**Bible Study Questions: READ Acts Chapters 5 through 6 (NASB)**

***Memory Verses:*** *"But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men.'"* — Acts 5:29 (NASB)

This sections covers the internal challenges the early church faced, the deceit of Ananias and Sapphira, and external opposition as the apostles are arrested, miraculously freed by an angel, and commanded to cease teaching about Jesus. Chapter 6, dispute arises between Hellenistic and Hebraic Jews over the neglect of their widows, leading the apostles to appoint seven reputable men, including Stephen, to oversee food distribution, while Stephen's powerful ministry leads to his arrest on false charges.

**1. Hypocrisy and God’s Holiness in the Church *(Acts 5:1–11)***

*The account of Ananias and Sapphira reminds us that the early Church was marked by awe, truth, and reverence for God.*

1. **Why did Ananias and Sapphira face judgment from God?** *(5:1–2)*
2. **What did Peter say about their deception?** *(5:3–4)*
3. **What was the immediate consequence of their actions?** *(5:5–10)*
4. **What effect did this incident have on the early Church?** *(5:11)*

**2. Power, Persecution, and Apostolic Boldness *(Acts 5:12–42)***

*God worked miracles through the apostles, but their witness also brought fierce opposition—and Spirit-empowered boldness.*

1. **What continued to happen through the hands of the apostles?** *(5:12–16)*
2. **Why were the apostles arrested, and how were they freed?** *(5:17–20)*
3. **What was the apostles’ response to being told not to teach in Jesus’ name?** *(5:28–29)*
4. **How did Peter once again proclaim the gospel before the Sanhedrin?** *(5:30–32)*
5. **What was Gamaliel’s advice to the council?** *(5:38–39)*
6. **What did the apostles do after being flogged and ordered not to speak in Jesus’ name?** *(5:41–42)*

**3. Delegation and Spirit-Led Service *(Acts 6:1–7)***

*As the Church grows, the apostles wisely delegate responsibility to maintain unity and care for all believers.*

1. **What problem arose in the early Church concerning the widows?** *(6:1)*
2. **What solution did the apostles propose?** *(6:3–4)*
3. **Who were some of the men chosen to serve, and why is their selection important?** *(6:5–6)*
4. **What was the result of this wise delegation of responsibility?** *(6:7)*

**4. Stephen’s Faith and the Growing Tension *(Acts 6:8–15)***

*Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, begins performing signs and debating with wisdom, drawing hostile attention.*

1. **Why was Stephen seized and brought before the Sanhedrin?** *(6:8–14)*

**Reflect**

1. **Integrity in Our Commitments:** In Acts 5:1–11, Ananias and Sapphira faced severe consequences for their deception about their donation. Reflect on a time when you were tempted to present a false image of generosity or commitment. How did you handle it, and what did you learn about integrity from that experience?
2. **Obedience to Divine Direction:** After being miraculously freed from prison, the apostles were instructed by an angel to continue preaching in the temple courts (Acts 5:19–21). Have you ever felt led to take a specific action despite potential risks or opposition? How did you discern and respond to that prompting?
3. **Prioritizing Spiritual Responsibilities:** In Acts 6:2–4, the apostles delegate certain tasks to focus on prayer and ministry of the word. How do you determine which responsibilities to prioritize in your spiritual and daily life? Are there areas where delegation or seeking assistance could help you focus on your primary calling?
4. **Embracing Servant Leadership:** The early church selected individuals "full of the Spirit and wisdom" to serve the community's needs (Acts 6:3). Reflect on the qualities you value in leaders within your faith community. How can you cultivate those qualities in your own life to better serve others?
5. **Responding to Conflict with Grace:** The appointment of the seven in Acts 6 arose from a dispute over the distribution of resources. Think about a time when you witnessed or were part of a conflict within a community. How was it addressed, and what role did grace and wisdom play in resolving it?