

## Vv. 1- 22 Peter and John before the Authorities

It doesn't take long for the authorities to respond to the troublesome and disturbing new ideas of this fledgling group of Christians. The authorities arrest Peter and John.

Remember the last time Peter spoke at Pentecost 3000 were converted.

Now, right in front of the seat of the religious establishment, the Temple, another 5000 repent. This disturbance is in danger of becoming a mass movement.

The religious leaders must act quickly to quell the movement.

On one side, rulers, elders, scribes – those of the high-priestly group.

On the other side – Peter and John, common, uneducated men.

“Who gave you the authority to be doing all of this?” power should not – could not- be in the hands of such lowly individuals!

How can Peter possibly speak before this great assemblage? By the power of the Holy Spirit.

There is a sense of irony in Peter's opening remarks – “ what are we guilty of – doing a good deed for a cripple?”

The religious leaders are backed into a corner. The lame man is healed for all to witness. They cannot deny it. They cannot crack down because they are supposed to be acting for the benefit of the people.

So they order Peter and John to keep quiet.

There is nothing more the authorities can do for fear the people will revolt – peace at all cost.

## Vv 23-31 The Community Prays

In light of what has occurred, the community comes together in prayer.  
What would you have prayed for?

They prayed for the power to speak God's word with boldness.

It is God's job to heal and to work signs and wonders in the name of Jesus.

It is the community's job to speak the word with boldness.

Boldness is a highly valued virtue in Luke – see 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27-28.

In these verses there is a relationship between divine deeds and human words.

God comes to us with mighty acts of healing but they are to be interpreted, proclaimed, witnessed and defended through words

There is also an interplay of witness and worship – that is the community prays, seeking the power to witness boldly; witnesses and then retires once more to pray.

This rhythm of action and speech, witness and worship is in fact the source of the church's life.

## Vv 32-37 The Challenge of Possessions

The church then and the church today claim to be of one heart and soul.  
Luke writes that it was so – but Luke also knew there is a good chance that where our possessions are our hearts will be also.

A surprising amount of Acts deals with economic issues within the community and also with matters of money – see –Luke 7:41-43; 10: 29-37; 12:16-21; 16:1-8; 16:19-31; 19:11-27.

Wealth for Luke is not a sign of approval but rather it is a danger – Luke 18:18-23 – the rich young man..

*To be continued with the frightening story of Ananias and Sapphira*

