

## Introduction:

The events of Acts are all related to the growth of the Lord's church, Obstacles are often opportunities in disguise. We see this in **Acts 4** as the preaching of the Gospel met with resistance by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. Then in the first part of **Acts 5** with Ananias and Sapphira as they lied about the sale of their land and its amount. We now pick up our account in **Acts 5**.

### I) The Events

#### A) The Apostles were continuing to preach about Christ.

**Acts 5:12** *And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.*

1. The "they" refers back to the Apostles being all together.
2. Solomon's Porch was a public place of meeting.
3. They, the Apostles were performing the signs and wonders, not the disciples.

#### B) The elevation of the Apostles

**Acts 5:13** *Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.*

1. We see the good and the bad. With the death of Ananias and Sapphira there is fear; with the miracles there is the sense of wonderment.
2. The Apostles were special as they had been chosen by Jesus.
  - a. They had walked with Jesus, saw the miracles, heard the teachings.

- b. They had seen Jesus after His resurrection, in their mind there was not doubt as to what He taught (perfect remembrance)- **John 14:26** *But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you.*
- c. Nor was there any doubt as to His resurrection and His ascending to heaven.

**Acts 1:9** *Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.*

3. They had power and authority from Christ to preach and perform miracles.

**C) Increasing numbers.**

**Acts 5:14** *And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. 16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.*

1. Increasing converts, from 3,000 to 5,000 men, to multitudes of men and women.
2. Notice the phrase “added to the Lord”.

**Acts 2:47** *praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*

3. This shows the Lord adds one who obeys the Gospel of Christ

as being saved, added to the body of Christ.

4. Increasing numbers coming to Jerusalem to be healed, once there they would also hear the Gospel.

#### D) Reaction of the leaders

**Acts 5:17** Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, **18** and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. **19** But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, **20** "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life." **21** And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

1. Filled with indignation, they were angry, perplexed; their threats had not worked.
2. Still happening – preaching, conversions, and miracles.
3. What do you do? In this case they put the Apostles in prison. Other records of jailing in Acts.
  - a. **Acts 12** Herod has James beheaded and Peter put in prison.
  - b. **Acts 16** Paul and Barnabas at Philippi were beaten and put in prison.
4. The Apostles were told to keep on preaching by an angel.

#### E) The second reaction of the leaders

**Acts 5:22** But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported, **23** saying, "Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside before

*the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!"*  
**24** *Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be.*

1. Fact – they had arrested the Apostles and put them “securely” in prison.
2. The prisoners were gone! What could it mean?

**F) What it meant**

**Acts 5:25** *So one came and told them, saying, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"* **26** *Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned.* **27** *And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them,*

1. They were in the temple itself teaching – the place of the leader’s domain.
2. What would you have thought it meant?
  - a. Would you have reacted as these men and got angrier and angrier?
  - b. Would you have wondered about why these men were so dedicated?

**G) Given a choice between God and man**

**Acts 5:28** *saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"* **29** *But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.*

1. Choices are often simple, either obey God or man.

2. Which would you have chosen?

## II) Rejecting the Truth

### A) The Sanhedrin

1. The healing of the lame man.

**Acts 4:14** *And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it...**16** saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.*

2. The miracles performed in **Acts 5** could not be denied.
3. Apostle released by an angel of God. The prison was secure, well-guarded.
4. The faith of the Apostles.

### B) How we reject the truth.

1. Refusing to believe in the face of clear evidence.
  - a. The Gospels tells us about the life of Jesus from four different perspectives.
  - b. They eyewitnesses of the resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:3** *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4** and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, **5** and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. **6** After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.*

- c. The events on the Day of Pentecost.

- d. The history recorded in Acts.
- 2. Refusing to obey God even when we believe in God.
  - a. People will say, "I believe in God, but..."
  - b. Most people in the Bible believed in God but were not obedient.

**Matthew 7:21** *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

- 3. Refusal to accept the clear teaching of God's word.
  - a. The Sanhedrin knew the Scriptures but they had their traditions and laws.

**Matthew 15:8** *'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'*

- b. We can do the same thing.

### **Conclusion:**

The Sanhedrin had betrayed Jesus and given Him over to Pilate. They were guilty of the blood of Christ. But they were also recipients of God's Gospel. **Acts 5:30** *"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. 31 "Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."*