

THE ORDINARY BECOMES ASTONISHINGLY SPECIAL

Acts 4:7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people!⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed,¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed...¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

- If you have been to our church long enough, you would know by now that I am not a soccer fan. However, over the years I have been intrigued by a soccer coach by the name of Sir Alex Ferguson.
 - For me ... he knew how to get the best out of every player in every scenario. He had the perfect amount of respect, discipline, understanding and control.
 - He could make the most average guy put in a world class shift.
 - He recognized players' main strengths, put them where they were the most effective and adapted the whole team tactics to fit everyone - he turned Cristiano Ronaldo from being a right back to play a striker role.
 - The record speaks of itself – he won many titles; including 13 Premier League titles, 2 Champions League titles, 5 FA Cups, 4 League Cups, and 1 European Cup Winners' Cup.
- In other words, Alex was able to turn the ordinary into something astonishingly special. This morning, I want to talk to you on the subject matter **THE ORDINARY BECOMES ASTONISHINGLY SPECIAL**.
- Yes, your life and my life might look ordinary, but it does not have to end ordinary. You must resolve it in your psychic that you will not die an ordinary man or woman.
- You will not go through high school as an ordinary kid, you will not finish varsity just as an ordinary student.
- I want you to know that your life can become astonishingly special. You see, something that is astonishing is something that is astounding, staggering, stupefying, amazing, or incredible. It's not something you see every day.

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- Lets go back to our scripture reading. This was an amazing story from zero to hero. Peter and John were known as ordinary fishermen in that small town and yet here they are silencing the religious leaders of the day.
- Peter and John had just performed an astonishing miracle on the beautiful gate, in which a crippled man was healed and began to walk. The religious leaders were very concerned because these men were proofing that Jesus whom they had crucified was truly the Messiah.
- They were determined to shut them down and therefore they called them in for questioning.
- When they called the two men for questioning, they were astounded at what they discovered.
Acts 4:13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus
- Peter and John were known in that small city as being ordinary people.
- They were unschooled regarding religious law - This word unschooled properly denotes “those who were not acquainted with letters, or who had not had the benefit of an education.”
- In other words, they were nobodies, day to day individuals.
- Many people seated here could easily fit in that category of Peter and John.
- You are here and you feel that your life is way below the ordinary and you have lived on that level of thinking and mindset.
- In fact, every person born of a woman is a mere human being, ordinary and hopeless.
- In this situation, what the religious leaders knew about Peter and John and what they were experiencing was totally different.
- Before them, there were ordinary people who did not act ordinary, before them there were unlearned people who did not sound unlearned.
- Something had happened to these men and whatever happened to them had transformed them into a wonder to behold.
- The scriptures said in their wonder and confusion, they remembered something. It was not that they had gone to a special school, it was not that they had started eating a special diet but rather it was the company they had kept.
- *Acts 4:13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus*
- This tells you that when someone has had an encounter with Jesus, there are notable changes that occur to that person.
- There is always a visible and astonishing difference between a pre-Jesus individual and post-Jesus individual.
- It is impossible to remain the same after you have been with Jesus.

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- If you have been with Jesus, your life cannot remain the same and today and I want to make that very clear to someone.
- You cannot encounter the God of heaven and yet remain the same. In other words, if nothing has changed after being with Jesus, it's either you have not been with Jesus at all or you have not been with Him long enough and you need to keep on with Him.
- You can come to the church of Jesus but never encountered the Jesus of the church.
 - Bartimeus was blind before he met Jesus but could see after being with Jesus.
 - The woman with the issue of blood was healed after being with Jesus.
 - The murderer and persecutor of the church, Saul of Tarsus became the greatest apostle after encountering Jesus.
 - Zacchaeus was a horrible sinner and tax collector before he met Jesus. After meeting Jesus, he became a transformed man who was compelled to pay back everyone he had defrauded.
- This tells you that when you have been with Jesus, you cannot help it but become a wonder. You are now asking; "I have been with Jesus, but my life has not changed that much, what is the problem"
- I am glad you asked – let me show you how it looks like to be with Jesus. Peter and John were with Jesus for just over three years and there are things that they did that allowed Jesus to transform them inside out.

1. What does it mean to be with Jesus?

Mark 3: 14 And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach.

John 15:4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

- The disciples of Jesus left everything and followed Jesus. It was not a half-hearted approach. With Jesus, its either you are all in or you are not at all. Many people are still flirting with the world and following Jesus at the same time.
- You are in conversation and communion with him. Jesus called the disciples so that He could be with them, so that He could deposit Himself into them. Saints, you will be transformed to the measure and degree to which you are filled up by Jesus. Being with Jesus means that you aware of Him, you involve Him in your affairs.
- You attend and pay attention to His words. Taking advice from someone is a very personal matter. That is why people do not just ask for advise – because they think they know it all. Being with Jesus means that His advice and wisdom that comes through His word becomes your marching orders.

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- You cannot be with Jesus and still do what you want with your life. The disciples were at the disposal of Jesus. He instructed them how they ought to live their lives, and they obeyed.

John 14:23 Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."

- Everyone who walks with Jesus in obedience, will trigger a spiritual principle which attracts God into their lives through holiness.
- God is attracted by holiness and holiness is a by-product of obedience and not a feeling. Holiness is not a feeling – it is the end product of obedience. Purity is not a gift – it is the result of repentance and serious pursuit of God.
- When you commit your life to walking with Jesus, in turn Jesus and the Father will resolve to walk with you.
- Whenever God is with someone, astonishing things happen.

2. What should be the result of this type of fellowship with Jesus

Genesis 39:23 The prison warden did not have to worry about anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with him. That's why Joseph prospered in everything he did.

Joshua 6:27 So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

1 Samuel 3:19 Thus Samuel grew and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fail.

1 Samuel 18:14 David was prospering in all his ways for the Lord was with him.

Mark 16:19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them, confirming His word by the signs that accompanied it.

- Being with Jesus means that the character of Jesus grows on you. Just like you start talking and thinking like the person you spend most of your time with.
- The religious leaders saw something on Peter and John. This means that people should be able to see something about you after being with Jesus.
- Your righteousness will be beyond and is deeper than traditional religion.
- You teach the things Jesus taught, in the way he taught them
- You do the things he did in the manner in which he did them.
 - Jesus treated people with dignity
 - Jesus was motivated by compassion and never did anything to selfishly draw attention to himself

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- Jesus only did what He saw His Father do.
- Jesus was purpose driven and His purpose was to see all nations become His followers.