

The Fallout Of The Lame Man's Healing.

Acts 4:1-12

Sunday morning, September 13, 2009.

I. The reaction of the Sadducees. Vss. 1-7.

- A. The Sadducees were the ruling and priestly party in charge of the temple in Jerusalem where the healing of the blind man had taken place.
- B. they distinguished themselves in that they believed only the first five books of the Bible to be inspired. They did not believe in angels or in the resurrection of the dead or a future life.
- C. The Captain of the guard was second in command on the temple grounds, just under the High Priest. He was in charge of a private police force constituted of Levites especially trained in maintaining order on the temple grounds. This police force was also instrumental in the arrest of the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- D. They were especially offended that the apostles taught the resurrection of the dead, and that they taught the resurrection in the name of Jesus, a condemned and crucified criminal, was especially offensive.
- E. It was already late in the day as Peter and John had gotten to the temple at 3.00pm. The Sanhedrin had already ended their session for the day, so Peter and John, and possibly the healed lame man (vs.14) were placed in custody until the Sanhedrin could review their case in the morning.
- F. Annas, a former high priest and Caiaphas, son-in-law to Annas, and he was the current high priest. John and Alexander are totally unknown to us. They may have been sons of Annas. Annas had been deposed by the Romans as high priest in 15AD. He was succeeded in the office by each of his five sons and a grandson respectively before his son-in-law Caiaphas took the office. John and Alexander obviously had a seat on the Sanhedrin.

II. The reaction of the people. Vs. 4.

“Many of those who heard the word believed...”

- A. The result of the miracle of the lame man's healing combined with the apostles' instruction, was faith in the Lord Jesus Christ on the part of many.
 - 1. Note the obstacle to faith here: These people had rejected and crucified the Lord Jesus. To retract those actions is a humbling thing.
 - 2. Note the encouragement to faith here: The overwhelming evidence of the signs of the living, risen Christ at work in their midst. God had vindicated Him in the resurrection.
 - 3. A further encouragement were the promises held out to them by the resurrected
Jesus: Acceptance into the family of God; a full and free forgiveness of their sin, and the promise of the gift of the presence of the Holy Spirit in, and with them.
- B. Note the rapid growth that took place in these days: Acts 2:41 mentions 3,000 souls. Here we read in vs. 4 that their number had become 5,000 men, (males) and as such presumably households, representing at least 20,000 souls.

III. The reaction of Peter and John. Vss. 8-12.

Theirs is a holy boldness. There is no sign of intimidation.

They see only an opportunity for the gospel and seize it.

A. Peter points out the unusualness of their case.

They are being judged, not for an evil deed, but for a good deed done to a helpless man. This makes the Sanhedrin look rather foolish.

B. As to the source of the power or authority which was used in making this man well, Peter wishes to be up front and public about this.

1. The whole Sanhedrin and all Israel are to know about this.

2. It is the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified.

3. Who was raised from the dead by God Himself and thus vindicated.

4. By Him this healing took place.

C. Then Peter quotes Psalm 118:22 and applies it to the Sanhedrin.

1. The Lord Jesus had quoted this reference during His final week of ministry

in

the temple. Matt. 21:42-46.

2. Peter would reference this text again in his first letter, 1 Peter 2:7,8, showing the nature of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in relation to the disobedient: - He is the Stone which the builders rejected.

- He is a stone of stumbling. (Which you trip over.)

- He is a rock of offence. (Which you get hurt by.)

To the obedient He is the Chief Cornerstone.

3. Here Peter boldly applies this text to the Sanhedrin which presided over the trial of Jesus, and rejected Him, and sentenced Him to die.

He changes the words of the text from "the stone which the builders rejected..." to "the stone which was rejected by you builders..."

4. He boldly asserts that this stone has become the chief cornerstone.

D. There is no salvation in any other for no other name has been given under heaven by which we must be saved.

Applications:

1. Have you noticed that the gospel spells bad news to our pride and selfishness; in fact, it spells its doom. Are you OK with that? Have you come to grips with that? Have you embraced that? As different humbling situations occur, and as you suffer losses of different kinds, are you able to apply that truth?

2. If you are, take courage, for the God who tears down also builds up, and He will raise you up together with Christ in newness of life. Look for that; ask and seek for that.

If you are not OK with that, and you must preserve your own pride, your own kingdom, and your own wisdom at all cost, then you are your own worst enemy, and the enemy of your own mercy. Whoever desires to keep his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will keep it. Matt. 16:25.

3. Notice how the gospel shuts us up to Christ.

Without Him we have nothing, no matter how learned we are, even in right doctrine.

With Him we have everything, no matter how ignorant we are.

That is why our dealings with Christ are the most important dealings of life.

Are you familiar with such dealings.