

Evangelism 101

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[0:00] Let's pray together. Father, we are unworthy to be in your presence. All of us are.

We should be condemned. And yet we go to your eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and we hide ourselves in Him because He is the one who stands in the gap for us.

So that with us, Father, You say that You are well pleased because we're united to the Lord Jesus Christ.

What kindness, what compassion, what great love. Thank You. Thank You. We bring to You our request.

We thank You that You hear us because of the Lord Jesus Christ. Right now we pray for Matthias and Janet Sandoval. Bless their marriage.

[1:13] It would display the gospel. Christ Jesus loving His bride, the church, loving leadership, Your bride, submitting to You in all things.

May their marriage exemplify this relationship. Give them fervent, devoted, passionate, enduring love for Your people since they've been born again through Your living and abiding Word.

And may Your Word be as vital to them as food and water. And Father, we take a moment thanking You for the mothers.

Pray for the older mothers. May they be sensible and prudent, teaching the younger ones to love their husbands and their children. Pray for the younger mothers.

They'll pour their lives to give their attention to their husbands first and foremost and then to their children. Precious times with their kids leaving a legacy.

[2:28] Lord God, keep these mothers solid in Your Word. Stable. Nurturing. And even at this time, we pray for Bob Scarborough as well.

Pray for him. Encourage him as he's in the hospital. May he know that You're great and awesome and mighty. Thank You for Mary Lou and how she stands by Him.

Bless her for that. We pray for the church as well. We pray for Summit Bible Church. We thank You for the ministry that Eric has poured into there at Summit Bible Church in Geno Valley.

Give them such confidence and assurance from Your Word as they profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and display fruits. And they know they have eternal life.

Father, keep them. Don't let the evil one touch them or upsurge them. Unite them under Your truth. Continue to give them understanding to know Your Son.

[3:33] And we specifically pray for Eric and that He love His wife Lori. His son Zach, Victoria, Paisley. And He shepherd His family.

Shepherd Your church. Give Him wisdom to the elders. And He preached the Word. I thank You for giving us a heart for the world.

For the peoples of this world who need to hear the Gospel. We pray specifically for Sudan and South Sudan. Country with so much war.

So many people have died. There's such disease, sickness, poverty, harsh government, slavery, Sharia law in the North. Fighting still in the South. Father, bring the truth of the Gospel.

which restores peace and hope in people because they have peace with You and they hope in You. Stop the violence and the corruption which happens when they respond to the Gospel.

[4:43] Bring about the pure Gospel truth. We pray for our brethren. May they endure persecution. We ask You protect them from being killed.

May they stay true to the Gospel. May they not compromise. Give them strength to remain

steadfast in You. Help them be courageous. They need solid discipleship, teaching and doctrine.

Unite them together in the Lord Jesus Christ. Give them trained pastors and teachers and doctrine and counseling. Father, we pray You would destroy the false teaching of Islam.

We pray specifically for the Nuba mountain people, the SPLA army, the youth, the thousands upon thousands of street children, the province of Defer, Beja, these different areas and people groups. Oh God, we pray that You would move much risk as it involves going to Sudan and South Sudan. According to Your plans, send more of us to both of these places.

[6:07] We may come alongside our brethren and encourage them and be ready to suffer for the Gospel. and for us who are here today, Father, give us more passion to proclaim the truth of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it is by His name we pray together. Amen. Please be seated. if you take your Bibles and go to Acts chapter 4.

Acts chapter 4. If you're visiting with us, that black Bible that's here in front of you, if you pull that out, go towards the back and find page 94.

Page 94. Acts 4 verses 1 through 12. That's what we're going to study this morning. Just trucking through, making our way through the book of Acts.

Acts chapter 4 verses 1 through 12. I'm going to read the passage and then we'll go into our study. Acts 4.

[7:38] And as they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

And they lay hands on them and put them in jail until the next day for it was already evening. But many of those who heard the message, the word, believed and the number of the men came to be about 5,000.

And it came about on the next day that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem and Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and all who were of high priestly descent.

And when they had placed them in the center, they inquired, by what power or in what name have you done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, rulers and elders of the people. If we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this one, this man stands here before you in good health.

[9:02] He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the very cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.

We have a little video up here for you. I want to show this to you. Maybe I want to get those lights, Travis. What's two plus two?

Four. I think it's seven. Am I wrong? Maybe. What do you mean maybe? I mean... What are you studying? Industrial engineering. What kind of an industrial engineer thinks two plus two might be seven?

I mean, it could be kind of abstract. I mean, you could have a different dimension. Maybe it's seven. This dimension? Then four. So I'd be wrong. I don't know.

All right. Here you go. I think Oprah Winfrey is the great goddess of the universe. Okay? You with me so far? Yeah. And if I say her name seven times right before I die, I'm going to live for eternity in her high-rise penthouse in Chicago enjoying a healthy diet with her personal trainer for all of eternity.

[10:40] That's what I believe. Am I wrong? No. How do you know? I mean, that's your perception of reality, so... Okay. Do you think I'm right? No. So you think I'm wrong?

No. So then you think I'm right? No. Then I must be wrong. No. They're... No, they're not. Suddenly I feel like a Catholic... Okay, so how...

You don't agree with me, though, correct? No. Why not? It's dopey. Well, I'm just saying your perception of reality is different than my perception of reality, so you can believe whatever you want about this universe and I can believe what I want.

They don't have to be the same... What's your first name, young man? Dan. Dan, nice to meet you. Now, I agree with you when it comes to art. We can interpret that if we want to, unless, of course, the author came along and said, no, I'll tell you exactly what it means and that's what it means based on the author's intentions, okay?

But when it comes to truth, it's not a personal preference. It is either true or it is not true. Correct? Well, in your perception of reality, sure.

[11:41] Okay, I'm going to ask you and it's maybe way out there. All right? Okay. Is this reality? Sure. In my perception of it. Are we even here for sure?

Maybe. Some people say we're just bobs of energy floating around in space. So I might not even be here. I might actually be just be somebody's imagination right now. Sure. You too? Yep. We just happen to be floating in somebody's imagination.

Potentially. Potentially. Okay. And you're sure about that? In one perception of reality, sure. All right. Dan, nice to meet you. Thank you very much. Okay, what do you plan on engineering someday?

What I plan on doing? Yeah. Getting a job in a bad economy. Yeah. But building anything in particular? Not anything in particular. Maybe consulting or...

Okay, nothing I might have to drive over or need a seatbelt on. All right, dude. Thanks for the chat. I appreciate it very much. What you just heard from Dan is the predominant mindset these days.

[12:37] It's called post-modernism. All truth is valid truth. Now, with art, maybe, depending on what the author's intent is, but when it comes to truth, you don't have a preference.

It either is or it isn't. Welcome to the 21st century. There you go. So, how do you respond to somebody like this?

How do you speak about the Lord Jesus Christ to people like this when they have this mentality?

What do we say to people like this? I mean, can we say anything? If so, what?

Well, whether it's people like Dan or whether it's a Muslim who lives across the street from you or it's one of these religious leaders that we have in our text today, Peter takes us to the school of evangelism in our passage.

That's what he does. We back up. Oh, great. Thank you, Tommy, for doing that. So, today, what we're going to say, just do it. This is what Acts is all about. Just do it. Be who you are. Let God use you to fulfill His mission.

[13:48] Today, evangelism 101. Maybe you have kids or grandkids that are just going into college. This is, you know, the beginning type classes, communications 100, communications 101.

This is evangelism 101. How do you talk to somebody about the gospel? What are the basic elements when we give someone the gospel?

This is what we're going to see today in Acts chapter 4 verses 1 through 12. Evangelism 101. Here is the first confrontation with the Jewish leaders and the first persecution of Christians.

It comes here. Peter's going to make the point, he's going to say, you guys killed Jesus but God exalted him or he's going to say, here's God's Messiah, you've rejected him but there is no other way to be reconciled to God.

And once again, Peter is going to deflect attention off himself back onto Jesus to the Lord Jesus Christ who was resurrected from the dead and through whom all the blessings of salvation come.

[15:04] They only come through Jesus. So allegiance to the resurrected glorified Jesus is what makes one part of God's people the new community.

this is the only way to do this. It's the only way to be saved. And Peter's going to show us how you bring people to that point. How do you do that?

So what are the basic elements when we give people the gospel? Now, first though, before we look at that, we have to be prepared.

Be prepared. Be prepared. As you are going to talk to somebody about the gospel, as you are going to do evangelism, as you are going to speak to people about the good news of Jesus, you must first be prepared for these five elements.

Be prepared. Be prepared first. Number one, people will attack you. Verse one, people will attack you.

[16:09] As they were still speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, the Sadducees, came upon them.

So while he was still speaking, that is Peter, it goes back to chapter 3, he had this second sermon that Peter gave us. So there's more there than was recorded. He was saying all these different things.

A reaction was triggered. A nuclear reaction took place. Priests, the captain of the temple, the Sadducees, confronted the two apostles.

That's what the word means. The idea of the word is that the leaders were asserting their authority. It wasn't just skipping along saying hi. It wasn't doing that. They came upon them strongly. They came upon them asserting their authority. They confronted them head on. Priests, there's one group.

[17:13] Notice, the captain of the temple. This guy was in charge of the temple police department. He was a member of the high priestly family.

The number two man in the temple. He was part of the elite. He officiated over the daily whole offerings. His job was to keep the peace and not allow any kind of messianic stuff to upset Rome. By the way, he probably was the one or at least him and some other guys were probably the ones who arrested Jesus himself. And then the Sadducees, the third group.

The aristocratic group of the lay nobility who were these guys? They had a materialistic world view. They cooperated with Rome to keep their status.

They weren't so concerned with laws or piety. They denied the resurrection. So that's just out the window. That's not going to happen. They believed the soul died with the body.

[18:27] There's a strong emphasis upon the Torah within the Old Testament. They blew off the rest of the Old Testament from Joshua on. So here's these guys confronting, strongly asserting their authority and from their perspective the apostles potentially presented a political, social, and religious threat to their good relationship with Rome.

They wanted to keep their position. They wanted to keep the bling bling flowing. They guarded their right to teach the people. It was their right to teach the people.

It was their right to oversee what was going on in the worship of the temple. Not these clowns as far as they were concerned. So friends, be prepared.

Be prepared. when we come to people with the good news, they will attack us to confront us because they are antagonistic to the truth.

People are open to everything and anything but the truth. I mean, you heard it from Dan. I mean, it's like talking to a wall.

[19:41] But even more so with Dan, you'll find that people are going to be very attacking. They'll confront you. They'll assert things against you. Be prepared as you're going to do evangelism. Number one, they'll attack you.

Number two, people will hate you. People will hate you. Being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

They were greatly annoyed, disturbed, vexed. They were unable to put up with these guys anymore. they riled over two things.

First, teaching, even proclaiming, Jesus. And then teaching about the resurrection that is the resurrection of Jesus. Now, some might say the resurrection will take place when Jesus returns. Whichever the case, they were not happy. they were irritated. Maybe what irritated them the most was because they were the ones that killed Jesus.

[20:50] I mean, speaking about the resurrection of someone of this stature, what stature? A servant Messiah, a prophet like, like, like Moses, and yet greater? Oh, that's, I mean, that's going to make them very nervous.

I mean, these clowns are teaching. It's going to upset our authority that we have with Rome. We are the teachers of the people.

We are the ones that have control, not you. And they hated that. They were disturbed, vexed, angry. Friends, people will not be able to stand listening to you speak about Jesus.

They don't want to hear it. They won't want to hear it. They will avoid you. They will hate you. They will attack you.

Obviously, these are the ones Peter spoke about from last week. The ones that would not heed that prophet. They are going to face serious consequences. People need eyes and ears to see and hear the truth, don't they?

[22:02] They do. So be prepared. People will attack you. Second, people will hate you. Third, people will silence you. Or at least they will try.

So what do they do? Priests, temple, guard, captain of the guard, temple guard, and the Sadducees? They laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day for it was already evening.

Greatly annoyed, they confronted them and arrested them on the spot. They didn't punish them, but they kept them in custody. It was already late. They went into mourning to have a hearing to judge them.

hoping to shut them down and keep them quiet. They strongly confronted and arrested them. They wanted to stop them from speaking about the truth of Jesus.

Friends, don't be shocked if people do whatever they can to try and silence and shut you down. Be prepared.

[23:09] When you're going to talk to people about the good news of Jesus, be prepared. They may attack you. They'll hate you. They'll try and silence you.

Number four, they'll intimidate you. People will intimidate you. Verse 5.

Came about on the next day that their rulers and elders, scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem. Annas, high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander. Look at this. It's getting a little bit more intense now.

All of the high priestly descent, all of those of high priestly descent were present. The leaders, who were these guys, the religious figures, the senior priests, they were the ones responsible for Jesus' death.

The elders, the civic leaders, the chief heads of the families, the scribes, those who studied and interpreted the law. And then he names off specific guys.

[24:20] Annas. He was high priest from AD 6 to AD 14. He was actually the high priest, but he was deposed. Caiaphas. They kicked them out, the Romans.

Which was invalid because once you're a high priest, you're a high priest for life. So that's why Luke says he's the high priest. When he actually wasn't the high priest, it was Caiaphas who was the high priest. But Caiaphas was the son-in-law.

And it still has some power there. Caiaphas was high priest from AD 18 to 36. Next up, John.

Possibly the one who replaced Caiaphas in AD 37.

And then names off here Alexander. We don't know who this guy is. But, these are the official top-notch, top dogs of Judaism.

These were the guys in Jerusalem. They were present to render judgment upon Peter and John. What are we going to do with them? So here are these 11 groups or individuals who were against the apostles, against Christianity.

[25:31] Now, what's the significance of this? Why does Luke name them off here? To show the weight they were standing before. These are the guys that they were standing before these guys.

But also, to show this is the same court that tried and condemned Jesus. It's the same guy. The same ones. Friends, look, people will try to do anything they can to intimidate you.

They'll mock you. They'll make fun of you. They'll be obnoxious, rude. Stand firm. Stand firm. Stand firm. One of the main reasons why we're afraid to proclaim the gospel is because the world intimidates us.

Let us stand strong to speak. The world thinks they can stop us by threats, force, attacking, hating you, despising you, trying to silence you, use force, prison, even pain, or death.

But they cannot. They cannot do that because God is bigger than them. This is what they'll try to do. Be prepared. And then the last thing that they'll try to do, number five, people will bully you.

[26:59] People will bully you. Verse seven. When they placed them in the center. So here you see the intimidating group and the idea is that there was a U-shape like this and guess where Peter and John were?

Right there. So they're all just looking at them to intimidate them in the semicircle in the midst of them and then they bullied them by asking them the question, by what power or what name have you done this?

We didn't give you this authority. So who did? What sort of authority are you doing this stuff? Who told you you could do that?

Who told you guys you could say these things about the resurrection of the dead? Specifically resurrection of Jesus. Who told you you could heal that guy?

I'm sorry I didn't know I had to ask for permission to heal somebody. If somebody's sick I want to help them. The Greek is put like this.

[28:20] What power or authority gave this right to you? In other words this authority is ours to give and it's ours to withhold.

Who do you think you are? Who do you think you are? That's what they're doing. They bully them. They bully them trying to put them down. We're in charge not you. Interesting. That question brings to mind what Peter said in chapter 3 verse 12. Peter says it wasn't from us.

It wasn't from our power. It was from the power of the Lord Jesus. It actually reminds us of what they asked Jesus. Remember that?

They actually asked Jesus the same question. Luke chapter 20 verse 12 chapter 20 verse 2 But what authority are you doing these things? They asked Jesus the same thing. So in court they wanted to publicly expose the apostles theology says to provide grounds for accusing them of blasphemy.

[29 : 37] They're more concerned about their power and reputation than justice. They're more concerned about justice. They're concerned about themselves. That's why they attacked them hated them they tried to silence them and then they intimidated them and then they're bullying them.

Be prepared. When you're going to give someone the good news you're going to talk to someone about the gospel that's not going to always happen and not all those things will happen all at once. But be prepared it could. It may. It should happen. We give people the gospel the enemy will come against us by people attacking, hating, silencing, intimidating, bullying us.

okay, so then what are the basic elements of the gospel then? What do we need to be prepared with? Now there's probably other things we can do but from our passage this is what we can come up with.

I'll give you five. Corresponding with the five points that we looked at, this is what they will do to you. They'll attack, hate, silence, intimidate, and bully you.

[30 : 46] These are the five basic elements for when we're going to give people the gospel. Number one, lean on the Spirit. First and foremost, lean on the Spirit.

Verse 8, Peter, fill with the Holy Spirit, said to the rulers and elders of the people, fill, play me. It means to be dominated, to be controlled, to be under the influence of, that's what that means. We know from previous parts in Acts, Acts chapter 1, Acts chapter 2, the word was used again. And it was used to display that it's from the Spirit, comes from the Spirit to perform and accomplish a certain task.

Peter was enabled and empowered by the Spirit to speak. we must lean upon the Spirit. He will enable you and he will empower you to speak. Lean on the Spirit.

[31 : 59] Trust in the Spirit. Let the Holy Spirit dominate you what you're going to say. And he will give you the grace to accomplish the task that he wants you to do.

So first and foremost, if there's anything that you want to do first, when you're going to talk to people about the good news of Jesus, first, lean upon the Spirit. Let him dominate you.

Let him control you. And the words will come out. Even though blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, you feel like blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Lean upon the Spirit, God's Spirit will move.

Number two, confront their intolerance. Peter spoke politely, respectfully, but firmly.

rulers and elders of the people. If we're on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, how this man has been made well, stop there. It's almost like he became the one judging them.

[33 : 04] He put them on the spot. If we're being examined, that's what it means to be put on trial, that's what the word means. If we're being examined or judged for a good deed done to this sick man, he's going to take the opportunity to proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ, but first, he confronts the fact that they are intolerant of something that's good.

It's almost like this, you're going to tell me that we're being judged, examined, on trial, legal implications for this. We've just been put in jail for this.

You mean to tell me we're being judged for making whole or healthy a sick man or a weak man?

Notice, drop down the end of verse 10, this man stands here before you in good health.

That's what the word means, be made whole, be made complete, be made healthy. We're on trial for this? A benefit, a good deed done to him?

A beneficial service, which should be rewarded, it should be well received, and yet you're judging us for this? Why should it be made the subject of judicial questioning?

[34 : 31] Why are we here? doing this good deed to this man? So what does it mean when we're talking to people about the gospel? Confront their intolerance, confront them with the fact that we're

not doing, we're doing a good thing, we're not doing anything evil.

What am I doing wrong? Tell me. I mean, if there's any place in this whole world that I can speak the gospel with freedom, it's here in this country, and they say you are intolerant, don't they?

Confront that. What am I doing that's wrong? I'm just speaking a message of truth. I'm just giving you the gospel. Don't you want forgiveness? Confront them with that.

Lean upon the spirit, confront their intolerance, and then, the big part, proclaim the Lord Jesus.

Proclaim the Lord Jesus, notice he starts there in verse 10, let it be known to all of you, to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this one, this man stands here before you in good health.

[35:50] It was none other than Jesus Christ and Nazarene, that this man, and I actually want to jump right back up to verse 9, where he says, this man has been made well, the actual Greek term is saved.

This man has been saved. Let it be made known to you, this is how this happened, is through Jesus Christ. This man has been saved, delivered, by Jesus Christ physically.

But yet, remember, we talked about this last week and the week before that, when Peter healed this man, the healing symbolized spiritual deliverance. Yes, the verb refers to physical healing in a physical sense, but mostly it refers, when it says the word sozo, the Greek term sozo, which means saved, it refers to being rescued from God's judgment.

To enjoying God's rule in the age of his servant Messiah, has spiritual connotations to it. So in other words, when Peter and John healed this lame man, they transformed his life, I mean his whole life changed, right?

That is a parable, or that is a picture of what God does to individuals. God transforms sinners, saving them by Jesus. That's what he does. What happened to this lame man, it points to what God does in the heart.

[37:23] What happened to this lame man is what God does to sinners, he transforms them, he changes their lives. That's why Peter says, this man has been saved. Christ.

So we proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ, and notice the different elements that he's proclaiming about the Lord Jesus Christ. First, Peter mentions, and we must proclaim that Jesus died.

Jesus was crucified on behalf of sinners. We tell them that God showed his great love and kindness to sinners in the life, death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus while also upholding his justice.

I mean, how can God still be just and yet give forgiveness to sinners? How can he do that? God just can't say, oh, that's okay.

He doesn't do that. He can't do that. There must be a penalty, there must be a consequence for what we do wrong. You just can't just go off scot-free. Well, that's what happened in Jesus.

[38:30] Jesus, on Jesus, God poured out all his anger on sin. He was a substitute so God could still uphold his justice and yet at the same time show his love.

God could uphold that he's a righteous God and yet at the same time show that he's compassionate and gracious. We tell them that. Tell them that. Tell them that he died and tell them that they were the ones that killed him.

What do you mean? Well, wait, the Jewish leaders, they were the ones that really killed Jesus. Yes, that's true because notice what Peter says, whom you crucified, you leaders killed him.

That's courage. You're the same guys who killed Jesus. You did it. That takes a lot of courage.

You know, it takes a lot of courage to tell people, you know what, it was your sin. You're a sinner.

You're evil. Peter proclaimed the Lord Jesus Christ and indicted the leaders for killing him.

[39:45] Friends, we tell people that their sin sent Jesus to the cross. They are guilty of killing the very Son of God. They are guilty of killing Messiah. It's you.

Your sin. somebody had to pay the price. You put them there. We proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ. We proclaim that he died. We proclaim that they killed him. And then we proclaim that he was raised. Whom God raised from the dead.

Though you crucified him, God vindicated him, the Lord Jesus Christ, by raising him from the dead. Look, you're culpable for his death, but God raised him back to life.

And that's how this man was saved. That's how this man was healed. The only way this man could have been healed was through the resurrected Jesus. The only way. The only way that God could do this is because Jesus has resurrected from the dead.

[40:55] That's Peter's point. That's his whole point. Even back in chapter 2, the reason why God is still working is because Jesus has been resurrected. He's been exalted. And then he's still doing things through the apostles now.

Which actually leads to the next point. We tell them that he died. We tell them that they killed him. We tell them that he was raised. And then also we tell them that he is the good God. Because he says here in the end of verse 10, by this one, this man stands here before you in good health. The fact that God raised Jesus from the dead proves that he was, he is indeed God incarnate the God man. This healing was the work of God's chosen Messiah. And since the lame man was healed, Jesus is alive. It's only by the power of God that he was healed. So we tell them that God is gracious and kind to sinners only through the Lord Jesus Christ. He's so good. And he's good by the very words we're speaking to them. God is giving them the opportunity to repent and trust in him. God is so good.

[42:16] He doesn't need to be. He doesn't need to do this for them. But he's so good to the very words that I'm speaking to and I'm speaking to in the gospel. God is showing his goodness to you because I am the instrument by which God could save you if you repent and trust in Jesus.

Do you get that? So as we're speaking the very words of the gospel to them, God is using us. We are the ones, we're doing it, we're accomplishing the mission that God has for us, we're speaking the gospel and the very words of the gospel are giving them an opportunity to respond and God's showing his goodness in that way to them.

When he doesn't need to, that's what he's doing. So we tell them that. We tell them God is showing his goodness. I actually tried that with that guy James that we met in Jerome.

So all these things are trying to put these things into practice. I'm preaching this, I've got to do it, right? I mean, come on. So I'm trying to tell him about these things. It was neat. He kind of stopped. Oh yeah, he was thinking about it.

It's like, great, praise God. I mean, the spirit's going to get a hold of his heart and save this guy. And then verse 11 kind of sums up the whole truth about Jesus.

[43:31] He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the very cornerstone. I mean, this sums up, I mean, there's a lot there that we can talk about. I'll give you the gist of it.

Though they scorned Jesus, it was God's divine plan for them to do what they still did and yet still be culpable. Jesus' rejection and his vindication, it was prophesied in the Old Testament.

And then what Peter does, he quotes Psalm 118 verse 22. There's no surprises for God. He planned this. Now, let's take this, let's talk about this for a moment.

The fact that God planned this for Jesus, okay? We looked at this last week. That God planned this sin to take place upon his son.

God decrees or plans or purposes evil. That's what he did with this, with his son. But he does it in such a way that he is neither the author of sin, nor has fellowship with it, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away but rather established.

[44:48] That's from the Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. It says later, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things and power and faithfulness in accomplishing his decree.

That's what God does. That's what he did here with his son. So in spite of their opposition, to Jesus, God accomplished his purposes through Jesus by having him killed and also by raising him from the dead.

He's alive and he's working. Look at the lame man. Interesting too, when Peter quotes the song, the original context in that song, the enemy would have been the opposing nations.

But there's an ironic twist here. the leaders, who were the builders, they rejected the stone.

They were the ones that opposed the stone. And the stone was a, it was a very one that God lifted up, God elevated the stone, and the stone is Jesus. Interesting how those closest to that stone, they failed to know and appreciate its high value.

[46:07] that's the irony. A temple which was being built as God's people, with whom he'd be present with them, it was totally rejected by those who would be God's people.

In other words, not all Israel was true Israel. They might have been part of the nation, but they weren't true Israel. The one whom they scorned, God made the key component to his building.

Or, what's called the cornerstone. The cornerstone, that was the main oversized stone at the base, it holds up the two intersecting walls. This cornerstone was vitally important to the building. It'd be like for today, for us, we do a foundation with rebar and all that stuff. You have to have a good foundation. You have to have that. Or else, your house ain't gonna stand. Upon this cornerstone, the structure rises or falls.

And as one writer puts it, quote, what they rejected, God vindicated. So, Jesus, the despised stone who was scorned, rejected by the leaders of God's people, he was exalted by God to highest honors.

[47 : 33] Jesus is the one, the one and only key individual who will restore Israel and bring about the new creation of this entire universe. That summed up in just that one verse.

So that's what we tell people. We proclaim the fact that who Jesus is, he died, you killed him, he was raised, right?

We speak about that, God exalted him, we speak about that, and we tell them he's a good God, he brings forgiveness of sins. So we tell them God is like this, he's opened up to you, he's gonna give you forgiveness and mercy, God is opened up to you.

number four, uphold Jesus exclusivity. Uphold Jesus exclusivity.

Here was Peter's concluding argument, verse 12, for salvation and no one else. Salvation is found in no one else.

[48 : 43] Where else can one turn for salvation? Nowhere! Salvation can come through no other means and no other name can one be saved.

Isn't this amazing that Peter offered hope to the very ones who killed Jesus? So here he is, he's opening up and he's saying, you can have salvation in no one else, it's only in Jesus Christ, that's it. Now remember, this whole healing of the layman, it's a picture of salvation, it's a picture of what the Lord Jesus does for sinners who come to him in faith, who repent and turn to God through Jesus, and Peter saying, that's the only way you can be saved.

This meant the Jewish leaders, and anyone else for that matter, could not remain where they were in relation to God. It needed to change.

And Jesus is, as one writer puts it, quote, the inescapable decision point, end quote. I mean, think about it. Peter's, Peter's talking, proclaiming to all these guys of high priesthood descent.

[50 : 08] He's telling them, you guys need to change your relationship with Jesus, or relationship with God through Jesus. If they needed to repent, what does that say about us?

If they were the ones that were close to God, what does that say about us? Friends, if there is any verse in the Bible that is the crux of our faith, it's here.

Look, there's no pluralism, there can be no syncretism, there can be no relativism, there can be no statement that says all roads lead to God. That is totally and entirely impossible.

One writer says this, quote, there's no one else at all other than Jesus who has the means to provide salvation, even for Jews who have access to God's revelation, end quote.

Remember, these were the big wigs, the head honchos, the top bananas of Judaism, the big kahunas, this is where they were.

[51 : 25] And he's telling them, for there's no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved. Ah, literally, by which it is necessary to be saved.

Guess which word Luke uses here. Dei, D-E-I, delta epsilon iota. It is necessary, it must happen, there is no other way, there is no other person or God to turn, it's only in the Lord Jesus Christ, he's the only Savior, no other person can claim to be the Savior that Jesus is.

He's the one and only. Which person proclaimed themselves to be God? Buddha didn't do that.

No one in Hinduism did that. Taoism, Mohammed didn't do that. Name the religion that's ever been that proclaimed themselves to be the one and only true God.

either Jesus is what he says or he's an absolute nutcase. Jesus is totally and unique, excuse me, totally and utterly unique when it comes to salvation, particularly forgiveness of sins and having a right relation with God.

[52 : 50] Peter was a straight shooter, no holds barred. Peter was exclusive and universal in the statement. Only Jesus saves.

That's what we tell them. Since Jesus has accomplished God's plan of salvation, he's now exalted in heaven, everyone must now turn away from their sin and put their trust in Jesus.

There's no ifs, ands, or buts. It's only Jesus. It's only Jesus. Look, are you here today?

And not a follower of Jesus. This verse is explicitly for you. You need to understand that Jesus is the only way you can have forgiveness of sins and be delivered from the judgment to come upon all humanity by Jesus.

He will come to judge the living and the dead. He is the standard of what's right and wrong. All will be condemned, all will be damned, unless one turns to Jesus in faith.

[54:02] Repent and turn to God through Jesus. If you're here today and you don't know Jesus, do that. You must understand what I'm saying. You must act now. Don't wait.

You can't afford to wait. You have no guarantee what's going to happen to you outside this door. forever. If you want forgiveness, if you want the gift of the Spirit, if you want to be satisfied in this life and in the life to come, then come to Jesus and you'll find forgiveness of sins.

You'll be given the Spirit. You'll find satisfaction in this life that you've never had before. Christian, we must proclaim the exclusivity of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Look, you do that, people will hate you. They'll hate you for it. They'll persecute you for it. They'll mock you for it. They'll deride you for it.

They'll be vehemently opposed you for it. But the passage is crystal clear, isn't it? I mean, you can't say, well, that's your interpretation. What interpretation, what more interpretation do you want from this?

[55:13] It's very clear. There is salvation in no one else. There is no other name under heaven that's been given among men by which we must be saved.

Nor the name under heaven, that's everybody, given among men, all humanity by which we must be saved. There's no other way.

May the Lord Jesus Christ give us as his people the grace to challenge opposition with a consistent biblical message and not to modify the message in any way, especially to avoid persecution.

Look, in our relativistic, multi-faith, or interfaith, pluralistic society, they find this truth regarding Jesus Christ totally repulsive, vile, offensive.

You mean to tell me I can't save myself? There's not other ways to God? Right. They'll accuse you, you're narrow, you're exclusive, you're intolerant.

[56:35] You say, no, God is. I'm just a messenger. may God give us grace to put our reputations on the line as well as the relationships we have with these people.

You've got to be ready to put them on the line, friends. This is honest evangelism. Jesus is the only way.

And yet he's open, he's like this, he's open arms to anybody and everybody, anybody can come to him. But you must understand that he's the only way. You can't go to anybody else.

So, we must lean upon the Spirit, confront their intolerance, proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ, uphold that Jesus is exclusive, because he's the only way.

But there's one more. There's one verse we haven't looked at. Trust God's will, verse 4. Trust God's will, verse 4. But many of those who had heard the word, believed.

[57:47] And a number of the men came to be about 5,000. Despite what the religious leaders did to the apostles, despite what they were doing, arresting them, many of those who heard the word believed, in other words, they became Christians.

Followers of Jesus. 5,000. Wow, that's amazing. Now, is this, it says men, is this men and women? I take it to refer to both in general. So, both men and women. But look, you have 5,000 people coming to Christ here, and then 3,000 in chapter 2.

So you're talking like almost 10,000 people already. Interesting, too, how the early church grew through the public preaching of God's word, the public preaching in the synagogues, and the believers, how they were caring for each other, love and concern and fellowship toward each other, as Christians.

just as a little side note here, these are important elements we need to have. In our local church, we want to see true, good, solid, numerical growth, publicly proclaim the gospel, connecting with unsaved in their various venues, and people seeing us care and love each other in an intimate way.

[59:14] That's how we will actually grow. now, 5,000 people, wow, I don't know, that's a lot of people. I don't think that's bad for us, but I would just love if God would save five people, wouldn't you?

And I mean true, unsaved people who actually and truly became followers of Jesus, here in Cottonwood, just five people. Trust God's will.

Trust, God's will, that God is going to do what He's going to do, you just be faithful. You just be faithful. You just proclaim the gospel.

You lean upon the Spirit, you confront that intolerance and then proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ, He died, they killed Him, He was raised, He's a good God, He brings forgiveness of sins, you tell them that Jesus is the only way, and then you trust God.

We pray and trust God to do the work, right? And pray if you would. Pray that God would save four to eight people in Jerome.

[60 : 26] And eventually we'll see 20 to 25 followers of Jesus in Jerome, we'll see a small, viable church birthed there in Jerome. in what seems to be a God forsaken town.

But God has His elect people, doesn't He? Right? God has His elect people. He calls us to proclaim. Are you going to proclaim, Christian? Remember Cottonwood Bible Church, are you going to do that?

Are you going to proclaim? Are you going to take this seriously? Evangelism 101, there you go.

Let's take a few moments. Let's ponder what we've seen in God's Word here in Acts chapter 4 verses 1 through 12.

Let's think through this. We'll have a few moments of silence for you to think and ponder. And we'll do our time of giving and sing our last two songs with our closing prayer.

Let's ponder what we've seen in His truth. minutes on and allow you more