



Acts

Study Pack 06

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Acts Chapter 5

All right, so we are going to begin our next lecture, number six, which is going to cover chapter five of the book of Acts. We just came through this amazing miracle that took place near the temple, with the lame man being healed, and Peter and John, and the prayer meeting that they had. And we saw at the end of chapter four, where people were, in Jerusalem, were literally selling their land and properties to give to the work of the Lord, and to give to those in need.

And what we're going to find in this next chapter is an example of that, and we're also going to find the first _____ in the early church. Did you know that churches have problems? Yes, they do. My dad told me at an early age, he said, Paul, the reason that we have problems in churches is because we have people in churches.

And you have people, you have problems. But if you don't have people, you don't have _____, you don't have _____, you don't have the work of the Lord. Because we're all sinners saved by grace, and so we have problems. .

As I mentioned before, every chapter, every verse that you peel back in this great book of the Bible— it's just one amazing thing after another that we see God working, and amazing things happening, where you just shake your head at all of what's taking place. So we're at this point, there's tremendous excitement and momentum in the church. To be honest, I don't know if there was ever after this, this much excitement and unity and things happening within the church.

I know there probably has been over the ages, but this is almost unmatched in church history, what we're seeing here take place. So they're selling land, they're selling their possessions to provide for those in need. We saw that Barnabas of Cyprus had just made a really generous gift, and no doubt, it was highly regarded.

We're human. So when someone within the church makes a large _____, and I think it's wise; I think it's appropriate to say “Thank you”, to recognize that person. Most people don't want to publicly, and don't need to be publicly recognized, but still everyone is going to see, “Wow, someone made this large gift that made this area of ministry possible! Someone helped us to be able to purchase this equipment!”

So again, nobody was _____ in the church, nobody was _____ in the church, there was not an _____ that they had to do this, but we saw that it was happening, and there was a commonness amongst all of them.

They were all on the same page, they were all believing the same gospel, they were all wanting to do great things for God. And remember, as we get into this, it's a little while before the destruction of Jerusalem, but not that far. Jerusalem was destroyed in _____ AD.

I'll throw this out there as a possible theory, is it possible that being led by the Holy Spirit, these people in Jerusalem who owned property, who had possessions, and obviously God knowing and foretelling that Jerusalem is going to be destroyed— all of these Jewish people, if they had property in Jerusalem, they know it's going to be gone.

They're not going to own anything. They're not going to be owners or purveyors of any kind of business. It's going to be wiped out, So is it possible that the Holy Spirit, knowing that that was the case, was leading

these people to give in this way so that the ministry could expand all over the world before that destruction came? It's possible.

Acts 5:1

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

Remember, all of what just led up to this, You've got Barnabas making these amazing donations, sacrificial donations.

Acts 5:2

² *And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.*

Now, this wording, *kept back part*, is not just, "Well, you know, we're going to donate this much, we're going to keep back this."

This is the idea that the Greek wording for this is _____ or to _____.

His wife was in on the whole thing. So what is it that they stole? What is it that they brought to the apostles' feet? You're going to find out.

Acts 5:3

³ *But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?*

Now remember, they were never commanded to go sell everything and do everything. What was the sin? Who was he lying to? He says, "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?"

He didn't say that you were lying to _____. He said you lied to the _____ . The sin was in lying about it because it was to appear to be _____ than they were, to be more sacrificial than they were. Why does that matter? It doesn't, only to you and your mind. What should matter is who you are _____, and that's what Peter is addressing here.

The devil doesn't like churches winning people to Christ. The devil doesn't like people within churches serving God and giving sacrificially and God working through them. How is he going to attack? He's going to attack _____ the church.

There are exterior attacks on the church that the devil will orchestrate, but his most effective attacks on the church will be from within, and that's what we see happening here, and that's why Peter addresses this.

He is cunning, but what is a part of the devil's attack? It's exactly what Ananias and Sapphira did. How do I describe it? This is how I describe it. It is by robbing Christians of God's blessings and power, by getting them to focus on the _____ rather than the _____.

You will not experience all that Christ has for you if you simply focus on the external instead of the spiritual. That's the lie of the devil. That's what it's always been: that if you just trust God, you'll get less.

You never get _____ with God. If you are going to go try to produce or make yourself look like you're spiritual or make yourself look like you're something, you're worried about the external instead of just hunkering down and saying, "God, work in my life, I want to follow you."

There will always be lying in churches. Did you know that? Because we have sinners. People are going to lie, but the motives will typically be hypocrisy or to hide sin or to be a gossip or to be a busybody, but no matter what the form of the lying is, it's _____, it _____, it's _____ within a church.

Acts 5:4

⁴ Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

In other words, before you sold it, didn't you own it? Wasn't it yours? And after it was sold, was it not in thy power? He's making it very clear. _____ you to do this— to sell it or to give it.

Why hast thou conceived in thine heart that thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God? So in Ananias' mind, he's thinking, "Well, no, I'm just fooling everybody else. They think I sold it for \$100, but truthfully, I sold it for \$200. We just didn't tell anybody, and we brought the \$100 so that it looks like we're the same as Barnabas. Everything he sold or whatever it was he sold, he brought it all, and we're just like him. We want everyone to see us just like him."

One of the most disgusting things to God is _____. He hates it.

Acts 5:5

⁵ And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

He's dead. That's it. He's done.

This is church discipline in quite a form. This guy is dead. And most likely, this took place in a church service or a church worship type, you know, gathering. In front of all these people, what does it say? And great fear came all them that heard these things.

Like God isn't messing around with this church. God isn't messing around with how we live our lives. So I don't know. I don't know.

It doesn't say if Peter was surprised. It doesn't say that Peter says, you know, "Drop dead." and down he goes. I don't know exactly what Peter was thinking, but I do know this: Peter knew how critical it was to God that there be a _____ set as to what the church was going to be about.

The church is not supposed to be about show. It's not supposed to be about us just looking a certain way. That's what the Sadducees and the Pharisees were. They're flowing robes; they're long oratory prayers to look a certain way.

God has no place, no time, no patience for hypocrisy. He wants _____. He wants people who love Him and give to Him out of a heart of love and out of a heart of sacrifice, and that's what He's looking for.

George MacDonald gave this quote: "Half the misery of the world comes from trying to look— instead of trying to be— what one is not."

Listen, if you see someone in this case who made a sacrificial gift, if Ananias and Sapphira would have said, "You know what? I want to be like that. I want to have that kind of heart." Then go to the Lord. Ask Him to work in your life. Sit down and think about how we are going to give to the Lord. But they didn't.

They said, "I want to be _____ like that." They weren't worried about being _____ that.

Big difference. Big difference.

Acts 5:6

⁶ And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

Just like that: he's gone. They wrap him up, and they dig a hole, and he's in the ground just like that.

Acts 5:7

⁷ And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

Can you imagine the people in the room watching her walk in, knowing what just happened to her husband, and thinking, "Oh boy, what's going to happen to her?"

Acts 5:8

⁸ And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

Now, mind you, Peter just healed a lame man, just throwing it out there: Maybe you shouldn't lie to the guy.

I'm pretty sure he's got God's power pretty strong on him, you know, but she doesn't care. She's going to keep the story. She has no idea her husband is literally in a hole six feet down in the backyard.

She _____ on the _____.

Acts 5:9

⁹ Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

At this moment, she's saying, "Wait, my husband? My husband was buried? What are you talking about?"

You see, to lie is bad enough. To lie to another brother or sister in Christ is bad enough.

It's the _____ ways that we judge each other. In other words, if the people in the church had not known the truth by what Peter exposed, what would the people have thought? "Wow, they must be the same spiritual mindedness as Barnabas." It's a _____ way because we can't see the spiritual, the unseen.

So it's bad enough to lie regarding how man can judge us, but God knows the truth, of course.

We know that, but to lie to God, it deals with the spiritual unseen. Remember, only God can judge the truth, So to lie in a way that states something that is of the unseen is an _____ to God, because it's as if He, who sees and knows everything, is also going to _____ for your same gimmick.

It is an offense to God, and that's what Peter is saying, and that's why Peter charged them with tempting the Spirit of the Lord. What did they lie to God about? They claimed to God's face that they loved God as _____ as _____.

This had nothing to do with the amount of money they gave.

This is not Peter saying, "Wait, wait, wait, Barnabas gave everything. You didn't. Now you're dead." That's not what this is about. It's not about the amount.

It has to do with their heart before the Lord, because they were claiming that before God, their heart was to say, "God, we care about you and we want you to have the preeminence in our lives. We want to honor you."

That's the lie that they were saying to a God who _____.

You see how offensive that is? And that's why they're struck dead. I also believe the reason they're struck dead is because this is the very beginning of the church. This is that transitional period of time where you've got the brand new church starting, and it was important to set a precedence.

We are not playing games. We are not messing around. We are not going to just _____ church.

We're not going to just play religion. We're going to be real before God.

Acts 5:10–11

¹⁰ Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. ¹¹ And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

God is setting the standard for the new church. It is a direct declaration of how truth within the church is so critical, and hypocrisy was of the _____. Why? Because it's so destructive. So that's why there had to be this fear.

This form of hypocrisy is so bad because it _____ the _____ of why we _____. If it becomes, "Look at me." instead of "Look at Him." then church is doomed. That's the problem. That's why this had to be dealt with.

Don't ever let your value be determined by your position. Don't ever let your value be determined by what you think others think of you. Don't ever let your value be determined by your duties or your level of contribution of any form.

Your value is in _____ you serve, not _____ you serve. How you serve will determine what you think of who you serve, but the value is not in all the ways of, "Look what I do. Look at my role. Look at my position. Look what I give."

That is not church. That's religious, social gatherings. That's not church. That's not what God designed it to be.

And we saw in the gospels when He would say very strong things to the Pharisees about their hypocrisy. Very strong things. Look at 1 Corinthians 11:28-30; this is that passage that we would use when we do communion.

We have communion. We have the Lord's Supper, and what does it say?

1 Corinthians 11:28–30

²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. ²⁹ For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

These are believers. This is not someone who is, are they saved or not? No, these are saved people celebrating the Lord's Supper.

And sleep does not mean dozing off. It means they're _____.

What is Paul talking about here? He's saying, "Listen. Be for real. Don't you dare celebrate the death of Jesus Christ in a moment of communion and you're spitting in God's face with your life. Examine yourself and get it right. Confess it before the Lord."

Why is that important? Because you're saved. You've been brought from darkness to light.

Who do you think you're fooling if you're _____ the Lord's Supper of the One Who knows everything, the One Who paid for all the sin that you're _____ in? So he says, "Examine yourself."

These believers committed, Ananias and Sapphira committed the _____ unto _____. This is not the unpardonable sin. In other words, their rebelliousness, their sin, even though they're saved, their sin brought about their _____.

_____ is an insult to God.

I cannot make that clear to you today. Don't live in fear of God, but live with the fear of _____ that disobedience to Him and a phony heart before Him will bring _____. It will. It always has. It always, always will. And I've seen it happen.

Believers who take this passage seriously will save themselves a lot of grief. Can you tell God doesn't like phonies? He does not like phonies.

Acts 5:12

¹² And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

Now we've, we've seen our pictures of the Temple.

And in this particular picture, you see that so that colonnade of Solomon. So on the sides of the Temple, archaeologists believe that there was kind of like a porch or a colonnade where you could go under there, they would meet and gather. And that kind of was all the way around the temple.

And so this is saying that they were gathered all in one accord on that particular side, Solomon's porch of the Temple.

Acts 5:13–14

¹³ And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. ¹⁴ And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

Okay. And we know that God gave them these gifts by the apostles, many signs and wonders were done. We talked about these sign gifts.

I want to just give you a quick reference so that you understand this is not just a one-time mention in the Bible, in the book of Acts.

Paul or whoever is the author, I believe it's Paul of Hebrews, look at Hebrews two verses three and four.

Hebrews 2:3–4

³ How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; ⁴ God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

He's talking about this actual moment in time that we're reading about in Acts. Before He died and then was confirmed after He died, what was the gospel, this great salvation? How was it confirmed unto us by them that heard Him? Who heard Him? That would be the _____.

That would be the people that we're reading about in the book of Acts, this launching out of this church. How did they confirm the very thing that Christ taught to them?

God the Father through the Holy Spirit worked and confirmed through his witnesses that He _____ and we're seeing that _____ in the book of Acts.

And that is spoken of in the book of Hebrews. Okay. So it was confirmed.

Acts 5:15

¹⁵ Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

There's people literally bringing people out in the streets so that just as Peter walks by and his shadow is cast over them, right, that they're hoping that this is a healing.

And by the way, Peter _____ this way. This is not something you're going to see in scripture. Peter didn't say call ahead to such and such a city, "Lay the sick and the infirmed out on the streets. I'll walk by."

It's not what he set up. It's not what was designed. But it's just to show you this is what was happening. This is the _____ that's happening in this area of Jerusalem.

Acts 5:16

¹⁶ There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

So now we're not just talking Jerusalem. Now we're saying the cities _____ Jerusalem, people are coming, bringing sick folks and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every single one.

Acts 5:17

¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

Why? Because these crazy apostles would not shut up.

They're healing people left and right. People are coming from cities outside of Jerusalem.

And so remember what was the big thing with the Sadducees? They didn't believe in the _____. They didn't believe in any type of miracles.

Remember I said before, these were not idle, _____ threats. They meant business, and they thought that that would scare these people into, these disciples and apostles and those that were sharing the gospel, they thought it would scare them enough to shut them up. It didn't.

Acts 5:18

¹⁸ And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

Now, I have a picture of a prison. This is not one that was actually in Jerusalem.

It's something that's kind of near that time. I gave this because I wanted you to kind of see just a prison from that era. Now we know that that there were prisons that had bars, doors that had bars, and things we would think of being in a prison.

This particular one, if you can kind of look in the picture, there's a hole in the ceiling, and that would be the only way _____ and _____ of that prison. This prison is really easy to guard. You drop the guy in/ There's no way out unless they lower a rope or a ladder or something.

Pretty much one guard at the top, if that is needed, unless you're just a really, really good, mountain climbing guy that can cling to the ceiling somehow and crawl out of here. But even that, it's one guy is going to one kick, and you're right back down.

They're put in prison, so this is the _____ arrest, if you will. They weren't necessarily in prison before or fully arrested. They were kind of being held, but they got out of that.

Acts 5:19

But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

This doesn't seem to have a door unless it had a hatch. But he opened the prison door. So we go from verse 18, they laid hands on the apostles and put them in prison. The very next verse, which is that night, an angel of the Lord by night opens the prison door and brought them forth. Just like that. We're in, now we're out.

Now again, this isn't that prison. There's no door on here, but what I wanted you to look at in this picture is to understand, no matter what the prison was like, you're not _____. You're not getting out of there. There's no scheming to think, "Well, how can I break out?" It's not going to happen. And it would be _____ for the guards if someone did escape.

But literally, we go from verse 18, they're in prison, we go to verse 19, they're out, just like that. That's the _____ of the Lord.

Sometimes in scripture we'll see where they fled. It was the right thing to do. What's the answer? Do you always flee persecution? Do you always stay in persecution? You know what the answer is? You always do what _____ to do. That's the key.

You seek God's will and he'll show you. This one was really easy to know God's will.

Acts 5:20

²⁰ Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

The very place that they just got arrested; “I've just broke you out of jail, just like that, now go back to the temple and keep preaching.”

Acts 5:21

²¹ And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

All the people of the Sadducees, people of the senate, the people in authority, what are they saying? “We're gathered together, we're ready to _____ these people. Send the messenger to the prison to have the prisoners brought.”

Acts 5:22–23

²² But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, ²³ Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

The guards were doing their job, so don't get mad at them. Like, the guys you sent us to go get? They're not there. But listen, the guards were in place— that's almost worse.

It would almost been better for these leaders if these messengers would have come back and said, “You're not going to believe this. Somebody fell asleep at the wheel. Somebody fell asleep on duty. These guys escaped. The doors were broken. They must have sent some of their guys to cut the chains. We don't know what happened.

It's almost worse that he comes and says, “Everything was in place. All the safety _____ were there, yet _____ not there.”

Acts 5:24

²⁴ Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

What are they talking about? What do you mean, wherein this would grow? They're thinking, “Oh, no, if this gets out, we're in trouble. If this gets out, we have no credibility.”

Then came one and told them, saying, “By the way, the men that were supposed to be behind the bars that are all secured and all the guards are in place, whom he put in prison, they're standing in the temple, and they're teaching the people.”

These guys are like, “We're going to kill them. They're furious.”

Acts 5:26

²⁶ Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

So, believe me, they're not ruffling them up. They're not in front of people. They're not whipping them or doing anything mean to them, Why? Lest they should have been _____.

They knew these people, there's so many people getting saved. There's so many people seeing what these guys are doing is of God. We don't stand a chance if we do anything publicly.

Acts 5:27

²⁷ And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

Now, what would you have asked first? How did you get out of _____? Isn't someone going to ask that? They didn't ask that. Why? Because, I believe down deep, they knew the answer, but they still refused to believe in God.

This is, this... You can't make this stuff up. Okay, look at what they asked.

Acts 5:28

²⁸ Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

This is like that moment when you're in trouble, your mom or your dad, bring you in, "Didn't I tell you not to do that? And you just went and did it."

That's the greatest compliment they could have ever heard, was, you're doing a _____. This gospel is spreading everywhere, and I doubt that this happened, but I could almost imagine Peter or John, whoever's standing there, looking at each other like, "Yes!"

Yes, we are spreading it all over Jerusalem! Thank you!

You have filled Jerusalem with, with your doctrine and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. What are they talking about? I believe what they're saying is, "You're trying to blame us for the blood of Jesus. You're blaming us for this guy that supposedly had this power to heal."

Less than probably two months earlier— for sure a very short amount of time— these same people were saying a very different thing.

Matthew 27:24–25

²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

²⁵ Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

They said, "We'll take it. We'll accept that, no problem. We're going to put this guy to death."

Acts 5:29

²⁹ Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

So not only does Peter proclaim his _____ to God's will, he takes the opportunity then right after this to share the gospel.

Acts 5:30–31

³⁰ *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. ³¹ Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

He didn't just point out their sin, he explained to them that the _____ of God and the _____ of God that is available through grace to all men. And he specifically addresses that forgiveness that is available to Israel and to these very people. The gospel again is being given.

Acts 5:32

³² *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*

By the way, when it says 'Obey him' you don't have to be obedient Christian to _____ the Holy Ghost.

This is talking about obeying the _____, meaning you believe that Jesus Christ is the only Way of salvation. That's what that's referring to. When you believe in Jesus Christ, you receive the Holy Ghost.

Acts 5:33

³³ *When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.*

Listen, this was not some just casual conversation. Their threats before were not just casual threats. These were not just idle threats. Now they're saying it is time to kill these men.

No longer are we having conversations, no longer are we going to keep going and playing this game. And can I tell you, the gospel brings conviction to the sinner, but it is up to the sinner to _____. Sadly, these men did not respond properly.

Acts 5:34

³⁴ *Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;*

Now Gamaliel is going to come up again later on in the book of Acts, and we're going to see that Gamaliel was actually the _____ of Saul of Tarsus. And Gamaliel had a reputation as a well-respected religious figure, teacher, and Paul actually learned under him.

His voice carries weight; his opinion carries weight. He knows they're getting ready to kill him. He gives them now a reasoning of why they shouldn't kill them, and this is the reasoning he gives.

Acts 5:36

³⁶ *For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.*

There was _____ insurrection in this region against the Roman government, against the Jewish leaders, and things like that.

So what he's referring to is, you remember this crazy guy? He had a little following, and then he died, and all the rest of them just kind of scattered, and it fizzled out. So he's saying, "Look, Peter and these guys— is it any different than one of these other guys?"

Acts 5:37

37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

Again, you know, people don't want to pay unfair taxes. They don't want to have to go through this persecution. So you get one guy, he gets all riled up, he gets a following, and Gamaliel says, and he drew away much people after him, but he also perished, and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

In other words, “These apostles of Jesus— it's going to _____. Just let it go.”

And he's comparing these, these zealous Christians to some of these _____ that they all knew about, and had no real credibility.

Acts 5:38

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

Now, this is a profound statement. It's the _____ response, but it is a profound statement.

Acts 5:39

39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

Now, this is someone who is trying to step in and just settle down the moment. But what a statement he makes, what Gamaliel makes is a statement that is the question of the ages.

A better voice of advice would have been, “Hey, let's consider what these men are saying. Let's consider the _____ with which they are doing these _____. Let's consider. Let's stop right now and consider Jesus of Nazareth. Maybe He was the _____.” But he didn't.

Instead, he said, “Hey, look at these other fringe guys. They fizzled out, all their followers fizzled out. If it is not of God, it will fizzle. If it is of God, you are not going to stop it anyway.”

Powerful statement by a man who is actually _____ the Messiah. Just makes me shudder to think of someone who knew the scriptures, who knew the truths, and yet still in this moment is not going to believe.

Acts 5:40

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

Now don't just pass over that. They got threatened and released. They got threatened, put in prison, and angel gets them out, they come in, So they agree not to kill them, but yet, you know what? Let's just _____ them.

To be _____ is not a small thing.

Acts 5:41

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

Are you understanding the _____ that has taken place between these same men who, when Christ is being crucified Peter's denying him; they scattered; and they ran scared, and now these men are beaten, and claimed by these religious rulers to be against the very God that they're willing to give their lives for.

Do you see the transformation that can happen when you just _____ in God and trust and live and walk by _____? They rejoiced in the suffering. This is significant. Why? Because there is a _____ in knowing that you are exactly where God wants you to be.

If you are suffering for God, you are exactly where God wants you to be. Is it painful? I guarantee you it is painful. I guarantee you they were bruised, they were beaten, they probably carried scars or broken bones all the rest of their lives.

This is no small thing, but the _____ of serving God is _____. The confirmation of knowing that you're where God wants you to be, it's glorious. That's what they were rejoicing in. The suffering confirmed that they had stood for the one they longed to please the most.

I truly believe if you go back and you look at the account of Peter and when Christ comes to him, and it's after the resurrection, and Peter's ashamed, he denied Christ. And they're talking and He says to him, "Peter, do you love me? You feed my sheep..." and you know that whole thing, then He says to Peter "You are going to suffer for me."

It actually says, it says in there, "You're going to die for me." Why at that moment Peter got confidence? Why at that moment did Peter rejoice? Because Peter then knew in his mind that God, Who knows everything, knew that Peter would _____ him.

That's what gave Peter confidence. I'm not going to deny him. And in this moment, he didn't deny him.

Sometimes you have to take the hardest stands for the ones that you love, for the person you love the most, and they did it, and they rejoiced in that moment.

Acts 5:42

⁴² *And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*

Didn't stop a thing. They didn't miss a beat. And by the way, can I tell you something? You know how we use the phrase, "The jury's still out on something?"

Do we know what happened, or did this come true? Well, the jury's still out. The jury is not still out.

The verdict is in on Gamaliel's prediction. If it's of God, you'll never stop it. The verdict is in.

_____ ever stopped it. It's still going today. The work of God is going out in a mighty way, and it was of God, and it wasn't going to be stopped. No one was going to overthrow it.

So as the church continues to grow in tremendous numbers and salvations, what we're going to see in our next chapter, chapter 6, is the need to develop a structure, a church structure, and positions and responsibility within the church.

One of the things I love about the book of Acts is that it reveals all the glorious things and some of the messy things, kind of like Ananias and Sapphira. But we get to see it all, and the fact is that this account of Ananias and Sapphira being included in Scripture, it's a solid reminder that God is _____, but God is _____ about His church.

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