

Acts 5:12-42

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The Way College of Emporia

Now following upon the greatness of that which occurred in **verses 1-11** we go to verse 12.

Acts 5:12

“porch” – portico, or arcade

“one accord” - this is its fifth usage in the Book of Acts.

“signs and wonders” - Some of you that are Advanced Class grads have copies that I have distributed on signs, miracles and wonders. You ought to study it. Signs and wonders never occur until believing goes up, as far as men working. When the believing of a community goes up, then there will be an increase of the signs, miracles and wonders.

“by the hands of the apostles” - a figure of speech meaning - by their work. It had nothing to do with Peter having especially blessed hands physically, or John or Andrew. By the hands of the apostles were many signs, miracles and wonders wrought among the people because of the things that had occurred; like the Levite, Joseph, having land, sold it. The plurality which people had, they had gotten rid of. See, they got their foot off the hose and as they got their foot off the hose things began to gel, things began to move. I think that illustration from God’s Word taught in the 4th and 5th chapters should speak very loudly to our ears this time; as loudly as it did to theirs then. But no matter who you are you cannot do much for anybody or any group of people unless the believing goes up. You can’t rise beyond your believing nor believe more than what you’re taught, nor teach anymore than what you know. Now if the truth is taught and people believe it, then they’re going to see the results of it. If not, we’re going to see the consequences of our negative action.

Acts 5:15 - Again let me go to 12 and show you. Everything in between, following upon the word “people” in **verse 12** to the conclusion of **verse 14** is a parenthesis. Following here with “many signs and wonders wrought among the people,” - “insomuch that they brought forth the sick”--that had to be tremendous believing. They got to the place they didn’t ever say, “Well, Peter, come over here and pray for this person.” Or, “Peter, or John, come over here and minister to this person,” right? Their believing was so fantastic, so terrific in that God was there, that if, just Peter walked down the street and his shadow would even fall upon people, they’d be delivered. Quite a day, wasn’t it? Most of that is almost foreign to our thinking. Well, let’s do the parenthesis.

Acts 5:13

“rest” - rest of the unbelievers or people who were born again of God’s spirit but not living it. Such as Ananias and Sapphira who were cheating the Lord and acting like they were the best in the whole outfit.

“durst no man join himself to them.” They didn’t come in and say, “Boy, we are really all out for God,” or, “We are doing everything,” unless they really did. They got really honest. That’s why there was such a tremendous blessing of God. It isn’t that people did not make mistakes; they were just honest. That’s all, just honest. See?

You know, you can move among people spiritually. I don't say a lot of things. I just let the thing go by because always it will come up like a cork on the water. The fish may pull it under and hold it but sooner or later it's going to come up. It will always show up among believers. When there's a callousness, a hardness or a real disobedience to the truth, it will always show up. That's why I never get too shook about it. It will always show up. Then what will happen is that people will split out and they'll give you a kind of rationalization why they can't take this or they can't take that. It's just by the freedom of our will; we didn't want to do it.

“the people” - there real believers

“them” – the apostles. They magnified the apostles. Why? Not because Peter was so fantastic, but because of the Word that was living in those men. They were walking and holding~ forth that Word so that all the people were getting blessed. If you're going to be a successful leader for people in this world, the people will have to respect you for your leadership. And leadership is earned, not donated. Leadership is something that you earn by the giving of yourself. Jesus taught that the greatest leader is the one who's the greatest servant. That's still true. The one who serves people, gives his or her life to serve people is great leadership. And you cannot be a leader until you first learn to take orders. Leadership must give an order. That's what you're a leader for. Now in order for you to develop to be that leader, you have to be humble enough to take orders and carry them out just like that. When it finally settles down all of us take orders every day from somebody somewhere. If not, we take it from God, from His Word, that's for sure. Maybe your Twig coordinator comes along and gives you an order. That's leadership. But if you're running out of orders, I'm sure of one thing; there will always be somebody above you who's able to give you an order and that will be God. So all of us take orders; I take orders, everybody does. So you hear people say they are tired of somebody giving them orders. Well, why don't you die? Then nobody is going to give you orders until the gathering together and then you are going to get up anyway. You see, leadership is a tremendous privilege, but it's also a fantastic responsibility.

“the people magnified them” - doesn't mean they worshipped Peter and put him up there, at the front or at the back, in a niche or corner, and people bow down or they kiss his stone toe. No, reverence, respect, thanksgiving that you are such a wonderful person to bless people's lives; that you're such a fantastic Twig coordinator that they just have to magnify you for being so terrific. That's what it's all about. And when you lose that respect, then you no longer are the leader. When you lose the respect of your Twig, for instance, then you are no longer Twig coordinator. You may be in name but in action or practice you're not. You've lost it. You're only the coordinator, the leader, as long as the respect is there and the respect in leadership is built. The greatest way I know of building it is in service. You just bleed your heart out, as I call it, for people. You give everything you've got and then give twice as much. Just lay your heart on the line, your life, your love, your tenderness, your prayers, your blessings--that's what I think great leadership is all about. That's why they magnified those apostles.

Acts 5:14

“added to the Lord” - didn't say that more believers were added unto Peter, or Saint Anthony or somebody. Believers were added to the Lord. That's the only thing that matters. Believers were added to the Lord, the body. That's the Lord; added to the Body.

“multitudes” - a take-off of the word *pletho*. You can see why that would be, can't you? The *pletho* is the overflowing. Multitudes would be overflowing.

“men and women” - That's the first time women added to the church are mentioned in the Book of

Acts. That's significant. We know they were added to the church previously because Ananias and Sapphira were in it, right? But here is the first stipulation in the Book of Acts where multitudes, men and women were added. The church grew by leaps and bounds - men and women. And that's unique because the first century church basically was always in the temple or in the synagogue dealing with Israel, Jewish people you would call them. And in those circles only men were counted, not women. Now here it is just put right out in the open in Acts chapter 5 after the Ananias and Sapphira experience. Multitudes were added, believers, multitudes, both men and women. And that's the end of the parenthesis. Then we go back to the body of the text.

Acts 5:15

"beds and couches" – like mattresses and quilts

"overshadow" - cross over

Boy, they sure would call us nuts for doing that today, wouldn't they? Well, most likely the unbelievers thought they were nuts too. But they had enough believers that they just believed that God was so fantastic, that if Peter walked by, or any of the other men of God (but Peter's mentioned here), they were healed. There's no healing in the shadow. The healing is in believing, believing that these were men of God. They magnified them. And that believing was so fantastic.

We haven't seen anything, have we, because the Word has not permeated our culture sufficiently or deeply enough. You get enough of that Word of God in communities and what would happen then would be exactly what happened here.

Acts 5:16

"also" - comes after "multitude."

"unclean spirits" - Even in those days people were not only sick, but they had a few devil spirits.

"vexed" - one translation, I think has 'troubled'. It's a lot deeper than that. In the Greek text, it's really neat. They brought the sick ones and "beset" ones. The interlinear translates it 'beset.' The King James says vexed. But the word is *ochlounous*. That word vexed is a take-off from the word crowded, *menous*; crowds or crowded. If we are jammed pack in here, we are crowded. That's the word vexed. You know what that word tells me? They had many devil spirits. That's what this verse says. "Crowded," they had a whole crowd of them. The gospels talk about this, remember?

Acts 5:17

"then" - but, in contrast

"sect" - is basically the word they use as cult, today. The word sect and the word cult come from the Greek word *hariesis*, transliterated into the word 'heresy.' The Pharisees major opportunity was the resurrection. They did not believe in the resurrection.

"indignation" - envy Again that really doesn't communicate the inner depth of what the word really says. The word is *zēlou* which is a take-off of *zēlos*. Remember, one man's name was Zelotes? The word *zēlōtēs* means a zealot, one who is real zealous for something. That's the word used here - and were filled with zealousness or indignation. But they just weren't indignant, they were zealously indignant. They were zealously enraged. They were mad with a purpose. It's the bulldog indignation. And they were filled with that, "Let's get rid of that cult! Let's really do it!"

Acts 5:18

“laid hands on the apostles” - put them in jail

“common” - public They put them in a public prison. Their arms and legs would be put in stocks. That’s where they put those fellows. Why did they put them there? What did Peter and the rest of them do? Nothing, except bring deliverance to people; bless people. Multitudes were added, they brought the sick and they got healed. But the Sadducees and the high priests were filled with indignation. The apostles made them angry.

Acts 5:19

“angel of the Lord” - Gabriel

“by night” - at the close of the night just before daybreak. You’ll see why this happens.

“opened the prison doors” - that simply means the stocks had a bigger hole in them than necessary and they pulled their feet and hands out.

“brought them forth” - not only did the angel of the Lord open the prison doors but the angel of the Lord brought them forth. See, there is a lot more in here than you ordinarily see. The average person would freak at this kind of thing. You know, Gabriel, whew! But, you see, the early Church was believing God and expecting God to move for them. The believers, multitudes, were the more added to the Lord and they had all things common. They were of one mind and one spirit. They stood together as believers. You see it? And then Gabriel came by night and opened the prison and he brought them forth.

“and said” - talked to them. If you today would talk about God talking to you, then you’ve got to be listed as a cult because God never talks to anybody. He talked to Luther. That’s all right. He talked to Calvin. He talked to the Pope, maybe, but you? I’ll let you ask yourself one question. If God ever talked to anybody at any one time then it’s the same God; He has to talk to anybody at anytime now. By sheer logic! Or there is no God to talk to anybody.

Acts 5:20

“life” - the life that’s available through the resurrection. That’s the life.

Acts 5:21

“early in the morning” - putting together “night” of **verse 19** and “early” of **verse 21** and where the angel said, “go, stand, and speak”; why tell them to go, stand and speak if it’s still four hours before? Why deliver them, four hours before they’re supposed to go, stand and speak? You know when they got delivered? Right at day break; just before day break he walked them out of that prison and he said, “Now, fellows, go into the temple and stand and speak all the words of this resurrection life.” And they walked in and it’s the first hour of prayer--6 a.m. It occurred at day break. That’s what “early in the morning” means--day break. Isn’t that beautiful? I talked to you the other night about the priests walking into the water and then the water receded (**Joshua 3:15-16**). God delivered them just at the moment they needed the deliverance. The Word of God is the will of God. They go right to the temple and they stand. They speak. In the gospels when they would speak they would sit down. They’d stand after the day of Pentecost. You see how the Word of God was the will of God for those fellows? It’s not important who delivers the message. It’s the message that’s important. If Gabriel delivers it, wonderful, praise God. If Peter delivers it, wonderful, praise God, right? If Maggie

Muggins delivers it, wonderful; it's not the vessel but the Word in that vessel. Isn't that beautiful? Gabriel was the one who said, "Fellows, get going." For them Gabriel was as much God's Word as if God Himself had written it across the wall.

"council" - included the Sanhedrin and the Sanhedrin was the seventy men who ran Judaism. That's the council.

"senate" - the Septuagint uses this word for council many times.

I've never quite understood why it would be repeated here. The council together, well, if they had the council together they had the senate. Well, why does it say "and all the senate of the children." This not only includes the Sadducees and the Pharisees, but all the scribes, their secretaries and all of their typists. That's why it's repeated. Got it? This was a big meeting. The best they could produce. They got them all together because they're really going to get these guys, Peter, John and so forth, and put the screws to them. So they came in and sent the temple guard up to the prison to have them brought.

Acts 5:22

"officers came" - from the temple to the prison, the public prison, they didn't find them there. That's revolting. So they hot-footed it back real quickly. They returned and they told the Sanhedrin, the council.

Acts 5:23

"shut with all safety" - the stocks were all in tact. The prison guards were all there.

"without" - this word is scratched. Naturally they were standing without. They weren't in the stocks.

"doors" - the exit gates; the place where the people would leave the prison.

Acts 5:24

"the high priest and" - these words are scratched.

"they doubted of them" - they considered; they got thinking, "What's this thing going to develop into that we allow this stuff to happen? Good gravy! we put them in jail and now they're out. What's going to happen?"

Acts 5:25

In **verse 24** the captain of the temple hadn't even gone to the jail, had he?

Well, look what he does in **verse 26**.

Acts 5:26

"officers" - top officers

"they feared the people" - they were afraid of the people who had responded and had been ministered to and delivered, and the multitudes of them that were of one mind and of one spirit.

Acts 5:27

"asked" - addressed

Acts 5:28

“we” - the council, the Sanhedrin, the top echelon

“straitly” - like a double command; commandingly command. It’s really the word “command” twice. That’s the emphasis.

“this name” - What name? The name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. They had just been telling the truth, that’s all.

Acts 5:29

apostles answered and said” - doesn’t mean that all twelve talked at the same time, but it means that when Peter and John were brought out, where do you think the rest of them were? In the temple. They got together. They had a little time and they got together and they talked things over. They had a little Twig meeting among themselves and then Peter was the spokesman. And he spoke for all the apostles and said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Boy, what a cry in our day and time. We ought to obey God rather than men.

Acts 5:30

“slew” - translated the same as ‘laid hands on’ - captured

“raised up Jesus” - can you imagine what the Sadducees would say to that phrase? “Why you old cult, you old heretics What’s the matter with you?” And then when they said, “Whom ye slew...,” Wow! “...and hanged on a tree.” I don’t know if I’ve ever showed you that “tree” stuff but it’s in **Deuteronomy 21:22-23** Remember that verse in **Galatians 3:13**; same truth. He became a curse for us who knew no sin. That’s a quotation in part from Deuteronomy. Cursed is everyone that is hanged on a tree. Christ became a curse for us and yet God raised him. That must have cut right across their theological positions, not only for the Sadducees but for the Pharisees. The Pharisees were legalistic legalists.

Acts 5:31

“him” – the text reads ‘this ONE’

“hath” - scratched

“with” – ‘at’ or ‘to’ He didn’t exalt ‘with.’

“a Prince and a Saviour” - Why the two words? He not only was a saviour but a prince. He was number one, God’s only begotten Son and saviour. That’s why the two words are used. They are not synonymous.

“forgiveness” - remission. You see now how that agrees with **Acts 2:38** and all the other places?

Acts 5:32

“his” - scratched

“things” - words What words – that God raised up Jesus etc.

They could not be witnesses unless they had the manifestation. The witness was the speaking in tongues, “We are witnesses of these words,” that he’s a prince and a saviour.

“Holy Ghost” - the Holy Spirit; the *pneuma*, the *hagion*, the gift.

“obey Him” - The obedience is to repent, be baptized and *lambano*. That’s obedience. Obey, get saved, born again, filled with the spirit which is to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and ye shall *lambano*. That’s the “obey him” of **verse 32**.

Acts 5:33

“they” - the council or Sanhedrin

Acts 5:34

“had” - held

“little space” - outside of the counsel

Gamaliel, according to Josephus, was the grandson of Hillel and Gamaliel died about 18 years before the destruction of Jerusalem. According to **Acts 22:3** it’s this Gamaliel who was top instructor of Paul, his main teacher in Jerusalem. Also Josephus tells that Gamaliel was a real tenderhearted, real compassionate, real considerate man. It tells us he was a Pharisee and previously we heard about the Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection. The Pharisees did believe it. There in the Sanhedrin you had the cleavage between the two. Now Gamaliel, being the grandson of Hillel, a respected doctor of the law, carried a lot of weight. Another reason Gamaliel may have spoken so effectively for this situation is that the early Church (Peter and the rest of them) were keepers of the law. They kept all the stuff they had kept under Judaism which would give a good feeling among men like Gamaliel. In some respects it’s like The Way Ministry standing for the United States of America, standing for the integrity of our country and the greatness of our country.

Acts 5:35-36

“obeyed” - followed

This Theudas here is not the one mentioned in Josephus. This is one who was put to death the last years of the reign of Herod the Great.

Acts 5:37

“Judas of Galilee” - was from the city of Gamala.

“taxing” - the enrollment, but not the one at the time of the birth of Jesus in **Luke 2:2**. This is the time when Archelaus was deposed and when Cyrenius was the governor of Syria at 7 B.C.

“obeyed him” - followed him, believed what he said.

Acts 5:38

“refrain from these men” - restrain yourself from doing what you said you wanted to do (slay them).

Acts 5:39

That was a very smart decision, a very wise statement. **Acts 23:9** It shows up here what Gamaliel said. It was tremendous what Gamaliel said. You cannot overthrow it. You can sort of hold it back, sort of make it look like it’s not going to develop but if it’s of God you cannot overthrow it. Because anything that is of God is going to bounce back and it’s going to live sooner or later even if you have to wait until the return. God had the first word and He’s going to have the last one. It’s so bad to fight against God.

Acts 5:40

Deuteronomy 25:1-3

verse 1 “come unto judgment” - appear before the Sanhedrin like we’re doing here in Acts. “condemn” - punish

verse 2 “wicked may be worthy” - i.e. - not justified before them.

verse 3 - The law was that if you gave them 41 stripes then you would be allowed to be beaten by the one or the family of the one that you had just beaten. Therefore, they only gave them 39 lashes with the whip just in case they miscounted. Even they apparently had a problem counting accurately to 40.

Now these were Pharisees, legalistic legalists. Even though Gamaliel had convinced them that they couldn’t fight against God and they better not slay them, they still believed that they were not right on. Therefore, they called the apostles back in and made them lay down and then they gave them 39 lashes with a whip. Then they got them up and said; “Now fellows, we will tell you once more. Don’t speak in the name of Jesus.” Then they turned them loose.

Acts 5:41

“rejoicing” - they weren’t complaining, they were rejoicing.

“shame” - humiliation, degradation because they were beaten. According to Deuteronomy, if you were beaten it was because you appeared before the judge and you weren’t worthy of death. Just to keep things straight and in order, that you stay real kosher, they beat you.

“His name” - the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom God raised from the dead.

Acts 5:42

“and daily” - Oh no, they had just told them again. They had just beaten them and they said, “Don’t you speak that Word in the name.” They commanded them. These were the men at the top positions of authority and power. Peter had said, “Are we going to obey men? Is it best to obey men or what?” The men said, “Don’t you speak that Word! Don’t you speak in that name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Don’t you tell us that we crucified him, that we slew him and hanged him! Don’t you speak in that name!” They left, turned right around and were present at the hour of prayer, daily in the temple. Somebody was making decisions. Their lives were in jeopardy and they knew it. But they took a stand. And they had the manifestation, the proof they were alive and vital and that it was a reality that God had raised Jesus Christ and no matter what the Sanhedrin said they obeyed God. And the angel had said, “Go, speak in the temple all the words of this resurrected life.” They went right back in and spoke it.

That’s first century Church. They went right back into the temple, spoke the Word of God and then they kept right on with their Twig meetings in every house. They went from house to house. It must have been a great day in the lives of the people in Jerusalem. Imagine Peter coming to your house for a Twig meeting, and John and Andrew. My, those must have been electrifying times. Then everybody would get together and go to the temple at the hour of prayer. There they witnessed. They’d get a hold of Mr. Chief Justice and witness to him about Jesus of Nazareth whom God raised from the dead. The first century Church - same God, same Church!