

Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Issue 15

Are We Guilty of Proof Texting Concerning The Local Church? - Acts Ch.4



B. Kirkland

A Personal Word Concerning This Series

Several years ago I decided to put away all of my Bible commentaries and determined to study the Word of God alone. I purchased a Bible with no footnotes and began studying by simply comparing Scripture with Scripture.

I attempted to put everything out of my mind that I thought I knew was correct and prayed that I might be teachable even if it meant having to admit I had been wrong concerning my position on any Bible doctrines. It has been quite an experience to say the least.

After a very extensive study of the Book of Acts, I have not changed my position on any doctrine; however, I have changed my position on the timeline of some things.

These articles are not written to change anyone to my position; however, it is my goal to challenge everyone to study the Word of God before looking at any Bible commentaries.

Pastor Kirkland

The storyline continues from the previous chapter where Peter was preaching concerning Israel and her kingdom. Peter got the religious leaders very upset and he and John ended up in prison. It was worth it, however, because we read in verse four, *“Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand”* (Acts 4:4).

What did they believe? They obviously believed what Peter was preaching. The religious leaders in Israel called a meeting. It included, *“their rulers, and elders, and scribes... Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest”* (Acts 4:6).

Verse 7 says, *“And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?”*

Verse 8-10 says, *“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.”*

Peter was speaking to their *“...rulers, and elders, and scribes”* (v.4). We read, *“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel...”* (v.4). He said his comments were for, *“...you all”* (v.10). He was referring to all the leaders of the *“rulers of the people, and elders of Israel”* who were listening to him. He also referred to, *“all the people of Israel.”* (v.10).

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Nothing in Peter’s comments were for any Gentiles and nothing had anything to do with local church doctrine.

We will repeatedly empathize that this does not mean the local church was not underway in Jerusalem.

Acts 8: I refers to “the church at Jerusalem.” The fact is, this chapter is not focusing on the local church it is focusing on Israel and Israel’s kingdom.

“THIS IS THE STONE”

Jesus is referred to many of different things in the Bible.

Why did Peter refer to Christ as, “the stone”? (Acts 4:10). Peter was quoting from one of the **Messianic** Psalms. It is a direct quote of the Messianic Psalm 118:22 that says, “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.” Christ applied these verses to Himself in Matthew 21:42-43. He said, “Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner...Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, (Israel) and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

JESUS RODE INTO JERUSALEM ON A DONKEY

Why did Jesus ride in to Jerusalem on a donkey? What was said concerning his ride into Jerusalem? Matthew 21:5 says, “Behold, **thy King** cometh unto thee.” Matthew 21:9 gives us a direct quote from Psalm 118:25,26. “And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the **Son of David**: (in line for the throne) Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Israel’s King Would Save Them From Their Enemies.

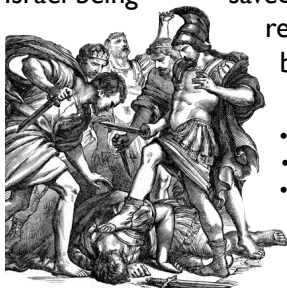
Peter continued in verse twelve saying,

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

We should ask the question, saved from what?

Keeping The Statement In Context.

Once again, we must be careful not to jump to our preconceived definitions of Bible words. We have seen verse after verse referring to Israel being saved from her enemies. Listed here are a few references from the Book of Psalms about Israel being saved from her enemies.



- Psalm 18:3, “...saved from mine enemies.”
- Psalm 34:6, “...saved him out of all his troubles.”
- Psalm 44:7, “...saved us from our enemies.”
- Psalm 107:13, “...he saved them out of their distresses.”
- Psalm 18:1, “...delivered from the hand of all his enemies.”

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“God forbid that I should be spared the humiliation which springs from the truth!”

C.H Spurgeon

Psalm 25:4

“Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.”

Psalm 25:5

“Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; in thee do I wait all the day.”

Psalm 27:11

“Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.”

Psalm 86:11

“Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.”

Psalm 119:12

“O LORD: teach me thy statutes.”

Psalm 119:26

“I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes.”

Psalm 119:33

“Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.”

Psalm 119:33

“The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.”

Psalm 119:66

“Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.”



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- **Psalm 18:17**, "He delivered me from my strong enemy."
- **Psalm 18:48**, "He delivered me from mine enemies."
- **Psalm 18:48**, "...delivered me from the violent man."
- **Psalm 34:4**, "...delivered me from all my fears."
- **Psalm 54:7**, "For he hath delivered me out of all trouble."
- **Psalm 78:42**, "...he delivered them from the enemy."
- **Psalm 107:6**, "...he delivered them out of their distresses."
- **Psalm 107:20**, "...delivered them from their destructions."



Physical Salvation For Israel

Listed here are a few references about Israel's salvation from her enemies.

Salvation From The Egyptians

Exodus 14:13,

"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD"

Salvation From The Ammonites

First Samuel 11:13,

"...to day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel."

Salvation From The Philistine Giant

First Samuel 19:5,

"...and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel."

Salvation From Moab

Second Chronicles 20:17,

"...stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you."

Salvation From Bondage

Psalm 53:6,

"Oh that the salvation of Israel were come...When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."

Verses 13,14

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it."

THE INFLUENCE OF PETER AND JOHN

- "...they saw the boldness of Peter and John."
- "...perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men."
- "...they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

"Been with Jesus"

This is interesting considering these religious hypocrites had recently crucified Jesus. Even though they realized Christ was alive again they refused to listen to Peter and John. Realizing that Christ was alive and the lame man was healed we read. "...they could say nothing against it" (Acts 4:14).

PETER AND JOHN WENT TO THEIR OWN COMPANY

Verses 14-28 tells us the council, conferred among themselves and decided to threaten Peter and John not to speak in the Name of Jesus. We read, they returned to "...their own company" (Acts 4:23).

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Points To Ponder



Doing Nothing By Partiality???

"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."

(First Timothy 5:21)

Doing Nothing By Partiality???

Most fundamentalists openly rebuke the Christianity Today magazine for its liberal content. However, when The Sword of The Lord promoted the heresy put forth by Jack Hyles and Curtis Hutson that repentance is the enemy of soul-winning, fundamentalists remain strangely silent. The Sword of The Lord even changed their hymnbook to line up with this heresy. **Fundamental reaction? Silence!**

Doing Nothing By Partiality???

We are quick to separate from those men with hair over the ears or touching the collar, and remain silent when fundamentalists attack the character of God with Calvin's heresy that says God brought some people into this world for no other reason than to watch them burn in Hell for eternity.

Doing Nothing By Partiality???

Some fundamentalists are quick to denounce Jack VanImpe for his associations and yet they remained silent when Jack Schapp promoted Geronimo Aguilar and his sensual rap dancers at the Richmond Outreach Center. Schaap said what they are doing is "awesome."

*Silence Isn't Always Golden,
Sometimes Its Just Plain Yellow.*



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Acts 4:23,

*“And being let go, they went to **their own company**, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.”*

The only other place that phrase is used is in Acts 15:22 where it is very obvious that it is referring to the local church.

Acts 15:22,

*“Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of **their own company** to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.”*

One more indication that the local church was underway prior to Pentecost.

Verses 29-31

“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word. By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”

SPEAKING THE WORD

Their prayer, “...grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word” (Acts 4:29).

Peter’s word,

Acts 2:41,

*“Then they that gladly received **his word** were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”*

Acts 4:4,

*“Howbeit many of them which **heard the word** believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word”*

Acts 4:31,

*“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they **spake the word** of God with boldness.”*

What word were they preaching?

- It wasn’t about tithing.
- It wasn’t about being born again.
- It wasn’t about loving one another.
- It wasn’t about the church.

To this point in the Book of Acts the only word they were preaching was about **the Kingdom for Israel**.

Acts 1:6,

*“wilt thou at this time restore again **the kingdom to Israel?**”*

Acts 2:22,

*“Ye men of **Israel**, hear these words.”*

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Article

How To Know God’s Will For Everyday Decisions

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Audio

Peter In Serious Trouble Again!

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Inward and Outward Modesty



By Rebecca Oksbjerg
Murraylands Baptist Church,
Murray Bridge S.A.

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Sites of Interest

Click Below





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Acts 2:36,

“...let all the house of **Israel** know...”

Acts 3:12,

“Ye men of **Israel**...”

Acts 4:8,

Ye rulers of the people, and elders of **Israel**...”

Acts 4:10,

“Be it known unto...to **all the people of Israel**...”

“ALL THINGS COMMON”

WHY DID THIS START AND WHY DID IT STOP?

Acts 4:34-35,

“Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet.”

Remember, the Jews were not fellowshiping with Gentiles twelve years after this situation. (See Acts chapter 10 and 11). Therefore, whatever this was it certainly did not include any Gentiles.

This account is not the first mention of them having, “...all things common.”

Acts 2:44-45,

“And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to their, as every man had need.”

Again, is very important to remember that it was only Jews who were involved in this. It had nothing to do with the local church.

Acts 4:32,

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.”

A multitude “...believed.”

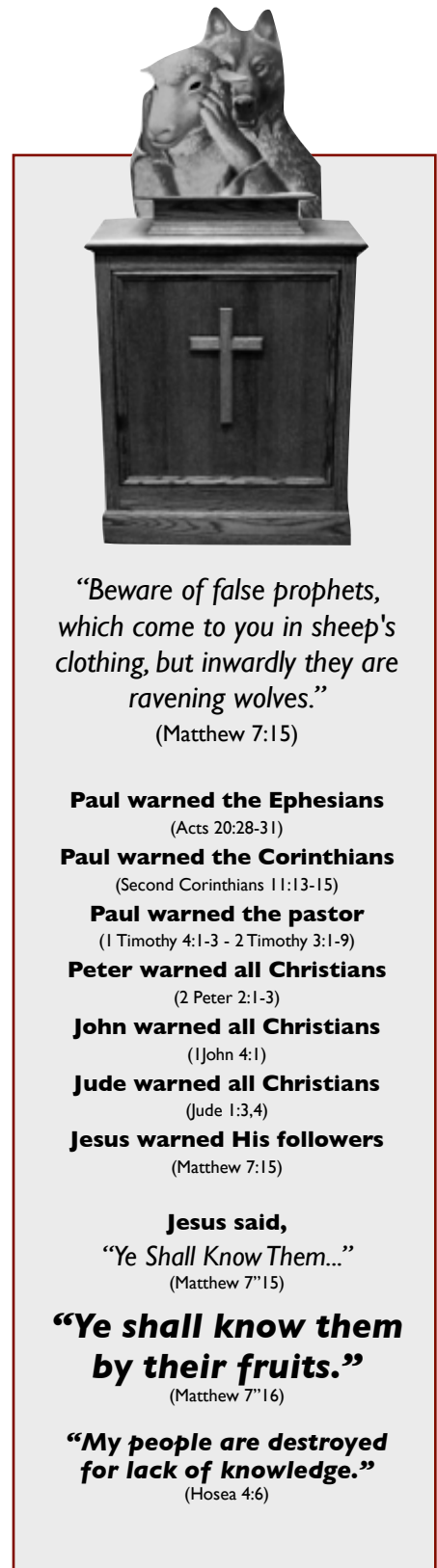
What did they believe?

They believed what Peter was preaching concerning Israel's King and their kingdom. They believed what they were hearing. The word “...they” has been used over thirty times to this point in the book of Acts and always refers to the Jews in the context of what they were hearing.

The number of verses that focus the attention on the Nation of Israel in these early chapters of Acts would seem to indicate that the Holy Spirit felt it was very important for us to understand that the focus had to do with the Nation of Israel.

- **Acts 1:19,** “...the dwellers at Jerusalem.”
- **Acts 2:5,** “...dwelling at Jerusalem Jews.”
- **Acts 2:46,** “...in the temple.”
- **Acts 2:14,** “...Ye men of Judaea.”
- **Acts 2:14,** “...ye that dwell at Jerusalem.”
- **Acts 2:22,** “Ye men of Israel.”
- **Acts 2:36,** “...all the house of Israel.”
- **Acts 3:1,** “...into the temple.”

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“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

(Matthew 7:15)

Paul warned the Ephesians

(Acts 20:28-31)

Paul warned the Corinthians

(Second Corinthians 11:13-15)

Paul warned the pastor

(1 Timothy 4:1-3 - 2 Timothy 3:1-9)

Peter warned all Christians

(2 Peter 2:1-3)

John warned all Christians

(1 John 4:1)

Jude warned all Christians

(Jude 1:3,4)

Jesus warned His followers

(Matthew 7:15)

Jesus said,

“Ye Shall Know Them...”

(Matthew 7:15)

“Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

(Matthew 7:16)

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

(Hosea 4:6)



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- **Acts 3:2**, "...the gate of the temple."
- **Acts 3:12**, "Ye men of Israel."
- **Acts 4:6**, "...gathered together at Jerusalem."
- **Acts 4:8**, "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel!"
- **Acts 4:10**, "...the people of Israel."
- **Acts 4:16**, "...them that dwell in Jerusalem."
- **Acts 4:27**, "... people of Israel."
- **Acts 3:3**, "...into the temple."
- **Acts 3:8**, "...into the temple."
- **Acts 3:10**, "...the temple."
- **Acts 4:1**, "...the captain of the temple."

BRINGING THEIR POSSESSIONS TO THE APOSTLES FEET ENDED AFTER CHAPTER FIVE

At that point nothing else is mentioned about having, "...all things common."

The unity was over.

In Acts 6:1 says, "...there arose a murmuring." The bringing of their possessions and laying them at the apostles feet had nothing to do with the local church or local church doctrine. The disunity was among those who believed what Peter was preaching about the kingdom promised to Israel. We will discuss this in more detail in a future article.

CONCLUSIONS FROM CHAPTER FOUR

1. About 5000 men believed what Peter was preaching about the kingdom.
2. Peter healed a cripple on his way into the temple.
3. The Jewish religious leaders were very upset.
4. Peter took the opportunity to preach.
5. His message was totally Jewish in content.
6. He directed his listeners back to a Messianic Psalm concerning Israel refusing their Messiah.
7. Peter's message, focused on the Nation of Israel being saved from her enemies.
8. The multitude of them that believed Peter's message, "...had all things common."
9. Those who believed what Peter was preaching later ceased to have all things common.
10. The fact for Israel was simple; no unity; no kingdom!
11. There is nothing in Acts chapter four about the local church or local church doctrine.

12. This does not mean local churches were not meeting. It simply means this chapter is focusing on another subject.

To take verses out of Acts Chapter Four To Support Anything About The Beginning of The Local Church Is To Be Guilty of Proof Texting.



"In essentials unity, in non-essentials freedom, in all things love."

On the surface this sounds good; however, it completely denies the principles and teachings of the Word of God. It is nothing more than a cute little saying created to help promote compromise and the one world apostate church.

The word **non-essential** means *unnecessary* and the word **essential** pertains to that which is *necessary* and must be believed. Only a spiritual simpleton would suggest there is something in the Word of God that is unnecessary.

Every doctrine in the Word of God is essential to either our salvation or our walk with the Lord. No one has the right to put one truth above another or to pick and choose what is essential.

Suggesting that part of the Word of God is nonessential is simply a way of rejecting God's Word for the sake of getting along with compromisers. Our so-called fundamental movement is plagued with the teaching of non-essentials in spite of the fact that nobody can produce a solid Bible foundation for this nonsense. It is a man-made false doctrine put together by compromisers who want unity at the expense of truth.

Christ commanded His leaders to teach Christians "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). He didn't say just pick and choose what will not cause division.

Paul warned the pastors at Ephesus to "preach the whole council of God" (Acts 20:27).