

Filled with Amazement

"When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him."

Acts 3:9-10

Icebreaker—*What is the most amazing thing you have ever seen God do?*

In John 14:12 Jesus said, "Very truly I tell you, all who have faith in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father..."

At Pentecost, Peter's sermon led to more disciples than during all of Jesus' ministry. We learned that the believers were in awe at the wonders performed by the apostles. Acts 3 & 4 records even more amazement as the power of God is displayed through the apostles.

Acts 3:1-10

What did the beggar expect to receive?

- Money

What do Peter and John offer him?

- They offer him healing.

What is the reaction of the crowds to this miracle?

- They are filled with wonder and amazement

How would you have reacted if you saw a lame man you had passed by every day get up and walk?

Peter, who now has the attention of the crowd and some religious leaders, preaches to them about the power of God, their responsibility for the death of Jesus Christ, and their need for repentance. *How well do you think that sat with the religious leaders standing nearby?*

- Not well, they had Peter and John arrested and put on trial!

How would you have felt speaking to a crowd and seeing some familiar faces from Jesus' trial staring back at you?

In this trial we find another group of people who are filled with amazement. Let's listen in to part of their trial

Acts 4:7-13

Why was the Sanhedrin amazed at what they saw in Peter and John?

- They were amazed because these men taught with authority and with wisdom but had not been through formal education.

How is it refreshing that God can use the simple to humble the wise?

- You don't have to have all the best training in the world to talk about Jesus. You just have to be willing.
- Our message is not about our power, ability, or education but about our submission to what God is doing in our lives.

What impact had Jesus had on their lives?

- They had been transformed from ordinary fishermen to passionate advocates for Christ.
- They were bold in the face of serious opposition.

The people they faced were not "light weights." These men had significantly influenced the death of Jesus only months prior and now the apostles find themselves under trial as well. *How would it be difficult to find boldness under those circumstances?*

After being told not to speak or teach any more in the name of Jesus they are released.

Acts 4:23-31

Not only did they have the support of God but they had the support of each other. *What two things do the Christians pray for in Acts 4:29-30?*

- Boldness and more healings, signs, and wonders

How is that a difficult thing to pray in light of what had just happened?

- They had just been warned not to do those things again.

Application

How does opposition often increase our faith?

In what areas could the church today use more boldness?

What does it take for us to become more bold in our faith and in proclaiming it to others?

Leaders: Ask for prayer requests for areas in their lives that they could use more boldness. Spend some time praying for boldness and for us to continue telling the story of Jesus to the lost all around us.