerusalem at this point (vs. 4)?

Can I Get a Witness?

Text: Acts 4:5-12

5. Who gathers to question Peter and John? What is significant about them? (vs. 5-6)
6. What is the question asked of Peter and John? (vs. 7) Why is this important?
7. What is the most important fact we learn in verse 8? Why?
8. According to verses 8-10, where we find Peter's defence, what is the most important fact that we need to know? Why?
9. Once again Peter drills home the fact that Jesus was crucified by men (though by God's purposes) and raised by God to life again. Why was the guilt of the crucifixion particularly true for the crowd Peter stood before that day?
10. What is the meaning and purpose of verse 11? (cf. Psalm 118:22-23, Isaiah 28:16, Matthew 21:33-34, 1 Peter 2:8)
11. Verse 12 is the conclusion of Peter's speech. What powerful message does he leave with the Jewish Council? Why might the Jewish Council object to this conclusion? What did they need to realize, a truth revealed to Peter (and all the disciples)?

Deliberation

Text: Acts 4:13-22

12. What three things did the religious leaders observe about Peter and John? (vs. 13) How do you imagine they recognized the third characteristic?
13. In verse 14, what is it that keeps the council quiet about the miracle?
14. What was the concern of the council? What was the problem? What was their solution? (vss. 15-17)
15. What were Peter and John told to do? (vs. 18) Despite the teaching of Paul in Romans 13:1-6, how do Peter and John respond? (cf. vs 19-20) What higher authority does Peter appeal to?
16. Verse 21 tells us they were set free, without further punishment. Why?
17. What important – if not amazing – fact do we learn in verse 22 about the man who was healed?

Believers Prayer

Text: Acts 4:23-31

18. Where did Peter and John go after they were released? (vs. 23)
19. What was the response of the group to the news about the arrest and threat? (cf. vs. 24)

20. What is the message of the first part of the prayer (vss. 24-28)?
21. What is the message of the second half of that prayer (vss. 29-30)? What might we expect they would be praying for?
22. What is God's response to their prayer in verse 31? Note that they were once again filled with the Spirit. What might this tell us about "walking in the Spirit"? (ie. Galatians 5:16)

Conclusion

"Boldness" seems to be a key thought in this chapter. See how the early believers received this boldness: they were filled with the Spirit (vv. 8 and 31), they prayed (v. 29), and they relied on the Word of God (vv. 25–28). You and I may have boldness in our walk and witness if we feed on the Word, pray, and surrender to the Spirit. We may have boldness on earth because Christ gives us boldness in heaven (Heb. 4:16)¹

¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Song: 290 Pentecostal Power

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). [*Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament*](#) (p. 287). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.