

# *Resurrection Life of Jesus Church*

## THE EARLY CHURCH

RLJ-2000

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### PART 4: 5,000 MORE BORN AGAIN

#### THE CHURCH

In our forensic study of the early church, we are examining the first weeks after Pentecost. With the mindset that the return of Jesus was imminent, the decision was made by the apostles to start home groups. There was a lot of logistics that needed attention since the day 3,000 when converts were added.

Most of these new Christians came from other nations and had no homes in the Jerusalem area which could be utilized. The apostles and the 70 others functioned as pastor/teachers as they went from group to group, repeating what Jesus had said and done. None of the Gospels or epistles existed at this point and the foundational teachings of the New Testament were spread by word of mouth.

It must have been a shock to the 120 original followers of Jesus when 3,000 converts were suddenly added to their group. There were no church buildings and the biggest meeting place was the upper room. It was impossible to fit all the new Christians into that room.

Luke recorded that they met daily at the temple complex and developed house churches to meet and share meals. Knowing that most of the converts were from other nations, private homes were secured, and in this way, the apostles and the 70 others conducted teachings and led the new converts in prayer.

Those who lived in Jerusalem or in the countryside of Judea began to sell their possessions to ensure there was food for the new converts. New people were added daily to their numbers as they were born again. **Acts 2:42-47**

The mindset of the original 120 disciples was that Jesus was returning shortly and there was no need for the new converts to try to find a place to live for themselves. This mentality can be seen in the apostle Peter, who shortly before his death, realized the necessity of putting into writing Jesus' doctrine and works. **2 Peter 1:12-16**

#### PETER AND JOHN

The last time Peter and John visited the temple ground was when Jesus confronted the ungodly Jewish leadership. **Matthew 21:23-27; 45-46**

At another time, the Jews picked up stones and tried to kill Jesus and his followers on the temple ground. **John 8:52-59**

It had been more than fifty days since the Jewish leadership used the Romans to scourge and crucify Jesus. Caiaphas was still in charge of the Sanhedrin and Pontius Pilate remained the Roman governor of Judea. It was suicidal to return to the temple ground and preach about Jesus' resurrection, yet the Holy Spirit had changed the 120 followers, removing fear and doubt and replacing it with power and boldness. **Acts 3:1**



## **A DIVINE APPOINTMENT**

Peter and John decided to visit the temple ground at the ninth hour (3:00 pm) to pray. There was a daily routine at the temple when priests led a public daily prayer. The temple ground had several entrances. Family members had dropped off a lame man each day at the gate called Beautiful where he sat and begged. The Holy Spirit set up a divine appointment for John and Peter with the lame man. **verses 2-3**

The last time Peter performed a miracle was about two years ago when Jesus had sent them out by twos to preach, heal, and cast out demons. **Matthew 10:1; 7-8**

When Peter and John came within speaking distance of the lame beggar, the Holy Spirit took control of Peter's mouth. **Acts 3:4-5**

Peter stated that while he had no money, he did have something better to offer. Reaching down and grabbing the outstretched hand, Peter pulled the lame man up and told him to start walking as a result of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. **verses 6-7**

The power of God immediately surged through the man's body and the atrophied leg muscles were instantly transformed into vibrant muscles that supported the weight of his body. This man had been born lame. Forty years had gone by without him ever standing on his legs or taking step. Then in one miraculous second, the power of God made him whole! To say that this unnamed man was excited would be an understatement as he leapt and shouted for joy! **verse 8**

People were astonished as the two apostles and the healed man entered the temple grounds because the lame man was a well-known beggar. **verses 9-10**

The public began to stream toward the apostles and the leaping man as the three men ended up on Solomon's porch. **verse 11**

When Peter saw the size of the crowd, he seized the opportunity to boldly preach the Gospel to them. **verses 12-26**

## **FIVE THOUSAND**

This crowd of Jewish men heard the preaching of Peter, and in responding to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, proceeded to confess Jesus as their Messiah and Savior. This commotion came to the attention of the priests and they confronted Peter and John alongside the captain of the temple ground, his soldiers, and a group of Sadducees.

**Acts 4:1**

The ungodly religious leadership were perturbed at having to deal with the disciples of Jesus two months after His crucifixion and jailed them, intending to deal with them the next day. **verses 2-3**

Luke records that the number of men born again at the temple – 5,000 – was even greater than the original outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. **verse 4**

## **BEHIND THE SCENES**

What took place in the spirit world? Lucifer was humiliated and lost all respect among the fallen angels and demons. He sold them on the idea of killing Jesus to ruin the redemption plan for the human race.

Lucifer was aware of that Jesus the Son of God had been incarnated into a human body. By destroying that physical body, he was confident that he had permanently wrecked God's plan for redeeming humanity.

*"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."  
(1 Corinthians 2:7-8)*

Jesus returned from Paradise, entered the tomb and picked up His body that had been refurbished by the Holy Spirit, and ordered Lucifer to bow before Him. The Son of God crushed his skull and informed him that he and his minions were doomed.

*"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he (Jesus) made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."  
(Colossians 2:14-15)*

The other fallen angels alongside the demons realized that Satan had led them from one disaster to another and hated him for the deception. But the Devil still had supernatural power from when he was a cherub and ruled his earthly kingdom with brute force.

Prior to the day of Pentecost, Lucifer had never encountered born again humans who were baptized in the Holy Spirit. During the Old Testament time (4,000 years), he had repeatedly been able to lure God's people into sin and seize control of them. But this time he was being opposed by the Godhead directly in form of the Holy Spirit.

Satan realized as long as a Christians walked "in Spirit and in Truth," he could not defeat them.

*"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."  
(John 4:24)*

He eventually figured out that the only way to defeat this new movement of the Godhead was to induce the Christians to sin and walk away from Jesus.

*"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."  
(1 Peter 5:8-9)*

When Lucifer learned that a lame man had been healed at the temple and 5,000 Jews had chosen to accept Jesus as their Messiah, he was filled with wrath and activated the demon possessed Jewish leadership to eliminate Peter and John.

The apostles and the rest of the 120 original followers of Jesus were blissfully unaware of what was happening in the spirit world. They were happily serving Jesus, operating

under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, while they waited for the second return of Jesus to reinstate the Kingdom of Israel.

***Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!***

***Do you have an ear to hear with?***