

HomeWord
For Parents

God added about 3,000 souls to the church after Peter's sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:41). As the church began to grow, so did the opposition to the truth about Jesus. When Peter and John were given the power to heal a lame man at the Temple in the name of Jesus, the people were amazed. Peter declared that it was by faith in the name of Jesus Christ that the lame man had been healed (Acts 3:15–16).

It wasn't long before Peter and John were arrested—but not before 5,000 more believers were added to the church (Acts 4:1–4). A trial followed their arrest as the rulers, elders, scribes, Annas, the high priest, Caiaphas, and others asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" (Acts 4:5–7). Peter, filled with the wisdom and knowledge of the Holy Spirit, again proclaimed that it was by the name of Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified and God had raised from the dead, that the man had been healed. Peter boldly proclaimed that salvation could be found in NO other name given to men under heaven (Acts 4:8–12). The Jewish council threatened the apostles and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus! However, Peter and John would not back down from speaking the things they had seen and heard (Acts 4:20).

The apostles were released and went back to their friends. They rejoiced at God's faithfulness and prayed that the Lord would grant them boldness to speak His Word and continue to give them the power to do signs and wonders in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:23–30).

The persecution of the church and the apostles would only continue to grow worse. But in spite of beatings and imprisonment, the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:40–41). And the church continued to grow.

As Christians, we, too, should boldly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, for it was through its truth that we were saved and through its power that others will be saved to eternal life.

Go to the Online Resource Page for more information.

OutWord For Family Discussion

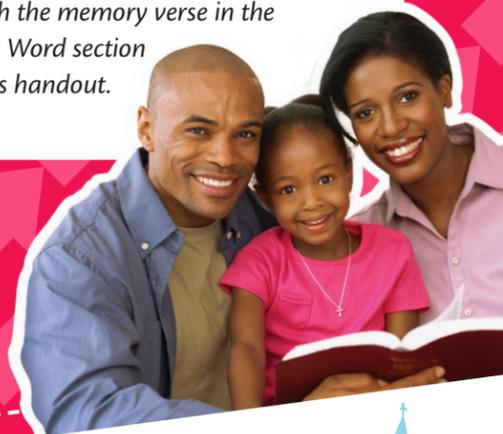
Suppose you heard someone say he thinks a battle is raging today between Christians and the people who want to shut them up. **What could you say?**

It sure seems that way sometimes! But it isn't a battle between people as much as it is a spiritual battle that has been going on since sin entered the world. Satan doesn't like it when God's people declare the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He will do everything he can to stop people from believing it. He doesn't want the church to grow and people to hear about salvation and the forgiveness of sin. So, a spiritual war rages. The apostles were persecuted for proclaiming the name of Jesus. And the same thing is happening to Christians around the world today. It's because the devil uses people and events to try to stop others from knowing about the truth of the gospel. But take heart. God is all-powerful and sovereign. His plan will be fulfilled, and no evil will be able to stand against Him or those He has called to proclaim the gospel!

inWord
For Family Study

"You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word" (Psalm 119:114). Where does confidence in God's protection and hope in His Word come from? Teach your children where real hope lies—read and memorize Scripture together.

Begin with the memory verse in the Learn the Word section inside this handout.



The Apostles Are Persecuted

KEY THEME

- God uses people to accomplish His plans.

KEY PASSAGES

- Acts 4:1–4, 4:7–10, 4:16–20, 4:23–24, 5:40–42



What You **HEARD** in the **WORD**

- The apostles were persecuted because they were preaching in the name of Jesus.
- The apostles responded to the persecution by praying and glorifying God in boldness. They rejoiced to be counted worthy to suffer for Christ and continued preaching.

Answer these questions from today's lesson.

- 1 The _____ gave the apostles power to preach the gospel boldly.
- 2 Who threatened the apostles, arrested them, and had them beaten for preaching in the name of Jesus?
- 3 How did the apostles react to the persecution?

