

All Saints Talk for Sunday 28 July 2024

'Ordinary people, extraordinary courage' Emma King

Acts 4:1-14

Today, we delve into a powerful story in Acts 4:1-14, where we see Peter and John standing firm in their faith in the face of opposition. This passage is a vivid reminder of the power of the Holy Spirit and the boldness that comes from truly knowing Jesus Christ.

The passage begins with Peter and John facing opposition from the religious leaders of the time—the priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees.

These leaders were disturbed because the apostles were teaching the resurrection through Jesus, a concept that challenged their beliefs and authority.

Peter pulls no punches in his preaching with a couple of quick questions he shifts the focus from a miraculous healing onto Jesus.

When questioned about their actions, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, speaks boldly and clearly. This bold proclamation was not just a result of Peter's courage but of the Holy Spirit's empowerment.

In Peter's eyes the miracle serves only to glorify Jesus.

In verse 8 he says “rulers and elders of the people if we are called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame of being asked how he was healed then know this and all of the people of Israel it is by the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth who you crucified but whom God raised from the dead that this man stands before you healed.'

This is such a powerful statement!

Peter and John's opportunity to speak out about Jesus in this example came from a lame man's longing he wanted something from them and rather than money they gave him a fresh start in life.

Peter's message still rings true today "Christ has died Christ is risen Christ will come again."

His words were like a rag read to to a bull for this particular audience.

Successes were small but powerful Jewish sect who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Peter calls for a response from them repent turn to God.

In our lives, we may also face opposition when we stand for truth, especially in a world that often rejects or misunderstands the message of the Gospel. This reminds us that standing for Christ may not always be easy, but it is necessary.

The Holy Spirit is the same today as it was then. As believers, we are also empowered by the Holy Spirit to speak the truth and share the love of Christ with boldness. We are reminded that our strength and courage come not from ourselves but from the Spirit of God within us.

Peter brings the focus onto Jesus with the blunt assertion, salvation is found in no one else...

It was enough to get them jailed again especially when Peter and John tell their accusers we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.

They know that the good news isn't just for the small gatherings in home groups this is good news for everyone and they know that the opposition is part of the package for Jesus's followers.

We heard about this from Naomi last week. But to add to that... healing doesn't just come in a physical form does it. Healing comes from, like I said last week, from broken hearts and broken lives. Salvation comes from the same thing... broken hearts and broken lives.

I was speaking to Steve yesterday, who said the prayer team that meets on a Saturday morning were prompted to pray for the broken and the lost. The Ordinary people.

Peter and John were ordinary, unschooled people. Yet here they were... healing and saving in the name of Jesus!

There is room for everyone... Jesus is for everyone no matter what we've done. If I'm honest... I think that who I think Jesus is after...

I've heard amazing testimonies from people whose lives have been transformed through the power of the name of Jesus and their salvation. Jesus likes things messy!

Many of us here were broken and lost... but salvation in the name of Jesus... and only in his name, has set us free and healed us.

And now here we are... praying for, speaking to, living alongside the broken and the lost in the hope of their salvation... but they don't find that through us solely... we can tell them about Jesus, introduce them to Jesus, but it's only through Jesus that the salvation will come...

Peter makes a profound declaration: "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be

saved." This statement underscores the exclusive and powerful nature of Jesus' name.

It is not just a name; it represents the authority, power, and salvation that comes from God.

In a society, this message may seem narrow, but it is the truth that we are called to proclaim.

Jesus is the cornerstone—the foundation of our faith.

Just as the apostles stood firm on this truth, so must we, even when it challenges societal norms.

The religious leaders were astonished by the courage of Peter and John, recognizing them as unschooled, ordinary men who had been with Jesus.

The transformation in their lives was undeniable and evident to all. Moreover, the healed man standing beside them was a living testimony to the power of Jesus.

Our lives should also reflect the transformative power of Christ. When we truly encounter Jesus, there should be a noticeable difference in how we live, speak, and love others. Our testimonies, like that of the healed man, serve as evidence of God's work in our lives.

Some people respond to Jesus because of a logical process Jesus was a real person who lived died and rose again .

Many people respond because Jesus because he meets them at their point of need when they see and hear how Jesus has changed other people's lives.

Here are some people you may recognize whos lives have been transformed through their salvation in Jesus name....

Mr T

Mr. T was initially baptized at age four, but he got re-baptized at 25 . Now he wakes up every day and starts with this prayer:

"I get up every morning and say, 'Father, give me strength today, not strength so I can lift 500 pounds, but give me strength, Lord, so when I speak, my words might motivate, might inspire somebody. Lord, when they see me, let them see you. When they hear me, Lord, let them hear you. In your holy name I pray."

Adam Peaty

British Olympic winning swimmer Adam Peaty spoke about his new found Christian faith and how going to church helped him overcome alcohol misuse.

"It's about being a better person. Not only being a better athlete and fulfilling my gift, but also being a better dad for George. There are so many other reasons. It gets quite deep. But it's great to be a part of."

Alice Cooper

Rocker Alice Cooper explained that choosing to follow God was the hardest but best thing he's done.

"Drinking beer is easy. Trashing your hotel room is easy. But being a Christian, that's a tough call. That's the real rebellion."

The talking Jesus report found that when Christians have a conversation about Jesus one in five of those they talked to want to experience the love of Jesus for themselves, or request prayer on behalf of themselves or a friend or a family member. Nearly as many say they are looking into Christianity more broadly while others express an interest in going to church have asked to have another conversation about Jesus or ask how they could find out more about Jesus.

As we reflect on this passage, let us be encouraged by the example of Peter and John. They were ordinary men, yet their boldness came from an extraordinary source—the Holy Spirit. They proclaimed the truth of Jesus Christ without fear, and their lives bore witness to His power.

In our own lives, let us seek the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, boldly proclaim the name of Jesus, and live as testimonies to His transformative power. Remember, salvation is found in no other name but Jesus. Let this truth embolden us to share the Gospel with love and conviction.