

ACTS LESSON 4

Acts Chapter 4

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

e-mail: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Memory verses for this week: *Psa 119:166 LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.*

Introduction: In Chapter 3, we studied the story concerning the lame man being healed in the front of the temple. Peter and John took no credit for what was done, but gave all the credit and honor to Jesus Christ. When the people came marveling at the feat, Peter took the opportunity to preach the Gospel to them. In this week's lesson, we see the beginning of the persecution of the church as Peter and John are brought before the religious leaders to explain how this man was healed.

Acts chapter 4 details the after-effects of the healing of the lame man at the Temple. Severe persecution of the early church commences, and powerful witness of the resurrection is further preached as a result. The last half of this chapter describes how the church responded to the persecution and opposition they faced. They prayed fervently. The result was a further manifestation of the power of God upon them.

I. The Persecution of the Early Church

As has been the case many times in history, the Christians were not persecuted by the lost, but by the religious leaders. God had set up the religious order, but through the years, it had become greatly corrupted from the original Judaism taught by Moses and the prophets. While in Dallas last year, I acquired some books on Acts, and in Warren Wiersbe's book "Be Dynamic", he stated "The Jewish religious system had become so corrupt that the offices were passed from one relative to another without regard for the Word of God. When Annas was deposed from the priesthood, Caiaphas (his son-in-law) was appointed. In fact, five of Annas' sons held the office at one time or another." This is a sad state of affairs. Jesus was not pleased with all the new rules that the Pharisees had come up with which were not rules of God, but commands of man to keep the traditions in tact.

Mat 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

In verse 6 of the same chapter, Jesus said: *Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.*

Acts 4:1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple,

*and the Sadducees, came upon them,
Acts 4:2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.
Acts 4:3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.*

These events are a continuation of what took place in chapter 3. The healing and subsequent preaching by Peter happened within the Temple complex. The Jewish authorities (the priest, the captain of the Temple, and the Sadducees) confronted them. The captain of the Temple oversaw the Temple police which were the Levitical gatekeepers of the Temple.

These authorities were upset that the disciples of Jesus Christ were still witnessing. The fact that the message Peter preached was about “the resurrection from the dead” seemed to be more than they could bare. The Sadducees were especially angry because they taught there was no resurrection. As a reprisal, Peter and John were put in jail for the night.

It appears from Verse 1 that the Sadducee party was in power at this time. We know that they and the Pharisees were the two largest religious groups or sects during this time. One of the major differences in the two was that the Sadducees did not believe in any resurrection. They also did not believe in angels or that man had a personal spirit.

Acts 23:8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

From verse 2, it is apparent that the Sadducees were upset with what Peter and John were preaching, because they were definitely preaching about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

As Peter had preached that day, *“many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.”* The power of God clearly was upon the infant church and its leadership. Five thousand men received Christ and were saved. This was an even greater number than that on the day of Pentecost.

We see that many of the Jews believed the gospel, and were saved. Several of the study books agreed that the 5,000 was the sum total that now believed including the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost. We see the men were bound, but Praise God, the Gospel is never bound. Satan has always tried to stop the preaching of the truth, but God’s Word can not be stopped.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

II. Peter's Address to the Sanhedrin

Acts 4:5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, Acts 4:6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. Acts 4:7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

The next morning, the various Jewish dignitaries assembled. It is noteworthy that Annas is called high priest. He was father-in-law to Caiaphas who was the actual high priest. In the opinion of the Romans, Caiaphas was the high priest. In the view of the Jews, Annas still was. In any event, they both held high influence.

Along with them were two other Jewish notables, a man named John and another by the name of Alexander. Peter and the Apostle John were brought forth, set in the midst, and interrogated. The core question the Jewish interrogators asked was, *"By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?"* In short, they asked, *'Who gave you authorization to do these things?'*

You see who gathered together to try the men... It was the mighty Sanhedrin council made up of the rulers, elders and scribes. Did you ever wonder why the angels came and announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds in the field? Why not go to the religious leaders.. the High Priest? It was because the religious groups had become so polluted that they had virtually taken over the rules and taught their own doctrines and traditions rather than the commandments of God. I wonder today when God looks down on us if He is not as disgusted with the vast majority of churches and pastors today. Let me stop and say I am not condemning everyone, I'm just saying that many today spend more time in pulpits giving book reports and pacifying the people than preaching the Gospel. And any church that has left her first love needs to repent as God commanded the church there in Ephesus in Revelations.

Rev 2:4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

In J. Vernon McGee's commentary on Acts, he said "I have found that the biggest enemies of the preaching of the gospel are not the liquor folk. The gangsters have never bothered me. Do you know where I had my trouble as a preacher? It was with the so called religious leaders, the liberals of the day, those who claimed to be born again. They actually became enemies of the preaching of the gospel. It was amazing to me to find out how many of them wanted to destroy my radio ministry. They were our worst antagonists. It wasn't the unsaved folk. It was the religious leaders, the Sadducees of

today. They are the ones who deny the supernatural. They denied the Word of God either by their lips or by their lives. This is important to see.”

Here John and Peter stand before Caiaphas, Annas the High Priest, John, Alexander, and many of the kindred of the high priest. The question they asked shows that they recognized the miracle, but demanded to know by what power they performed it. Jesus had warned the disciples that they would face such experiences after His death.

Mat 10:17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

Mat 10:18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

Mat 10:19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

Mat 10:20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

Acts 4:9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

Acts 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Peter addressed the assembled Jewish authorities concerning how and why they were able to heal the crippled man. Here we see another instance noted of Peter being filled with the Holy Ghost. There are 2 things that need to be considered.

(1) He did not speak in tongues. The presumption of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements that being filled with the Spirit is always evidenced by speaking in tongues is shown false. Here, along with many other places throughout the Bible, one was filled with the Holy spirit and did not speak in tongues.

(2) Great spiritual power is evident in Peter's witness. The overwhelming evidence throughout the Bible is that when people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they are endued with power from God for the spiritual work at hand.

In verse 10, Peter again confronted them with Jesus Christ. Not only did Peter confront them again with the crucifixion of Jesus, he forcefully reminded them again of His resurrection. The witness of the resurrection of Christ was a major message of the early church. Peter in effect said, by His authority we have healed this man!

Acts 4:11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the

head of the corner.

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Peter uses a forceful Old Testament illustration from the original Temple construction. In Psalm 118:22 which herein is alluded to, the psalmist prophesied and yet referred to an actual incident in the construction of the Temple. Jewish tradition held as Solomon's temple was being constructed, each specific stone for the temple was cut and fitted off-site. They then were transported to the Temple site and fitted by stone masons.

The story went on how the cornerstone of the Temple was shipped in advance. The builders rejected the stone, not recognizing it. It was cast aside and as the construction continued, weeds grew up around it. When the time came for the corner stone to be installed, word was sent to the quarry that they were ready for it. The quarry replied it had been sent long ago. The psalmist alluded to this event and prophetically made application to the Messiah.

Peter forcefully brings this to the attention of his Jewish persecutors. He makes it clear that Jesus Christ is the long sought for corner stone and they had foolishly rejected it. . Other Old Testament prophecies also clearly refer to the coming Messiah as a valuable corner stone. See Isaiah 28:16 and Zechariah 4:7.

Isa 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Zec 4:7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

The exclusivity of salvation through Christ is set forth. The gateway of salvation is narrow. It is exclusively through Jesus Christ. There is no other name by which one can be saved. One trusting in anything other than Jesus Christ adheres to a false salvation which is no salvation.

We see prophecy being fulfilled in verse 8 as Peter is given the words to speak by the Holy Ghost. Peter takes this opportunity to preach the gospel again. If we are perceptive, many instances come up in our daily life when we can tell others about the Lord. We see that Peter knew what the gospel was, and he preached it to the Sanhedrin council

1 Cor 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

1 Cor 15:4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

By recapping what Peter said, we see that he declares that Jesus is the stone that the Jews cast down and rejected. This stone (Jesus) which the builders (the Jews) set aside had become the head of the corner.

Psa 118:22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

And perhaps the most important thing that Peter said was that there was no other name under heaven by which man can be saved. Jesus is the door of salvation, and this is God's chosen method to save lost man. Anyone trying to come any other way is like a robber or a thief. Paul told the church in Corinth that there was no other foundation that we can build on except for Jesus Christ.

1 Cor 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Cor 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1 Cor 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1 Cor 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1 Cor 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

III. Preaching in Jesus' Name is Forbidden

Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

The clear evidence of them being filled with the Holy Spirit is found in their boldness. The word translated as boldness (parrhsia parrhesia) has the sense of 'confidence and freedom of speech' in the sense of articulation. It conveys the idea of being fearless and forceful. Such boldness seems to always accompany the fullness of the Spirit.

The Jewish authorities were taken aback by such boldness. Moreover, they "*perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men.*" This is not a reference to the mental ability of the apostles, rather to their formal educational status. The word translated as unlearned (agrammatovagrammatos) speaks of formal accredited education. The word translated as ignorant (idiwthv idiotes), in this context, has the sense of not having rank or being esteemed.

They were common men, not of social rank or upper class. In so perceiving the common degree of these apostles of Christ, the Jewish authorities marveled (or, were amazed). Yet, in their amazement, the testimony of Jesus Christ is again present. "They took

knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Proximity with Christ brings a visible change in one’s life!

IV. John and Peter Answer to the Council

Acts 4:14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

Acts 4:15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

Acts 4:16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it.

As the Jewish authorities conferred, it was evident they could not undo the miracle done upon the crippled man. All of Jerusalem was aware of it. They then decided to “threaten them” and command “them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.”

If the world could only see one thing in us, would it not be great if it would be what they saw in Peter and John. They took knowledge that they had been with Jesus. My heart’s desire is that I might be a worthy servant of my Lord. Men and women that live for God make indelible impressions in our mind. I think of Paul who never gave up, although he suffered near death experiences over and over.

I’m reading a book about “The Cost of Discipleship” by Deitrich Bonhoeffer, and before this German preacher was put to death in a Nazi concentration camp for his stand for God, even the German soldiers apologized for having to lock his cell. They saw God in the man who said “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.” This man literally lived that out to die as a martyr for the cause of Christ.

Peter and John should have been scared to death of these religious leaders, but they were not. And why not?? It was due to the power of God working through these men. These men were bold, and spoke the words God would have them to speak. We need to fear God, not man. As we said earlier, Satan has forever tried to squelch the Gospel, but he has not, and he never will. God’s Word will endure forever. Everything else will pass away, but God’s Word will not.

Mat 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

It says that they marvelled at these ignorant and unlearned men. This did not mean they could not read or write, it meant that they had no formal schooling by a rabbi or by the scribes. What they failed to see was that there was never a teacher like Jesus Christ. And they had been with Jesus for over three years learning at the Master’s feet. The Word of God not only made sense to Jesus, He effectively was the author. And He was with God in eternity past. Jesus was far superior to the scribes.

Mark 1:21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day

*he entered into the synagogue, and taught.
Mark 1:22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one
that had authority, and not as the scribes.*

Ministers and lay people of the church need to all study to rightly divide the words of the bible.

*2 Tim 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth
not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

*Acts 4:17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them,
that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.*

*Acts 4:18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in
the name of Jesus.*

*Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the
sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.*

Acts 4:20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

A simple principle is defined here. When conflict between human authority and God arises, we must always obey God. Though human government as an institution is ordained of God; when it contradicts divine mandate, we have no alternative but to obey God.

Not only was there divine principle at hand, the apostles only were speaking that which they knew to be the truth. They had seen it and heard it for themselves. Moreover, they had experienced it. This makes for a powerful witness!

*Acts 4:21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing
how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that
which was done.*

*Acts 4:22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was
showed.*

Peter and John were released though threatened. The common people of Jerusalem “glorified God for that which was done.” The man healed was more than forty years old. All Jerusalem knew him and his condition. There was no doubt that this man was in fact healed.

The council could not say anything against what had been done for the fact was before them that a miracle had been done and the people had all witnessed it. They reasoned among themselves as to what they should do. So rather than pretending the miracle did not happen, they give the men the command to just “Don’t preach in the name of Jesus anymore.”

I love what they told them... you reason among yourselves who we should hearken to.. you or God. In verse 20, they said “we cannot but speak the things which we have seen

and heard.” I thank the Lord that they continued preaching, and other men of faith followed, and generations later, I was given the opportunity one morning when I was 13 years old to hear the gospel, and by God’s grace and power, I turned to Christ and was saved. Each of you who know Jesus as Savior owe a world of gratitude for all the forefathers and men and women of faith that did not waver but stood their ground through the ages. Many died that you and I might have the freedom to hear the Gospel preached.

V. The Prayer Meeting of the Church due to Persecution.

Acts 4:23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

Acts 4:24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

After Peter and John were released, they went and told the church about all that was said and done to them by the chief priests and elders. When the church heard the account from Peter and John, they prayed together.

The early church did not have or need a legal defense fund or lawyers to advise them. The churches today might take a lesson here. Like Jehoshaphat of old who cried unto the Lord in deep crisis, “Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee,” the early church turned to heaven for help. Notice that “They lifted up their voice to God with one accord.” The spiritual unity of the early church enabled to God to work mightily through them.

The collective prayer of the church is instructive. In it there is praise. There is quoted Scripture. There is reminder to God of recent events. Finally, there is request of God for help. Let us look closer. In the latter portion of verse 24, the church began their eloquent prayer by praising God.

Acts 4:25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

Acts 4:26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

Acts 4:27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

Acts 4:28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

Acts 4:30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

The church prayed and praised the One who had created the heavens and the earth. They continued by quoting in their prayer from Psalm 2 in verse 25. They then continued by reminding God in verses 26-27 that in recent days human government (both Jews and the Romans) had united against Jesus Christ, finally crucifying Him.

The early church understood that the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross had been by God's counsel determined before to be done." Just days earlier, they were ignorant of all this, even after being told by Jesus that His death was necessary. Their knowledge here is evidence as to what took place on the day of Pentecost. The word translated as determined before (proorizw prooridzo) is more commonly translated as 'predestinated.'

And without a question, the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross had been determined in the mind of God before the world began. (See II Timothy 1:9 and Titus 1:2.)

2Ti 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

*Tit 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;
Tit 1:3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;*

In verses 29-30 are the simple requests of their eloquent prayer. Again, God is reminded of the threatening which the early church faced. Despite the threat by official Israel to not speak or witness of Christ, they besought God "that with all boldness they may speak thy word." Despite the injunction placed against them, they asked God for boldness to continue to speak. Several comments are in order here.

As a general principle, God's people are enjoined to obey the God-ordained institution of human government. However, as noted in Acts 5:29, when a conflict arises between human authority and God, "*We ought to obey God rather than men.*" We clearly have been commanded to preach and witness of Jesus Christ.

The request for boldness is further instructive. The word translated as boldness (parrhsia parrhesia) conveys the idea of freedom in speaking, confidence, courage, clarity of articulation, and fearlessness. As we shall shortly see, such boldness comes as a result of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, as God had already extended special sign gifts of the Holy Ghost, they asked that God grant further "signs and wonders" to further embolden them.

Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

God responded to their prayer immediately. *“The place was shaken where they were assembled together.”* This no doubt was a literal earthquake in that “the place was shaken”. It has been thought of as being more spiritual than physical.

The word translated as shaken (saleuw saleuo) also can have the sense of ‘being moved.’ In either case, it was the work of God. Notice *“They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”* A significant correlation is at hand. The fullness of the Holy Spirit is almost always preceded by extensive prayer.

As we take note of other instances of the fullness of the Spirit in Acts, in virtually every case, it was preceded by intensive prayer. As they were filled with the Holy Ghost, “they spake the word of God with boldness.” Contrary to the unscriptural teachings of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, the normal result of the filling of the Spirit is not speaking in tongues. Rather, it is speaking the Word of God with boldness. Again, as noted above, God-given boldness brings liberty of speech, courage, fearlessness, articulateness, and authority.

Several of the books I read on chapter 4 of Acts said that the reason the church was so solid and went forward so powerfully in the early years was due to their ability to pray and pray effectively. Peter and John report everything that happened to the church and they did not panic, but rather lifted up their voices to God in prayer. They acknowledge God as the one who made heaven, earth, and sea, and all that is in them. And they asked God to behold the threatenings, and grant unto their servants **“BOLDNESS THAT THEY MAY SPEAK THY WORD”**. They did not ask for God to take away the persecution, but asked for boldness to keep on keeping on. God help us to have that kind of attitude. The church also asked God to do signs and wonders in the holy name of Jesus. And God granted their petitions. God is pleased when the church is focused, and has one mind and one accord.

The apostle Paul asked for prayers on his behalf that he might be effective in the preaching of the Gospel.

Eph 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

VI. The State of the Church

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Acts 4:33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord

Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

Acts 4:34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

Acts 4:35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Acts 4:36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

Acts 4:37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

In the days of the church's infancy, many sold their possessions and pooled their resources. Many came to Jerusalem for the spring observances and tarried because of all that they had heard and saw. Their means depleted over time

The 4th result of their being filled with the Holy Ghost is the "great power" with which the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Holy-Spirit-derived power comes as a result of being filled with the Spirit. The primary message of the early church focused upon the resurrection of our Lord. Moreover, "great grace was upon them all." Grace is a broad spiritual quality that implies not only God's goodness and kindness, but also His strength and help.

Those who professed Christ no doubt was avoided by the general population for fear of being accused of being a disciple of Christ making it difficult to earn a living. In my understanding, the land and possessions sold was an act of faith in obedience to the leadership of the Spirit of God to further what was about to take place. I do not believe that this was any attempt at socialism or communism. There is no evidence to suggest such.

Next, we are introduced for the first time to the man commonly known as Barnabas who later would be a companion in the ministry of Paul. It is noted that he was a Jew and a Levite. He was originally from the island of Cyprus. He was also known as Joses. Barnabas was a contributor of the ministry in that he too sold his possessions and gave the proceedings to the church.

There was great unity in the church it says in verse 32. They were of one heart and one soul. And because of this, God gave them great power to witness and great grace was upon them all. They sold all that they had and brought the money to the apostle's feet, and they distributed it out as there was some need. I doubt if there are many churches today where the people have the faith it would take to go out and sell out everything and believe that God would take care of them. But this church did.

The church was really know for three things.

- They preached the Gospel. (verse 2)
- Most of them had been with Jesus (verse 13)
- They were a giving church. (Verse 37)

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.