

**Series Title: Unlikely Heroes 10/11/20**

**Sermon Title: Ordinary People/Extraordinary God**

**Text: Acts 4:13 – 22**

**Focal: <sup>13</sup> When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and discovered that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized these men had been with Jesus.**

The pedagogy (teaching) of the oppressed has been the pathway toward racial-uplift and social justice for many African Americans. Historically Black Colleges and Universities were born of necessity through the meager resources of Black people who were systemically denied access to higher education. However, higher education was not an option for many Black people who were restricted due to economic constraints.

Nevertheless, God's divine providence recognizes credits from the school of hard knocks. The story of Oseola McCarty, an African American woman, with a six-grade education who became a philanthropist giving \$150,00. to the University of Southern Mississippi bears witness to this truth. She could not attend the school but she made a way for others to attend.

Likewise, Peter and John in our text were recognized as "unlearned" fisherman who had spent three years with a radical rabbi named Jesus who was recently crucified. Although Peter and John's spiritual lives were transformed, their social status remained the same. The education received through their relationship with Jesus was formidable (impressive) when summoned to speak before the learned men of the Sanhedrin Court.

### **Sermon Points**

1. We must open our hearts to **DIVINE COMPASSION**

Peter and John encountered a "**Broken man at the Beautiful Gate**". They didn't ignore the man but recognized his humanity and shared their personal testimony with the lame man. The power of God to heal was exercised through the divine compassion Peter and John shared with the man.

2. Peter exercised **Divine Compulsion**

The religious leaders were threatened by the power of God moving through Peter and John so they summoned them to stand before the Sanhedrin Court, the highest religious court in the land. Peter argued under *divine compulsion* they must do God's will rather than obey the court's mandate to refrain from talking about Jesus.

3. God is a **Divine Companion**

Pastor Warnock testified as a freshman at Morehouse College, his mother and father didn't have money to give him to attend college but gave him "such as they

had” their confidence in the faithfulness of God. Reverend Warnock shared God was faithful allowing him to graduate Morehouse and continue on to receive a Masters and Ph.D. degree.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What experiences have you had in which blessings and opportunities exceeded your qualifications?
2. Why were the religious leaders threatened by the healing of the lame man?
3. Have you been in a situation in which human authorities challenged you to deny God’s authority? What happened?
4. Do you think people with less education trust God more than highly educated people? Explain
5. Do you believe the adage, “what we gain in reason we lose in faith”? Why?
6. How can we plan for our children to inherit a path towards higher learning? Does such a plan include faith?