

Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”*

Read Acts 4:13-31 aloud.

1. What surprised the Jewish leaders about Peter and John?
Boldness of uneducated, ordinary men.

Why was this a surprise?

2. Why did the lame man present a dilemma for the Jewish leaders in verse 14?

This beggar was undoubtedly a character everyone knew – he had been sitting outside the Temple for years. Now he walked freely, and Peter & John gave Jesus the credit. The Jewish leaders had executed Jesus a few weeks earlier. They couldn’t deny the miracle, but they couldn’t confess Jesus either.

What was their solution?

Warned Peter & John not to talk about Jesus.

Why wouldn’t they accept Peter and John’s explanation that Jesus deserved credit for the healing?

Why didn’t they execute the apostles?

3. How did Peter & John respond to the idea of clamming up about Jesus?

Verse 20 – do you really think Peter was going to be quiet?!

What do you think of Peter & John’s response?

How often do you have opportunities to demonstrate that your life has been changed for the better by Jesus?

4. What happened when Peter & John returned to the believers?

How did they relate their experience to Psalm 2:1-2?

5. What was the apostles’ prayer regarding the Jewish threats?
See verse 29.

What are some other things they could have asked God to do with the Jewish threats?

How do you respond when you are threatened?

6. What happened after the Christians prayed?

Why do you suppose the house shook in verse 31 and not verse 20?

How does God make his will known to us today?

In what directions is God leading you and our group?

Project idea for your LIFE group

Our congregation has invited School Store guests to a four-week Basic Financial Training class on Monday nights beginning August 10. We need helpers on Aug. 10, 17, 24, and 31:

- **Our group could prepare & serve a simple meal – 5:30 to 6 pm.**
- **Our group could help with childcare – 6-8 pm.**

Please call the church office if you can help on any of these dates – 444-9502.

† **The million-dollar question** *If you ask only one question, this is it. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It’s okay to pass, but even the quiet people deserve a chance to respond.*

What would help you be more aware of God’s amazing work in the world? How would that affect your speech?

Resources

Bible notes

- Verses 25-26 quote Psalm 2, a passage the Jews connected to their kings and to the coming Messiah. Read it – you'll be amazed how much of the psalm could be applied to Jesus as a king.
- The council that grilled Peter & John was an impressive bunch – Pharisees, Sadducees, and the family of high priests who had been in power nearly 30 years. This assembly was everyone who was anyone, so it likely included Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Gamaliel, and a young rabbi from Tarsus named Saul.

Kid-friendly activity...kids & adults growing together.
Celebrate the good things God has done this last week!

Give out art supplies – coloring, clay, pipe cleaners, etc.

Make a work of art that represents something amazing God has done in your life.

You might pair up kids & adults to help the kids think about what to draw or design.

Each person share with the group what they have made and what it says about God's work.

How does knowing about God's work in the past give you confidence for the future?

What is one thing that might be challenging in the new school year?
Write these down for prayer time later.

Read Acts 4:1-22 aloud and then help the kids re-tell it in their own words.

What gave Peter & John confidence when they were threatened?

What can we learn from their example?

Pray about the challenges facing the group members (listed above).



August 2, 2009

LIFE Group Guide

Acts 4 – Impossible to be quiet

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this discussion: **being people who are aware of God's work in the world and who can't keep quiet about it.**

Our congregation is enjoying a studying of Acts entitled "Living the Dream." This week's message involves Acts 4, when the apostles rejected an order to keep silent about Jesus.

One of the key thoughts from the sermon is that Christians can develop boldness by focusing on the amazing things God does. Boldness does not come from assertiveness training or from learning how to out-argue critics. Boldness is based in confidence that God is at work in our lives and that he is leading all of creation toward his goals.

Leadership tip: August is one of the best times of year to launch a group or to invite re-commitment from an established group. You have two months without significant holidays, then Fall Break, then six weeks before Thanksgiving. Pick up sample covenants at the LG table or on the church website to help guide your conversation.

I. Relate *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ What is something that most of us don't know about you?
You could make this a game – ask each person to write down a secret fact and then invite the group to guess who.
- ❖ Who was a character in your hometown that everyone knew because of their quirky qualities?
Every community has a few – they are known all around town for doing unusual things.
- ❖ When are you most likely to see God at work in a typical week?