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## Study 4

### Prison and Pentecost

*Matthew 26 verse 56 tells us that at the time of Jesus' arrest 'all the disciples deserted him and fled.' In the book of Acts we see a very different side of Peter and the other Apostles.*

#### Acts 2

<sup>1</sup>When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. <sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

<sup>7</sup>Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" <sup>8</sup>Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?

<sup>12</sup>And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" <sup>13</sup>But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine."

<sup>14</sup>But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. <sup>15</sup>For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. <sup>16</sup>But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel.

<sup>22</sup>"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—<sup>23</sup> this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. <sup>24</sup>God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

<sup>32</sup>This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.

<sup>36</sup>"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

<sup>37</sup>Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" <sup>38</sup>And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup>For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." <sup>40</sup>And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."

<sup>41</sup> So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Q1 What happened in Acts 2 :1-4?

Q2 What was the immediate result of the Holy Spirit filling them?

Q3 How does a person come to receive the Holy Spirit today?

Q4 Why do you think we don't have the same physical manifestations when the Holy Spirit fills us today?

Q5 After receiving the Holy Spirit, what change was visible from Peter's behaviour?

Q6 What caused the people to be 'cut to the heart'?

Q7 When we realise we have displeased God, how do we need to respond?

### **Acts 3**

<sup>1</sup>One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. <sup>2</sup>Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. <sup>3</sup>When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. <sup>4</sup>Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" <sup>5</sup>So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

<sup>6</sup>Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." <sup>7</sup>Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. <sup>8</sup>He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. <sup>9</sup>When all the people saw him walking and praising God, <sup>10</sup>they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

<sup>11</sup>While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. <sup>12</sup>When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? <sup>13</sup>The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has

glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. <sup>14</sup> You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. <sup>15</sup> You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. <sup>16</sup> By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

Q8 How was Peter able to heal the crippled man? Who received the praise for his action?

Q9 How did Peter use this one physical healing as an opportunity for spiritual healing for many?

Q10 What can we do to make sure God receives the glory for the times when we are able to help others?

#### **Acts 4**

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. <sup>3</sup>They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. <sup>4</sup>But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

<sup>5</sup>The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup>Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family. <sup>7</sup>They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

<sup>8</sup>Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! <sup>9</sup>If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>He is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone."<sup>12</sup> Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

<sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. <sup>15</sup>So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. <sup>16</sup>"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. <sup>17</sup>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.”

<sup>18</sup> Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup> But Peter and John replied, “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. <sup>20</sup> For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

<sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

*Note: The Sadducees were a group within the Jewish faith who didn’t believe in resurrection after death.*

Q11 What was it about Peter’s teaching that disturbed the Sadducees and the temple guard?

Q12 What happened to Peter and John? What was the result of Peter’s teaching?

Q13 Peter had previously denied Jesus, in a courtyard, in front of servants. How does he respond when he is brought in front of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling body, which condemned Jesus to death? What has made the difference?

Q14 Why were the Jewish rulers astonished at Peter’s answers, and what did they take note of?

Q15 How does this encourage us in our witness for Jesus?

Q16 Although the Sanhedrin recognised that Peter and John had performed an outstanding miracle, what was their reaction? What did they command Peter and John?

Q17 How did Peter and John respond?

Q18 In what sort of situations do we need obey God’s laws rather human laws?

*When Jesus first met Peter, he looked at him with all his imperfections and called him a rock. When Jesus looks on each of us he sees us the way God has created us to be, the way we will be in heaven. After being filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter became the rock that Jesus had named him. Our belief in the resurrection depends on the witnesses who were changed from doubters to believers by their personal experience. Our confidence in the face of death is based on the first hand testimony of these men. Praise God.*