

**Sunday, September 28, 2025**  
**Sierra Vista Community Church, Las Cruces, NM**  
**Acts Sermon Series: Pray Send Go**  
**Follow God, Not Man, Acts 4:13-22**

**Stand & Read**—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. “Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. 17 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them 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. 19 But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! 20 As for us, 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.

**Pray**

**1. God Uses the Ordinary to Accomplish the Extraordinary—Verses 13-15**

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.

- A. Some of the best theologians are not seminary trained, but they are Jesus trained.
- B. Even the best intentions that come out the mouth of seminary trained theologians can’t compare to a theologian of Jesus.
- C. The heart is where it’s at. Heart theology beats brain theology anytime, anyplace, anywhere.
- D. There is a dynamic that takes place in a person’s heart when they believe in a real Jesus, not just a Jesus on paper. Knowing about Jesus and truly knowing Jesus are miles apart.
- E. If I stand up here and give you facts and figures without a true heart transformation, you will leave here with facts and figures. I like facts and figures. We need them.
- F. It’s what we do with those facts and figures that make the difference. I want to teach you what
- G. I have experienced in Christ. I want you to believe that if Jesus can change anyone, He can change me.
- H. That is the true Jesus theology.

- I. **Verse 13**—Peter and John had the courage to act upon what they believed.
- J. And because they did, people noticed. Our text says they were astonished. Your version may say they were amazed.
- K. They saw men who had been with Jesus! These men were uneducated, untrained, and had 0 seminary training.
- L. But because they had been with Jesus, people started to take notice.
- M. I think that it blew people away. I think it really scared them. I think it messed with their minds, because they had been told all their lives that only certain men had the power to speak about God in a personal way.
- N. Here was Peter and John telling this lame man to walk. And not just to walk but to walk in the power of Jesus name.
- O. Think about that statement for a minute. Let it marinate for just a little bit. Walk in the power of Jesus name, a literal command with huge spiritual implications.
- P. If I said to you today to walk in the power of Jesus name, you would understand that I meant for you to live your life under the power of the Holy Spirit and do everything in relationship to Jesus.
- Q. This man was being told to literally walk in the power of Jesus name. He had to believe that it was possible.
- R. I am not asking you to literally walk in the power of Jesus name. I am asking you to spiritual walk in the power of Jesus name, which is much more difficult than a literal healing.
- S. You know why? Because most of us walk in our name each and every day. We walk according to our ways, and our wants.
- T. Peter and John were asking a man to get up from out of his problems and make Jesus the way to in which he would go.
- U. We are to get out from underneath the problems in our life and walk in the power of Jesus name!
- V. **Verse 14**—When Jesus is evident, no one can deny His power.
- W. The text says they had nothing to say. They were astonished at what they saw.
- X. Are people astonished when they see you? Do they see Jesus in you?
- Y. **Verse 15**—The Sadducees and Pharisees could not get past Peter and John's uneducated upbringing and because wanted to protect their own agenda and their view own of their own God.
- Z. So, they retreated to go and make a plan about what to do with John and Peter.

**Application**—Are you concerned about your plans? Do you know what God's plans are for your life? I say like Peter said, walk in the power of Jesus name so you get in tune with Holy Spirit in order to live out His plans for you!

## **2. When You Follow God, Questions Will Arise—Verses 16-17**

16 "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. 17 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

- A. **Verse 16**—What will we do with these men?
- B. Remember they are perplexed about the situation. The healing has really thrown these leaders for a loop.
- C. They are dazed and confused to put it into today's words.
- D. They really have a huge dilemma as they go on to say in verse **16, everybody saw what happened and there is no denying it.**
- E. I want to interject right here and say this. Even when we see Jesus at work, we too can become confused, especially when we believe we have our plans already worked out.
- F. Along comes Jesus, and destroys all that we know and all that we had been believing in. It happens.
- G. So, we too should say we can't deny what God is doing, so let's join Him in His work!
- H. **Verse 17**—Now the leaders can't think of anything else. They don't have a conviction for their belief system.
- I. So, what do they do? They try and shut up Peter and John.
- J. They understand that if they allow Peter and John to continue peeking about Jesus, there could be an uprising. The religious belief system will come tumbling down.
- K. That, my friends is what happens when God is removed from the church. The church is no longer a house of prayer, but a house of programs.
- L. The church is no longer about the Word of God, but about awesome sermon illustrations.
- M. Oh, don't think for a moment, just because this happened a long time ago, that we are in the clear from a religious takeover. It still happens today.
- N. We must continue to speak in the name that is above all names, the name of Jesus!
- O. When we speak in Jesus' name, expect questions to arise, even from within the religious community.

### **Illustration—Matthew 16:13-19**

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, **"Who do people say the Son of Man is?"**

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 **"But what about you?"** he asked. **"Who do you say I am?"**

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, **"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."**

**Application**—Who is Jesus to you?

### **3. It Is Best to Follow God Over Man—18-22**

18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you,

or to him? You be the judges! 20 As for us, 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.

- A. In this last section of our text today, Peter and John are not just told but commanded not speak in Jesus’ name.
- B. **Verse 18**—Don’t speak and don’t teach in Jesus’ name.
- C. **Verse 19**—Peter and John say, I think you know what’s best. It is better to listen to God over man.
- D. **Verse 20**—I don’t know about you, but as for us, we are going to do what we believe and what we see. We will continue to speak about our God.
- E. **Verse 21**—God was vindicated by their stance. People want to know that Jesus is real in our lives. They are waiting for us to show Him to them.
- F. I genuinely believe that people want to rejoice and follow Jesus, but it will take us removing ourselves and allowing the power of God to control us.

**Illustration**—Ronald Reagan quote:

Meaning no disrespect to the religious convictions of others, I still can't help wondering how we can explain away what to me is the greatest miracle of all and which is recorded in history. No one denies there was such a man, that he lived and that he was put to death by crucifixion. Where...is the miracle, I spoke of? Well consider this and let your imagination translate the story into our own time -- possibly to your own hometown. A young man whose father is a carpenter grows up working in his father's shop. One day he puts down his tools and walks out of his father's shop. He starts preaching on street corners and in the nearby countryside, walking from place to place, preaching all the while, even though he is not an ordained minister. He does this for three years. Then he is arrested, tried and convicted. There is no court of appeal, so he is executed at age 33 along with two common thieves. Those in charge of his execution roll dice to see who gets his clothing -- the only possessions he has. His family cannot afford a burial place for him, so he is interred in a borrowed tomb. End of story? No, this uneducated, propertyless young man who...left no written word has, for 2000 years, had a greater effect on the world than all the rulers, kings, emperors; all the conquerors, generals and admirals, all the scholars, scientists and philosophers who have ever lived -- all of them put together. How do we explain that? Unless he really was who he said he was."

**Application**—Who are you going to follow? God or man? The choice is yours to make.

**Conclusion**—It is always best to follow God, but that doesn’t mean it is always the easiest to do so. You must decide for yourself who you will follow. God or Man?

**Pray**