

## Family Lesson 75

**Principle:** Live for Christ in spite of persecution.

**Bible Character(s):** Peter, John

**Scripture Reference:** Acts 4:1-22

**1. Worship** - Choose your favorite songs from the [Spotify playlist](#) found on the curriculum resource page. Have fun, sing loudly, and follow along with the motions!

**2. Bible Lesson** - Read through the lesson with your family. The bold font is meant to be read aloud along with the Scripture references.

### Bible Lesson

Today, we'll hear more about Peter and John who were bold in real-life situations. Their boldness didn't come from being tough. The Holy Spirit filled them with boldness to speak the truth about Jesus!

Last week, what did God use Peter and John to do? (Heal a lame beggar.) What did the beggar think he needed? (He thought that money was what he needed most in his life, but Peter and John showed him that what he needed most was Jesus.) Through God's power, Peter and John healed the lame beggar so he was able to walk. What did the beggar do when he was healed? (He got up and praised God for healing him.) Everyone who saw what happened was amazed.

Today, we are going to continue learning about Peter and John. They keep telling others that Jesus died and rose again. The religious leaders, who had wanted to kill Jesus, do not want Peter and John to teach others about Jesus. They do not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. Do you think this stops Peter and John from telling others about Jesus? (Allow responses.)

Let's read in Acts 4 [NLT] to see how Peter and John respond to these religious leaders.

### Acts 4:1-4

*While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees. <sup>2</sup> These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead. <sup>3</sup> They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning. <sup>4</sup> But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of believers now totaled about 5,000 men, not counting women and children.*

Why are Peter and John arrested? (Allow responses.) They are obeying Jesus' instructions and telling others about Christ. They know that living for Christ is worth it because their lives are changed by Jesus. They want to share this with others, even if it means suffering. They risk their lives to tell others about Jesus.

The next morning, Peter and John stand before the Sanhedrin ("san-hee-drin"). The Sanhedrin is the council of all the rulers, elders, and teachers of religious law—71 members. The members of this council are the same people who had Jesus arrested and crucified. They are powerful. Peter and John have to stand in front of this large group of powerful people and answer the question, "By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?" (v. 7) They have to explain why they are preaching about Jesus. How would you feel if you had to answer this question, knowing the people you were speaking to are the ones who had Jesus crucified? (Allow responses.) Do you think Peter and John are afraid? (Allow responses.) Let's see how they respond.

**Acts 4:8-12**

<sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of our people, <sup>9</sup> are we being questioned today because we’ve done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? <sup>10</sup> Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead. <sup>11</sup> For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says, ‘The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.’ <sup>12</sup> There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

**Peter answers the council with boldness and power. He does not back down even though he knows they could have him killed. Do you think you would be able to respond like Peter? (Allow responses.) Verse 8 says that Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives him the words to say and the strength to say them. We can also respond this way, not because of who we are or how strong we are, but because of the power of the Holy Spirit. If you believe and trust in Jesus, you also have the Holy Spirit. You can boldly speak about what God has done in your life because of the Holy Spirit in you.**

Talk about or show your child the pictures (found on [GCK Resource Page](#)) of the different cornerstone examples to give them an idea of what a cornerstone is. Explain to your child that if the cornerstone is removed, the structure isn’t as stable—it might even collapse.

A cornerstone is the main stone used in the foundation of a building. If a cornerstone is not used, the building will not be very stable; it might fall down. Jesus is the cornerstone of Christianity. Verse 12 says, “There is salvation in no one else.” Jesus is the key; without him, no one can be saved. There is no other way. Our own good works or good behavior will not save

us. Jesus is the way, the truth, and light, and no one comes to the Father except through him.

**Let’s see how the religious leaders respond to Peter and John.**

**Acts 4:13-18**

<sup>13</sup> The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. <sup>14</sup> But since they could see the man who had been healed standing right there among them, there was nothing the council could say. <sup>15</sup> So they ordered Peter and John out of the council chamber and conferred among themselves.

<sup>16</sup> “What should we do with these men?” they asked each other. “We can’t deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it. <sup>17</sup> But to keep them from spreading their propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus’ name again.” <sup>18</sup> So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.

**Are Peter and John special men with special powers? (Allow responses.) No, verse 13 says they are ordinary people, just like you and me. They could heal the lame beggar through the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The council knows the beggar had been healed. But the council does not want Peter and John to keep sharing about Jesus. They tell Peter and John never to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. Do you think Peter and John agree to the council’s warning or continue to obey Jesus? (Allow responses.)**

**Acts 4:19-20**

<sup>19</sup> But Peter and John replied, “Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him?”

<sup>20</sup> We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.”

Peter and John choose to obey Jesus. Even with the possibility of being arrested, they choose to obey him. We can learn a lot about being bold and courageous from Peter and John. They do not stop telling about what they have seen and heard. Do you choose to obey Jesus? Do you tell others about Jesus, or are you afraid of what others might say or think? (Allow responses.)

Let's read the final verses and see what happens to Peter and John.

### Acts 4:21-22

*<sup>21</sup> The council then threatened them further, but they finally let them go because they didn't know how to punish them without starting a riot. For everyone was praising God <sup>22</sup> for this miraculous sign—the healing of a man who had been lame for more than forty years.*

Peter and John are released, and everyone begins praising God. They have seen God do amazing things in the life of the man who had been lame, and they see God's protection of Peter and John. The people respond with praise. We are to praise God also. We may not have seen people healed from physical pain in such a miraculous way, but we can see people's lives changed through the power of Jesus in their life. For this, we should give God praise.

Read through the following situations, asking your child if the consequences of the actions were "worth it." Help remind your child that it is worth it. Use the following questions to help them think through each situation: Is it worth it? Is it worth it to believe? Is it worth it to tell? Is it worth it to suffer? Is it worth it for Peter and John? Is it worth it for ourselves?

1. You and your little sister are outside playing, and your parents told you both not to go swimming in the pool. After a little while, your sister jumps into the pool to play! You tell your parents because you know she's not supposed to be in the pool without supervision. She gets in trouble, and then

she is mean to you for the next three weeks for telling on her.

2. A bunch of your classmates decide to play kickball while outside at recess. Two captains are chosen to pick teams, and you are one of them. A few rounds of picking goes by, and then you decide to pick a girl who is always the last one to be picked so she won't be the last one this time. Your teammates complain to you about picking her, and the other team starts laughing at you. You tell her you're happy she is on your team.
3. A friend at school took some candy off your teacher's desk when your teacher was not looking. You know it was wrong of him and tell him that he should tell the teacher and apologize. He tells you that you are stupid for thinking he should apologize and then tells all his friends to call you "stupid."
4. You are at a friend's house, and they put in a movie that you know you shouldn't watch. You tell them your parents wouldn't allow you to watch it, but they all call you a baby and start the movie anyway. You leave the room because you know you aren't supposed to watch it.
5. At lunchtime during school, you pray before you begin eating. A boy sitting a few spots down watches and makes fun of you. You tell him you pray because you want to thank God for providing the food. The boy then tells his friends and they start laughing at you.

**When you believe and trust in Jesus, it does not mean that your life will be easy. You may still suffer or go through hard times. People might make fun of you or even hurt you because you believe in Jesus. When it is hard, is it worth it to follow Christ?** (Allow responses.) Jesus offers us a new life of joy no matter what our circumstances are around us. God gives us joy and power that we cannot get from anyone or anything else. The suffering and persecution we experience is nothing compared to the love and power that God gives us. Is it worth it to you? (Allow responses.)

As Americans, we live in a country that has freedom of religion. That means we are free to choose any religion we want without getting in trouble with the police. We may have people laugh at us or think we are wrong, but in America, people are not put in jail for telling others about Jesus. In other countries, people can lose their families and belongings because of their faith. There are missionaries who have died because they were telling others about Jesus. There are people who are in prison because they are telling others in their countries about Jesus. They have experienced something similar to Peter and John.

## Prayer

Spend a few minutes in prayer to close your family time. Ask God to give each of us strength to live for him, even when it's hard.

## Activity

"My Act of Testimony" - the purpose of this activity is to give your child the opportunity to write down part of their story so they can tell others about Christ.

### Supplies:

Paper

Pencil

Crayons/Markers/Colored Pencils

Have you seen God do something amazing in your life? Has God met a need for you or your family? Has God changed your heart? If so, you have something that you can share with others. This can be called a testimony. You can "testify" about how God has changed you. You can also tell others about what you have heard and what you have learned. You have been learning about God's love for you, and Jesus' great love and power. If you believe and trust in Jesus as your Savior, you have the Holy Spirit in you at all times. You can be bold like Peter and John and tell others about God's love and forgiveness, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Give your child a sheet of paper. Help them think of ways that God has changed their hearts. Talk through what it looks like to have God change your heart—conviction, repentance, forgiveness, resulting fruit (Galatians 5:22-23). Have them draw a picture about what Jesus has done in their lives. (Examples: helped them to love others, helped them not get mad at their brother/sister, helped them befriend the weird kid in their class, helped them get baptized when they used to be scared to do it, etc.)

**How has God changed your heart?** (Allow responses.) **You can boldly share these things with the people around you. Your friends might ask you why you act a certain way or make certain choices. Is it worth telling them about Jesus? Look back at the blessings God has given you. Think about your sin and how Jesus has taken the punishment for your sin. Who told you about Jesus? Are you thankful that someone told you how you can be saved? Who can you tell?**

