**Acts Chapters 3 and 4**

3:1-10

* Healing involves breaking the status quo - it’s not just giving to the poor beggar we see, but in the name of Jesus changing their lives so they don’t have to beg.
* Peter and John looked at the man and saw him as he was - the power of the cross allows us to see a thing as it is, and know the power of God to heal.
* Where do we look at our church and our world and see things as they are? Where do we prefer to turn away, or not see things that are broken? What might our blind spots be?
* Are there places in our life where the help we were asking for was not the help we received? What ways has God broken the status quo for something better in our lives and church?

3:11-26

* Peter names God the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - a title that is used frequently in the first five books of the Bible, the Torah. Peter is saying, this is the same God that has always been who is doing a new thing here.
* In vs. 20-21 Peter speaks about refreshment in God now, while we wait for the time when all will be restored.
* What names do we use for God? How does that affect how we understand God? Are there names we don’t use as often that we should consider using?
* We experience refreshment while we wait for restoration. How do we experience the “already-not-yet” of God raising Jesus from the dead and promising salvation, but not yet experiencing full restoration of all of creation?

4:1-22

* The leaders of the temple, the high priest and his family, were afraid of losing their power based on the teachings of Peter and the disciples about Jesus being the resurrection of the dead.
* As we’ve seen, the promise that God will restore all things often involves upsetting the status quo, meaning they may lose their positions of power.
* At the same time, this proclamation was good news to many (5,000!) who were around them and hearing it. For them, the promise was that their lives would experience restoration.
* The disciples used Jesus’ name to do deeds that Jesus himself did - not to gather power for themselves.
* What do we fear losing if God upsets the status quo we find ourselves in? What might we gain if God upsets that status quo?
* What do we do in the name of Jesus? How can we pattern our deeds after Jesus?

4:23-31

* When the disciples were faced with opposition, their first task was to read scripture and pray.
* They prayed that God would “look at their threats, and grant [them[ to speak with boldness. They did not focus on those who opposed them, but focused on the work God was doing in and around them.
* How do we map our own story onto the story of scripture? Where do we see our lives and our church in scripture?
* How often do we get distracted by things that are opposing us, rather than focusing on what God is doing?

4:31-37

* In action, as well as word, the early church mapped their being by scripture. Luke is referencing Deuteronomy 15, the year of jubilee and the fact that there would be nobody in need in the covenant community, to show that this early gathering of followers of Jesus was the true covenant community.
* For the believers, being of one heart and one soul involved more than just feeling good toward one another and agreeing on their beliefs. It affected every part of how they lived.
* How do we live as one heart and soul as a community of believers? How can we grow in that way of being?