



SCC Message by John Aldax, February 9, 2014

Part 6

Pluralism and the Gospel

Acts 4:1 – 22

Acts 4:1 – 22 – ¹ The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. ² They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³ They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. ⁴ But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

⁵ The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. ⁷ They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone."

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. ¹⁵ So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. ¹⁶ "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

¹⁸ Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰ As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

²¹ After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

THE CLAIM THAT JESUS IS SUPERIOR PROVOKED HOSTILITY

The claim that Jesus is superior provoked hostility from the Jewish leaders

Acts 10:43 – All the prophets testify about him that *everyone* who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

The claim that Jesus is superior provoked hostility from the surrounding cultures

Acts 19:26 – . . . gods made by human hands are no gods at all.

The claim that Jesus is superior provoked hostility from the Roman government

“Caesar is lord.”

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

OBJECTIONS TO THE CLAIM THAT JESUS IS SUPERIOR

1. It is arrogant to say that Jesus is the only way to God.

“Before Abraham was I already existed.” (John 8:58)

“I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes to the Father but by me.” (John 14:6)

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9)

“. . . if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me” (Matthew 26:39)

“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” (Matthew 26:28)

2. It is exclusionary to say that Jesus is the only way to God.

HOW CAN WE “MAKE DISCIPLES” OF A PLURALISTIC WORLD?

“If we tune in carefully, we can detect this *growing desire for authenticity* all around us.” (Edward Docx, *Prospect Magazine* (UK), *Postmodernism is Dead*, in July 2011.

Jesus saved us through rejection

John 13:14 & 15 – ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an *example* that *you should do as I have done for you*. (NIV)

Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples. John 13:35 (NLT)

Proverbs 3:3 & 4 – ³ Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

⁴ Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. (NIV)