

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: [Acts 4:8-13](#).
- B. It is very important to be able to read and write. Literacy is a must.
- C. But there is another very important and powerful ingredient for success in life--knowing X.
- D. We don't need a higher education or special training to be a spiritual success--we need to let Jesus take hold of our life.

I. AN OLD TESTAMENT FLASHBACK.

- A. When we think of a man who was a powerful preacher for God who did not have any training or education in preaching, Amos comes to mind ([Amos 7:12-16](#)).
[Then Amaziah said to Amos, "Go, you seer, flee away to the land of Judah, and there eat bread and there do your prophesying! But no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the king and a royal residence." Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, "I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs. But the LORD took me from following the flock and the LORD said to me, 'Go prophesy to My people Israel.' And now hear the word of the LORD: you are saying, 'You shall not prophesy against Israel nor shall you speak against the house of Isaac.](#)
- B. Amos had a right to speak because he had an appointment with God. And it was because of God's power, not his own, that he could preach ([Amos 3:3-8](#); esp. v8).
[Do two men walk together unless they have made an appointment? 4 Does a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey? Does a young lion growl from his den unless he has captured something? 5 Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground when there is no bait in it? Does a trap spring up from the earth when it captures nothing at all? 6 If a trumpet is blown in a city will not the people tremble? If a calamity occurs in a city has not the LORD done it? 7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets. 8 A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?](#)
- C. The important thing is to preach what has been commanded--nothing more or nothing less ([2Tim. 4:1-2](#)).
[I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.](#)
- D. If it amazes us at the ability of Amos to convict men of their sin, it is by the same power (God's) that Peter and John amazed the men of the Sanhedrin.

II. PETER AND JOHN: POWERFUL IN DEED.

- A. See [Ac. 8:4-13](#).
- B. Peter and John had powers that we do not have today. They had these special powers for the same reason they did other things--they had been with Jesus ([Lk. 9:1](#); [24:49](#); [Ac. 3:6](#)).
[\(Lk 9:1\) And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases. \(Lk 24:49\) "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." \(Ac 3:6\) But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene» walk!"](#)
- C. Even their critics could not deny that the miracles took place ([Ac. 4:16](#)).
[saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it."](#)
- D. Our lesson is that we can do what we think impossible (just short of miraculous) when we let Jesus live in us ([Phil. 4:13](#)).
[I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.](#)

III. PETER AND JOHN: POWERFUL IN PREACHING.

- A. Peter and John commanded attention because of their message as well as their works ([Ac. 4:33](#)).

And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

- B. We too can be powerful in our preaching because of what we preach. We are not to preach our wisdom, but the word of God (the gospel), that comes from JC.
- C. The Word is powerful; it's God's dynamite (Rom. 1:16; Heb. 4:12; Eph. 3:7).
(Rom 1:16) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
(Heb 4:12) For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
(Eph 3:7) of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.
- D. True wisdom comes from God, and is revealed in the Bible. Dr. William Lyon Phelps said,
"I would rather have knowledge of the Bible without a college education, than a college education without knowledge of the Bible."

IV. PETER AND JOHN: POWERFUL IN A CHANGED LIFE.

- A. Words can hurt, and damage, but actions often speak louder.
- B. It was the changed life and attitudes of Peter and John that was the most apparent.
- C. Paul shocked the Jewish community with his conversion to Xianity, and the reason for this is his changed life (Phil. 3:6-8).
as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,
- D. No one was able to be with Jesus and not be a different person:
 - 1. The rich young ruler (see Mk. 10:17-22).
 - 2. Zaccheus (see Lk. 19:1-10).
 - 3. All of the apostles (Mt. 9:9).
And as Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man, called Matthew, sitting in the tax office; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he rose, and followed Him.
 - 4. All of the others X came in contact with.
- E. Even within my life I have known of certain individuals that I never thought would become Xians. And they became the best of saints.
- F. The reason for this "indestructible life" is that God is behind it (see Ac. 5:33-40a).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. All of the strength that came to Peter and John was from God, because they had been with X.
- B. It does not take great wisdom or training to be acceptable to God--just obedience.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.