

At the start of the Reformation of the Church in Scotland in 1557, John Knox wrote to his congregation before going into exile and said,

*“You are bishops and kings; your wife, children, servants, and family are your bishopric and charge. Of you it shall be required how carefully and diligently you have instructed them in God’s true knowledge . . .*

*And therefore I say, you must make them partakers in, exhorting, and in making common prayers, which I would in every house were used once a day at least.”*

# Let’s Worship God

19th-24th January 2015  
Acts



Let's Worship God is a ministry of



Airdrie Reformed Presbyterian Church

[airdrierpcs.org](http://airdrierpcs.org), 01236 620107  
Part of the RFCS - [rpcscotland.org](http://rpcscotland.org)

**Family worship, a joy to be experienced every day!**



# Let's Worship God

**Verse To Learn**  
Repent therefore,  
and turn again,  
that your sins  
may be blotted out,  
Acts 3:19

## reading notes

Acts 3:17-26 - They Should Have Known, But They Didn't!

When we read that Peter tells the people that they and their leaders have acted toward Christ in ignorance, because they don't know that He is the Messiah, our first thought is 'Surely Peter is making a mistake. How can he say that when the people kill Jesus they don't know who He is?' (Note - he's not saying that this is okay, he's simply acknowledging that this is the way it happened).

The very fact that when we read on and see Peter telling the people that God has spoken about the coming of the Christ in the Old Testament merely confirms the question - Does Peter make a mistake when he says that these people act in ignorance? How can he on the one hand quote Moses speaking about Jesus and make the point that all the prophets from Samuel on speak of Jesus, foretelling the events of His life and ministry, and at the same time believe that these people don't know who Jesus is?

The answer is simple - although the people have the Old Testament, they haven't really read or studied it!

What a challenge to us! Think about all that God has written in the Bible about life and eternity. Will we be guilty of sin simply because we don't bother to read what God has to say to us?

## questions

1. Although the people could have known a lot about Jesus from the Old Testament, why didn't they?
2. What had they done to Jesus, not knowing who He was?
3. Is there a lesson we can learn from their mistake?

## praise pray

- Ps. 97:all
1. Pray that God will give us the desire to read the Bible.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  3. Pray for family matters.



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## reading

Acts 4:32-37 - Sacrificial Love

## notes

Despite the threats of the Sanhedrin, the apostles continue to do what the Lord Jesus has told them to do. In obedience to God, they continue to preach. The key element of their message is that Jesus has risen from the dead, that He really is the Messiah or promised Saviour, and God blesses their preaching so that it really affects the people who are listening to it.

Because of this powerful preaching, the people in the church begin to think less about themselves and their problems and more about how they can help other people in the church who are in need. Some sell houses and land which they own but don't really need and bring the money they get from the sale to the apostles. The apostles then give the money to those in the church who need it just to live. This means that no one in the church goes hungry or without clothes etc.

Luke introduces us to Barnabas one of these sacrificial and selfless givers in the church. We read of how Barnabas sells his land and brings all the money he gets from the sale to the apostles for giving to the needy.

Is there a challenge in this for us?

## questions

1. What did the message of the apostles focus on?
2. How did the preaching and teaching of God's Word affect the Church?
3. What did Barnabas do?

## praise pray

- Ps. 100A:all
1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  3. Pray for family matters.



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**reading** Acts 4:23-31 - God is in Control!

## notes

Released by the Sanhedrin, Peter and John immediately go back to their friends who are other believers, and they hold a prayer meeting. But note they don't pray for protection or deliverance. Why not? Because of their absolute certainty that God is in control.

Their prayers are addressed to God as the Sovereign Lord (Acts 4:24). God is declared as the one who has made everything and therefore has the right to rule over and control it.

In their prayers they pray about how the prophecy about Jesus in Psalm 2 is fulfilled, and how the plots against Jesus are all in vain because Jesus' enemies are doing just what God had decided beforehand should happen (Acts 4:28). The implication is that if all the schemes and threats of Jesus' enemies are in vain, so the threats of the Sanhedrin against them will be in vain.

Knowing that God is in control, they ask God for boldness to be faithful, in spite of the persecution, to tell others about Christ, just as He has commanded them.

As their prayer ends, God shakes the house as a sign of approval, and they are filled with the Holy Spirit, so they can proclaim the Good News with great courage.

## questions

1. What did Peter and John and the believers do as soon as they were released?
2. Who was controlling everything that happened?
3. What did they ask God for and why?

## praise pray

- Ps. 99B:all
1. Give thanks that God is in control of all things.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  3. Pray for family matters.



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**reading** Acts 4:1-4 - The First Persecution

## notes

The relatively short time of peace and good will that the new church enjoys is abruptly brought to an end when Peter's sermon is interrupted by the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees. The Sadducees are Jewish priests who control the Temple. They accept only the first five books of the Bible (Genesis - Deuteronomy) as coming from God. They also don't believe in a Messiah (promised Saviour), angels, eternal life, or, importantly in this situation, that it is possible for anyone to be resurrected.

These Jewish leaders are really annoyed at Peter and the other apostles for the following reasons:

- Peter and John are simple, uneducated fishermen and therefore shouldn't be answering people's questions about the law and what to believe.
- Peter and John are teaching the people that Jesus has been resurrected from the grave.
- Peter and John are urging the people to save themselves from this corrupt generation (Acts 2:40), and have said that the leaders didn't know what they were doing when they put Jesus to death.

To cap it all, many people are listening to them and believing in Jesus. So Peter and John are arrested and thrown into jail.

## questions

1. Who interrupted Peter's sermon?
2. What things did the Sadducees not believe were real?
3. Why were Peter and John put in jail?

## praise pray

- Ps. 98A:all
1. Pray for Christians in other countries suffering persecution.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  3. Pray for family matters.



Wed.  
21st Jan.

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**reading** Acts 4:5-12 - Jesus is the Only Way

**notes** Peter and John are brought to trial before the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish religious court in Israel, made up of Pharisees and Sadducees and meeting with the permission of the Roman Governor. (Note - The Sanhedrin is dominated by the Sadducees who do not believe in the idea of resurrection.)

The first question that Peter and John are asked is how they did the miracle. Just as Jesus has promised, Peter is given the words to speak in his hour of trial (Matthew 10:19-20).

Peter tells the Sanhedrin, If you really want to know how this healing was done, I'll tell you - it was by the name of Jesus, the Jesus whom you crucified but whom God resurrected. So Peter is telling them that Jesus has the power and authority of God; he is accusing them of killing Jesus; and also saying that he believes in the resurrection - a belief which he knows the majority of the Sanhedrin, being Sadducees, will disagree with. He then applies Psalm 118:22 to Jesus. Jesus is the stone the builders (i.e. the Sanhedrin members) rejected, but God has made Him the chief cornerstone in His plan of salvation - therefore there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

- questions**
1. Before whom did Peter and John go on trial?
  2. What did the Sadducees not believe in?
  3. What is Jesus called in Psalm 118:22, and what does that mean?
  4. Can we be saved and go to heaven by believing in any religion?

- praise pray**
- Ps. 98B:all
1. Give thanks that God does help us when we speak about Him.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  3. Pray for family matters.



Thur.  
22nd Jan.

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**reading** Acts 4:13-22 - Speaking Up for Jesus

**notes** Getting arrested, spending a night in jail, and being on trial before the highest court in the land, must have been an intimidating experience. Yet Peter doesn't flinch because he is filled with the Holy Spirit. His bold reply to their question of how he and John have healed the lame man leaves the Sanhedrin amazed and completely speechless - there was nothing they could say (Acts 4:14).

Unable to respond to what Peter and John have said, the members of the Sanhedrin send Peter and John out of the room while they discuss the case in private. They know that a miracle has taken place, and they also know that all the people in Jerusalem know that a miracle has happened. They don't know what to do. Having arrested the two apostles, they will look silly if they let them go without punishing them, but if they do punish them, then they can't be too harsh, or else the people will be angry with them for punishing the men who healed the lame man. In the end the Sanhedrin decide that they will just give the apostles a good row and order them to not speak about Jesus anymore. So they call Peter and John back in again and tell them what they've decided, to which Peter and John respond, No way! We're not going to stop speaking about Jesus. Then the Sanhedrin tell them off again and let them go.

- questions**
1. Why was the Sanhedrin amazed at Peter?
  2. Why did the Sanhedrin find it difficult to decide what to do?
  3. What did the Sanhedrin tell the apostles?

- praise pray**
- Ps. 99A:all
1. Pray that God will make us bold to speak about Jesus.
  2. Pray for a member of your church as per the congregational list.
  3. Pray for family matters.