

**The First Persecution of the Church:
Lessons for Christian Service
Acts 04:01–22**

**1 *Peter and John arrested
and tried***

- a. For preaching (3:1f)
- b. By the leaders of the temple

**2 *They suffered abuse
because they preached
the resurrection***

- a. They were arrested
- b. They bore fruit:
5,000 converts

**3 *They credited Christ
with the power to heal
and to change lives***

- a. The Sanhedrin Court
- b. God equipped them
with the Holy Spirit
- c. They credited Christ
with the power
to make men well

1 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people.

2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.

3 They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day.

4 But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

5 The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem.

6 Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family.

7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them:
"By what power or what name did you do this?"

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them:
"Rulers and elders of the people!

9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed,

- 1) It was by the name of Jesus
- 2) It was Jesus
whom “you crucified”
- 3) It was Jesus
whom God raised
from the dead

**4 *They proclaimed
salvation in Christ alone***

- a. Christ is the Head
- b. Christ alone saves

**5 *They gave evidence
that they had been with Jesus***

- a. The clear evidence:
Courage and power
- b. The unequivocal evidence:
The healed man

6 *They suffered threats*

- a. The Court deliberated
- b. The Court threatened

10 Then know this,
you and all the people of Israel:
It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,
whom you crucified
but whom God raised from the dead,
that this man stands before you healed.

11 He is ‘the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the capstone.’

12 Salvation is found in no one else,
for there is no other name under heaven
given to men by which we must be saved.”

13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John
and realized that they were unschooled,
ordinary men,
they were astonished and they took note
that these men had been with Jesus.

14 But since they could see the man
who had been healed standing there with them,
there was nothing they could say.

15 So they ordered them
to withdraw from the Sanhedrin
and then conferred together.

16 “What are we going to do with these men?”
they asked.
“Everybody living in Jerusalem knows
they have done an outstanding miracle,
and we cannot deny it.

17 But to stop this thing
from spreading any further among the people,
we must warn these men
to speak no longer to anyone in this name.”

18 Then they called them in again
and commanded them not to speak
or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

7 *They refused to compromise their message*

- a. Defence 1:
God is to be obeyed before men
- b. Defence 2:
A man must testify to what he has seen and heard

8 *The result: All people praised God*

19 But Peter and John replied,
“Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God.

20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

21 After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened.

22 For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.