

June 14/26 – Small Group Questions

Acts 4:1-13 — A Clash of Kingdoms

As we come to Acts 4, we're witnessing the first organized opposition to the church. What is striking is that this persecution arises not because the apostles have done harm, but because the kingdom of Jesus is breaking into the world. A lame man has been healed, the excluded have been welcomed, and hope has been proclaimed. Whenever the reign of Jesus confronts competing allegiances—whether systems of power, personal ambitions, or cherished idols—there will be resistance. Yet this passage is not primarily about opposition; it is about the faithfulness of Jesus. He promised his followers they would face hostility, but he also promised his presence through the Holy Spirit.

Read Acts 4:1-13

1. What reasons do Luke and the authorities give for Peter and John's arrest? What seems to be troubling the leaders most?
2. What contrasts do you notice between the response of the healed man, the crowd, and the religious leaders?
3. Why do you think a message about resurrection and new creation would be seen as threatening by those in power?
4. Peter says that the man was healed "by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." What does this reveal about who Jesus is and what he came to do?
5. In verses 8-12, how does Peter respond to intimidation? What evidence do you see of the Holy Spirit at work in him?
6. Where do you see "clashes of kingdoms" in everyday life today?
7. Peter declares that there is "no other name under heaven" by which we must be saved. The word translated "saved" here is the same word used earlier of the lame man being "healed." How does that deepen or expand your understanding of salvation?
8. Verse 13 says the council recognized that Peter and John were "unschooled, ordinary men," yet they were astonished by their boldness. What encouragement does this offer to followers of Jesus today?

Closing Prayer

Invite the group to spend a few moments reflecting silently on where they currently feel the tension of competing kingdoms in their own lives. Then pray that the Holy Spirit would give them the same courage, wisdom, and faithfulness he gave Peter and John. Thank Jesus for his promise to be with his people, and ask that his kingdom would continue to break into their homes, workplaces, relationships, and neighbourhoods until the day he makes all things new.