

Summary

This sermon from Acts 4 explores the early church's explosive growth from 3,000 to 20,000 believers in Jerusalem, emphasizing that we are part of an ongoing movement of God that began 2,000 years ago. The message centers on Peter and John's arrest and their bold declaration that their power comes from Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The pastor challenges believers to examine by what power they operate in their daily lives, offering four practical steps: acknowledge Jesus, follow His teaching, step out in faith, and evaluate outcomes. The sermon concludes with the powerful observation that the religious leaders 'took note that these men had been with Jesus,' highlighting how ordinary people become extraordinary when they spend time with Christ.

The central theme emphasizes that salvation (soteria) is not just forgiveness of sins but complete healing and wholeness - spirit, mind, and body. The pastor encourages believers to either choose Jesus for the first time or choose to share Jesus with someone else, reminding the congregation that when we hang around Jesus more and join Him in His work, 'me plus Jesus equals extraordinary.' The movement continues today through ordinary believers who cannot help but speak about what they have seen and heard.

Intro Prayer

Holy Spirit, we invite You to speak to us today. Lord, You have words for us, thoughts, and ideas through Your scripture that You want to communicate. We are open to that, we invite that, and we want that this morning. Help us to be receptive to what You want each of us to receive from our time together. Open our hearts and minds to Your truth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you want to ask them?

Key Verses

1. Acts 4:1-4
2. Acts 4:7-12
3. Acts 4:13
4. Acts 4:18-20
5. Proverbs 3:5-6
6. 1 Peter 3:15

Questions

1. What does it mean to you personally that we are part of a 2,000-year-old movement that started in Acts?

2. The religious leaders asked 'By what power or name did you do this?' If someone asked you that question about your life, how would you honestly answer?
3. Which of the four steps (acknowledge Jesus, follow His teaching, step out in faith, evaluate outcomes) do you find most challenging and why?
4. Peter and John were described as 'unschooled, ordinary men' yet they astonished the leaders. How does this encourage you in your own walk with Jesus?
5. Pastor Mark mentioned that 'the movement has a price.' What price have you had to pay or might you need to pay to be part of God's movement?
6. Acts 4:13 says the leaders 'took note that these men had been with Jesus.' What evidence in your life shows that you've been with Jesus?
7. Peter and John said 'we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.' What has God done in your life that you feel compelled to share with others?
8. The sermon emphasized that salvation includes healing and wholeness (spirit, mind, body). In what areas of your life do you need God's continued work of making you whole?

Life Application

This week, identify one person in your life who needs to hear about Jesus or be invited into Christian community. Pray for that person daily and look for an opportunity to either share your story of faith or invite them to church. Practice the four steps of operating in Jesus' power: acknowledge Him daily, follow His teaching by acting on one simple truth you know, step out in faith when opportunities arise, and evaluate each day how God used you or where you need to grow.

Key Takeaways

1. We are part of a 2,000-year-old movement of God that continues today through ordinary believers
2. The movement of God's kingdom has a price - it requires our effort, courage, and willingness to step out in faith
3. Operating in Jesus' power involves four steps: acknowledge Jesus, follow His teaching, step out in faith, and evaluate outcomes
4. Salvation is not just forgiveness but complete healing and wholeness in spirit, mind, and body
5. When people spend time with Jesus, it becomes evident to others - 'they took note that these men had been with Jesus'

Ending Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the reminder that we are part of Your incredible movement that has been changing lives for 2,000 years. Help us to live each day acknowledging that we need You, following Your teachings, and stepping out in faith when opportunities arise. Put someone on our hearts this week who needs to hear about Your love and salvation. Give us the courage like Peter and John to speak boldly about what we have seen and heard. May others take note that we have been with You. Continue Your work of making us whole in spirit, mind, and body. We pray this in the powerful name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Amen.