

## Sunday Morning Message

June 23, 2024

### *Back in the Temple Again*

Text – Acts 5:12 - 42

Congregational Reading – Acts 5:12 - 16

### **Introduction**

Last week, we saw what happened to Ananias and Sapphira, when they lied to the Holy Ghost, and took back that which was previously dedicated or promised to the Lord.

This was the first sign of internal trouble in the Church at Jerusalem, but now after having taken care of their trouble within, they are now back outside in the streets and the lanes of the city of Jerusalem, preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is an important point to consider here as we are introducing today's message. This church at Jerusalem just went through a very difficult and scary ordeal. God struck down two individuals for lying about their offering. Ananias and Sapphira may have been good friends with some members of this congregation; they may have been close. There may still be family members of theirs still in the church. An event like this could potentially shut down a church and keep it from moving forward again for the Lord. Yet, we will see in this passage, the church keeps going. Its leaders, the Apostles, are back at it again. They are doing what God commanded them to do. They are proclaiming the gospel of Christ in the community.

Stuff happens sometimes in churches; they happen sometimes to families. People will fall into sin; deaths, sometimes tragic deaths, will occur. People's feelings are going to be hurt; trials are going to come; and when they do, they need to be processed properly, but then the church needs to keep going forward for the Lord. The measure of a man (or a church) is not how it handles prosperity, but how it deals with adversity. It's not the height of your heights that make you strong, but the height of your depths. This church came through a tremendous trial but will be better because of it.

Peter and John are back out fishing for men again. Remember, Peter and John used to be in the fishing business, but now they were in the business of fishing for men. After God took care of their problem within the church, Peter and John, and the rest of the apostles are back out fishing again, and they are in their favorite fishing spot: the Temple.

Remember, the last recorded time that they were in the temple, they were arrested.

Would you be willing to go back out to preach in the same place you were just arrested in; and in the same place that you were commanded not to preach again?

## I. In the Temple Preaching Again (vs. 12 – 16)

### v. 12 – “signs and wonders”

The Apostles were given these “sign gifts” to validate their message. Remember, the church was built upon ...*the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.* (Ephesians 5:20). The apostles were the ones who were going to be the witnesses of Christ’s resurrection.

Jesus told the two disciples on the road to Emmaus:

*“...Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.” - (Luke 24:46-48)*

The Holy Spirit manifested Himself in powerful ways through these New Testament Apostles and prophets to prove to the nation of Israel that their message was genuine. The Jews required signs and wonders.

*“For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:” - (1 Corinthians 1:22)*

It is important to note that these signs and wonders were only active during this transitional period in the early church. God uses signs during times of transition. When Moses delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt, He used many signs and wonders. During the Tribulation Period, there will also be many signs and wonders.

But during the period that we are living in now, we have the word of God.

Turn to 1 Corinthians 13:8 – 13

*“8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in*

*part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (1 Corinthians 13:8-13)*

The canon of Scripture was complete by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, which coincides with the end of the "signs and wonders". Today, people must put their faith in the Word of God. God's method today for people to get saved is through the preaching of the Word of God.

*"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." - (Romans 10:17)*

*"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." - (1 Corinthians 1:21)*

*"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." - (1 Corinthians 1:18)*

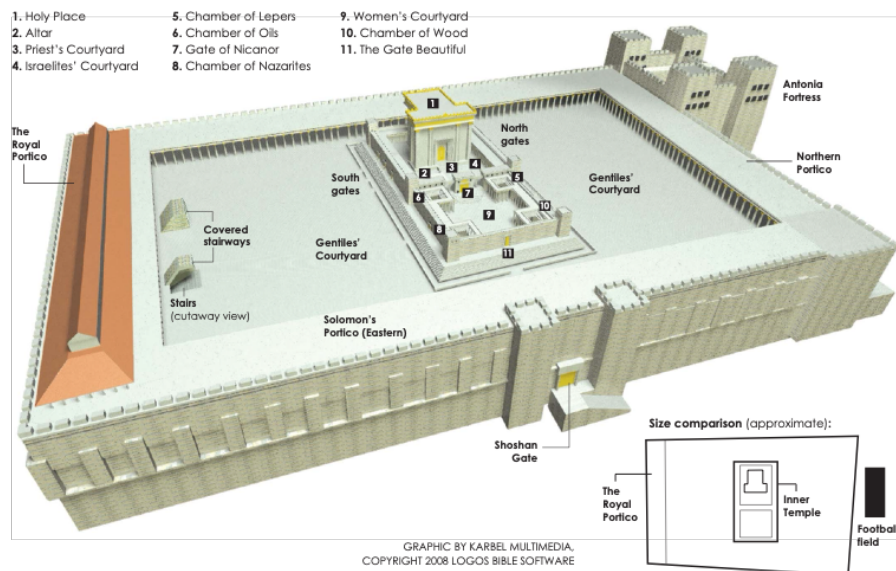
By the way – the Jew may require a sign, but the Gentiles of our day require the sensual.

We must have entertainment. People today are not impressed by the plain preaching and teaching of Scripture. People do not enjoy hard preaching, straight from the Bible. They need fluff. They want music that appeals to the flesh instead of the spirit. This is the day of Burger King religion: "have it your way."

**"Solomon's Porch"** – covered porch that was on the eastern side of the Outer Court of the temple. (see slide)

### Herod's "Second" Temple on the Temple Mount

King Herod the Great began renovations on the Second Temple approximately 20-19 BC. The entire temple expansion, including the massive Temple Mount, was not completed until approximately 62-64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.



Notice again that they were “in one accord” – It seems that the internal problems from vs. 1 – 11, did not affect the unity of the church. (1:14; 2:44 – 46; 4:32)

**v. 13 “durst know man join himself to them”** – possibly a reference to the fear that some people had of the apostles, or of being put out of the synagogue. It could also be a direct reference to what had happened previously to Ananias and Sapphira. V. 11 does tell us that there was “great fear” because of their deaths.

**“magnified them”** – the people did this. They were authenticated through the signs and wonders, and through the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, as being truly the servants of God.

**v. 14 – notice – God is no longer counting** – it’s just multitudes of both men and women.

I am praying for the day when we are seeing such an excitement in the community from the preaching of God’s Word that there will be multitudes saved.

**v. 15 – “shadow of Peter passing by”** - The apostles did not condone this. This was done by the people, and it was not something that God taught them. People can be very superstitious.

**v. 16 – “every one”** – all were healed. Quite a contrast to what these modern-day faith healers can do. They can imitate speaking in tongues, and they can manufacture someone being slain in the Spirit, but can they heal everyone?

Illustrate – healing service at a Pentecostal Church – “interpreting for the deaf”

## II. In the Temple Prison Again (and again – vs. 17 – 40)

### A. The Anger of the Sadducees (vs. 17 – 18)

### B. The Announcement of the Angel (vs. 19 – 20)

**v. 20 – “words of this life”** – everlasting life

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” - (John 3:16)*

*“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” - (1 John 5:12)*

*“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they*

*might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." - (John 10:10)*

The words of this life are the words of the gospel:

*"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed." - (1*

*Corinthians 15:1-11)*

### **C. The Acceptance of the Apostles (v. 21)**

### **D. The Apprehension by the Council (v. 22 – 33)**

#### **v. 28 – “filled Jerusalem”**

The job of our church is to fill our Jerusalem – Galloway Township – with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We need to do everything that we can to get the Word of God out to the people of our community, or into the church where they can hear the gospel preached.

#### **v. 29 – “we ought to obey God rather than men” – God is the highest authority.**

### **E. The Advice of a Pharisee (vs. 34 – 40)**

I have often heard people say that this was good advice. However, what the man said was not completely true. There are a lot of religious systems out there that are clearly not of God, yet they continue and even thrive. Gamaliel was wise in that his advice represented man’s free will. He knew that what the religious leaders were trying to do by forcibly shutting down the apostles would eventually backfire on them. Persecution will often draw more attention to the cause you are trying to stop.

### III. In the Temple Praising Again (vs. 41 – 42)

Notice – they had just been beaten, and they are praising God.

*"And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." - (Acts 16:22-25)*

### Conclusion

Here at the very beginning of the period known as the Church age, we see an early picture of what the Christian life would be like. We see both the mountain tops of multitudes of people being saved and the church serving together in one accord, but we also see the pain of persecution and trials. Both are part of the Christian life.

The message for us today is to follow the example of this early church. Where do we see them in our message – back in the Temple again. Continuously, even after they had been kicked out, arrested, beaten; they just keep going back to do what God told them to do – preach the gospel:

*"2 Preach the word; **be instant in season, out of season**; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Timothy 4:2)*

That is what we need to be doing. Preach the gospel, whether it is popular at the moment or not; telling people about the salvation that is available through the Lord Jesus Christ.