

THEY HAD BEEN WITH JESUS

Acts 4:13, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus."

Peter and John were preaching Christ before the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin took note. What a beautiful statement, "they recognized that they had been with Jesus." Have you been with Jesus? You've heard the quote by Jim Rohn, *"You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with"*. Jesus has such a great impact, does He not? Let's consider how being with Jesus does so.

Being with Jesus makes you bold. Acts 4:5-12

- You don't have to be educated or popular on the world. These were fishermen. Let's be reminded of 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.

Being with Jesus makes you a servant. 3:1-10

- Had the pleasure of talking with one of you this week. Stopped by "the office" (my coffee shop) and we chatted. We talked about service. Do you see what the people were doing for this man? They carried him daily at the gate. That was some daily commitment. Jesus loved seeing this kind of love. Remember when he saw the faith of the lame man and those who brought him to Jesus? One thing this lame man had was the love of friends/family. One thing he lacked? Faith in Jesus.
- If the community could love and help this man . . . how much more should Peter and John. So what did they do? They gave him Jesus. Or at least help in the name of Jesus. What did it result in? Praising God. Peter and John were looking like their friend, weren't they!

Being with Jesus means there's always room for you. 3:11-16

- Look at Peter. He looks a little different in this passage than he did not long ago. Not long ago Peter was denying Jesus. Pretty bold thing for Peter to say, "you killed the Author of life". Yep. And you pretended like you didn't know Him! Yet, here he is proclaiming a bold message, with confidence, before his own people.
- Listen, there's nothing that Jesus can't forgive. Your life isn't done. The race isn't over. Guess who calls the shots? Satan? No, Jesus. If Jesus wants to forgive and put you back to work - then He will. "But no one will listen to me." Maybe not, but don't let that stop you from proclaiming truth. Yes, that means you may have to point out sin in others' life . . . and that's okay. However, this does require something on your part . . .

Being with Jesus makes you want to repent. 3:17-26

- None of us can be this bold and have an impact unless we repent of our sins. If we don't, then the world is right to ignore us and we're wrong for correcting others while we have a plank in our own eye.

- Let's remember what the goal is and the gift of God. We think we find fulfillment going our own ways, but the reality is that we create a mess. Like this crowd had - having killed Jesus. Yet Jesus offers them what? The blotting of sins and times of refreshment. Chew on that for a moment. We kill Him. He forgives and comforts. Where's the justice in that?
- We'd be wise to listen to Jesus now. He's not some grandfather, throwing out gifts and ready to be trampled on. No, he's the great prophet. This passage is taken from **Deuteronomy 18**. I spent some time back in this passage and was reading **vs. 9-14**. In that passage it forbids Israel from learning from the nations God would drive out of the promised land. They were abominable people, so he didn't want them to act or follow them in any way. Among their practices were children sacrifices, divination, fortune telling, interpreting omens, sorcery, etc. When you look at the others passages such as **Leviticus 19:26-28**, it also forbids rounding off the hair on their temples or marring the edges of their beards, or cutting their bodies for the dead or tattoos. The reason why he forbid these things is because of what it represented and who it was associated with. Israel had a tendency to not only believe what others around them believed, but they'd go so far to even look like them. When we repent - we're fulling repenting. We're saying, "I don't want to act, look or talk like the world anymore." Being with Jesus changes all of this. Who are you with?

Being with Jesus means being with believers. 4:1-4

- Now we're back where we started. They healed the man and began to preach Jesus. The religious leaders put them custody for this, but there's something not to be overlooked. "But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand." It's easy to overlook this passage in chapter 4. It's also easy to overlook this passage in life.
- Being with Jesus means you're not alone. We were talking to the kiddos about God's wisdom this past week. "Why do you think God gave us the church? Why not give people the truth and let us all follow God on our own?" Well, they understood why. So do you. You know, so many of us wouldn't know each other because we may live in different towns, have different jobs and interests. Yet, God can bring us all together and we find among us friendships that are many times stronger than blood. How is that? Through the story of the one who shed His blood for the world. We find direction and comfort in Him. Truth be - He's teaching us to be like Him so we can guide and comfort each other. Where would we be without Jesus is the first question. But, I've got to ask, where would we be without each other?