

### Acts 4 – Boldness in the Face of Opposition

Acts 4 records the first organized opposition to the gospel as Peter and John are arrested for preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. Standing before the religious leaders, Peter boldly proclaims that **salvation is found in no one else**, declaring that *“there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved”* (v.12). The leaders are astonished by the courage of Peter and John, realizing they are unschooled, ordinary men, and they take note that these men had been with Jesus. Though unable to deny the miracle, the authorities threaten them and command them to stop speaking in Jesus’ name. After being released, the believers gather and pray—not for safety, but for boldness. They ask the Lord to consider the threats and empower them to speak His word courageously while continuing to perform signs and wonders through Jesus’ name. God answers immediately: the place is shaken, they are filled with the Holy Spirit, and they proclaim the word of God boldly, showing that persecution fuels mission rather than silencing it.

### Acts 5 – Obedience to God Above All

Acts 5 opens with a sobering account of Ananias and Sapphira, who lie to the Holy Spirit by secretly withholding part of the proceeds from the sale of their land while pretending full generosity. Their sudden deaths instill a holy fear throughout the church and underscore the seriousness of integrity within God’s people. Meanwhile, the apostles continue performing signs and wonders, and the church grows despite increasing hostility. The apostles are arrested again, but an angel of the Lord miraculously frees them from jail and commands them to keep preaching in the temple courts. When brought before the authorities, they refuse to be silenced, declaring, *“We must obey God rather than men.”* Though they are flogged and warned again, they rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for Jesus’ name. Day after day, they continue teaching and proclaiming that Jesus is the Messiah, proving that obedience to God outweighs the fear of man.

### Acts 6 – Faithful Leadership in a Growing Church

Acts 6 highlights the growing pains of a rapidly expanding church as a dispute arises over the fair distribution of food to widows. The apostles respond wisely by appointing seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, to oversee this responsibility so they can devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. This decision protects unity and allows the church to continue growing. One of the seven, Stephen, stands out as a man full of grace and power, performing great wonders and signs among the people. His bold preaching stirs opposition from those who cannot withstand the wisdom and Spirit with which he speaks. Unable to refute him, his opponents falsely accuse him and seize him. The chapter ends with Stephen standing

before the Sanhedrin, his face shining like that of an angel, setting the stage for his powerful witness and martyrdom.

## Reflection Questions

1. In Acts 4:12, Peter declares that salvation is found in no one else but Jesus. How does this exclusive claim shape the way you speak about Christ in a pluralistic world?
2. The religious leaders were astonished by Peter and John's courage and noted that they had been with Jesus. If others observed your life closely, what evidence would they see that you have been with Him?
3. After being threatened, the believers prayed not for safety but for boldness (Acts 4:29–31). What does your typical prayer life reveal about what you value most—comfort or faithfulness?
4. How does the church's response to persecution in Acts 4 challenge the way you respond to opposition, criticism, or pressure in your own faith journey?
5. Ananias and Sapphira tried to appear more faithful than they truly were. In what ways are you tempted to project spiritual maturity instead of practicing honesty before God?
6. Acts 5 shows the apostles choosing obedience to God over obedience to human authority. Where might God be calling you to obey Him even when it costs you approval, comfort, or security?
7. The apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' name. How does this perspective reshape your understanding of hardship or inconvenience for the sake of the gospel?
8. The selection of the seven in Acts 6 protected unity and allowed the mission to continue. What role does humility and shared leadership play in the health of your church or ministry context?
9. Stephen spoke with wisdom and power that could not be refuted. How can you grow in both spiritual depth and Spirit-led courage when sharing your faith?
10. Across Acts 4–6, the church grows despite opposition, discipline, and internal challenges. What does this teach you about God's ability to advance His mission through imperfect people and difficult circumstances?