

When God Moves Mightily

Acts 5:12-42

I. The Wonders of God's Power (Acts 5:12-16)

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.

¹³ Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.

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.

- The word "signs" refers to miracles that point to a deeper spiritual reality. These weren't performed for entertainment, but to authenticate the message of the gospel. The word "wonders" speaks of the awe and amazement these miracles produced. When God moves mightily, people take notice.
- *None of the others* – "The meaning seems to be either (1) that none of the Jewish rulers had the courage to avow themselves Christians (see John 9:22; 12:42); (2) that no unbeliever ventured to intrude on these gatherings; or (3) that so great was the respect and awe inspired by the apostles that ordinary Christians held aloof from them."¹

II. The Witness of God's People (Acts 5:17-32)

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.

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.

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!"

¹ Richard Francis Weymouth, *The New Testament in Modern Speech: An Idiomatic Translation into Everyday English from the Text of "The Resultant Greek Testament"*: Commentary, ed. Ernest Hampden-Cook (London: James Clarke and Co., 1903), 284.

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,

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."**

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."

- When God moves mightily, opposition is inevitable.
- Verse 19 - God chose to do this miracle in a very specific way. The Sadducees didn't believe in two things: resurrection and angels. So what did God do? He sent an angel to free the apostles so they could go back and preach about the resurrection. God used the very thing they denied existed to confirm the very truth they rejected.
- "common" in v.18 has two meanings: "belonging to the state" and "open or visible to the public." All jails belonged to the state; therefore, this must have been a jail where prisoners were put on display as a warning to others.²

III. The **Warning** against God's Plans (**Acts 5:33-40**)

³³ When they heard this, they were furious and plotted to kill them.

³⁴ Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while.

³⁵ And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men.

³⁶ For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing.

³⁷ After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed.

³⁸ And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing;

³⁹ but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—**lest you even be found to fight against God."**

⁴⁰ And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

IV. The **Worship** from the Persecuted (**Acts 5:41-42**)

⁴¹ So they departed from the presence of the council, **rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.**

⁴² And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Evangelism Pattern (v. 42):

- **Daily** – Continually sharing
- **In the temple** – In the midst of opposition
- **House to house** – Where the people are
- **Without ceasing** – Always at it
- Teaching and preaching - Two different Greek words describe their ministry: didaskō (systematic instruction) and euangelizō (gospel proclamation). They combined doctrinal education with evangelistic fervor.

² Charles R. Swindoll, Acts, Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2016), 105.