

Living in The Name of Jesus (Acts 3-4:22)

Maybe you've heard or used the phrase "in the name of Jesus" at the close of a prayer. Like anything we get used to, it's easy to forget the significance of what we're saying. When you do something in someone else's name, you act in their authority and as their representative. In Acts chapters 3-4 we learn that a Spirit-empowered life includes speaking *and living* in the name of Jesus - in his strength, as his representative and for his glory. While that means hope and joy for many, it is also a threat to anyone clinging to their own power.

1. Jesus' power *displayed* (Acts 3:1-11)

2. Jesus' power *proclaimed* (Acts 3:12-4:4)

3. Jesus' power over every other power (Acts 4:5-22)

QUESTIONS (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. Read Acts 3:1-11. What stands out to you? Does anything surprise you?
2. We often end prayers with "in the name of Jesus" but it's easy to treat it like a magical formula or to forget the significance of what we're saying altogether. What does it actually mean to do something in someone else's name?
3. Read Acts 1:4-8. In Acts 1:8, Jesus promises power to be "witnesses." How do we see the transition from an *experience* of Spirit-empowerment in Acts 2 to an *expression* of Spirit-empowerment in Acts 3 and 4?
4. In Acts 3:6 Peter says, "*I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you.*" What did Peter "have"? How does this contrast with the money the man was seeking?
5. The power of Jesus to heal becomes a platform to proclaim the power of Jesus to save. Read Acts 3:12-4:5. What does Peter say about Jesus? What does he say about his audience?
6. Read Acts 3:17-21. Peter calls his listeners to "repent." What does that mean? What does it require? According to the passage what is the result of repentance?
7. The same name that heals the broken, also threatens the proud. Read Acts 4:5-22. Why was Jesus' power/authority such a threat to the religious leaders of Peter's day? In what ways is Jesus' power/authority a threat to people today?
8. The religious council was astonished that "*uneducated, common men*" could speak with such clarity. They concluded these men "*had been with Jesus.*" What does "*being with Jesus*" involve? How does it develop a boldness that doesn't rely on our own strength or "power," but on his?

Read Colossians 3:17. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one specific "deed" or "word" you have coming up this week. How would doing it "*in the name of Jesus*" change your approach?