

STUDENT DISCUSSION GUIDE

EMPOWERED – Session 4

Empowered to Stand

Acts 3:1–4:31

SESSION FOCUS

The Holy Spirit empowers believers not only for private spirituality, but for faithful public living.

In Acts 3–4, Peter and John encounter suffering, opposition, pressure, and public scrutiny. Yet the Holy Spirit gives them courage, compassion, and steadiness.

This session explores what it means to stand faithfully in the world without becoming fearful, hostile, or reactive.

The goal is not aggressive Christianity.

The goal is Spirit-led courage rooted in prayer, compassion, humility, and truth.

OPENING REFLECTION

Take a few quiet moments before beginning.

- Why do many people keep faith private?
- What fears often affect public faithfulness?
- What is the difference between courage and aggressiveness?
- How do pressure or fear shape people's behavior?

Personal Notes:

SCRIPTURE READING

Read Acts 3:1–4:31 slowly.

As you read, notice:

- how Peter and John respond to people
 - how they respond to pressure
 - and how the Holy Spirit shapes their actions.
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KEY IDEA

The Holy Spirit empowers ordinary believers to remain faithful, compassionate, and courageous even when following Jesus becomes uncomfortable.

PART 1: COMPASSIONATE ATTENTIVENESS

(Acts 3:1–10)

Peter and John notice the man sitting beside the gate rather than ignoring him.

The Holy Spirit moves believers toward people.

Reflection Questions

1. Why is it easy to overlook people around us?
2. How does compassion become part of Christian witness?
3. Where might God be inviting you to become more attentive?

Personal Notes:

PART 2: COURAGE TO SPEAK ABOUT JESUS

(Acts 3:11–16; 4:18–20)

Peter points people toward Jesus rather than toward himself.

Fear loses power when faithfulness becomes more important than self-protection.

Reflection Questions

4. What fears most often silence people spiritually?
5. What is healthy spiritual courage?
6. How is Spirit-led courage different from hostility or argument?

Personal Notes:

PART 3: PRAYER PRODUCES STEADINESS

(Acts 4:23–31)

The believers respond to pressure through prayer rather than panic.

Reflection Questions

7. Why do people often react before praying?

8. How does prayer affect fear and anxiety?
9. What helps believers remain spiritually steady during uncertainty?

Personal Notes:

PART 4: COMMUNITY STRENGTHENS FAITHFULNESS

(Acts 4:32–35)

The believers continue supporting and encouraging one another together.

The Holy Spirit forms courageous communities, not isolated Christians.

Reflection Questions

10. Why does isolation often increase discouragement?
11. How can Christian community strengthen courage?
12. What characteristics make a church spiritually healthy?

Personal Notes:

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Take a few quiet moments to reflect honestly.

- Where do you most need courage right now?
- How does fear currently shape your decisions or reactions?
- What would greater dependence on the Holy Spirit look like in your daily life?

Personal Response:

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray for:

- courage
 - compassion
 - wisdom
 - humility
 - and deeper dependence on God.
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OPTIONAL PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

This week:

- Re-read Acts 4:23–31 daily
- Practice pausing before reacting in stressful situations
- Pray:

“Holy Spirit, help me remain faithful here.”

- Practice one intentional act of courage or compassion
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FINAL THOUGHT

The Holy Spirit does not form fearful or hostile believers.

The Spirit forms faithful people who remain grounded in prayer, compassion, truth, and courage.
