

The Apostles Perform Miracles and Preach the Gospel in Jerusalem

Acts 3, 4, & 5

Outline

- 3:1-10 | Peter and John heal a lame beggar
- 3:11-16 | Peter's second sermon: How the man was healed in Jesus' name
- 3:17-26 | Peter's second sermon: God's plan fulfilled in Jesus, beginning with the Jews
- 4:1-4 | Summary of the progress of the church (5,000 men) and the arrest of Peter and John
- 4:5-12 | Peter speaks before the Council - salvation in no other name, Jesus
- 4:13-22 | Peter and John refuse to stop preaching
- 4:23-31 | Peter and John pray for God's blessing on their preaching
- 4:32-35 | Believers shared all that they had in common
- 4:36-37 | Joseph, Barnabas or Son of Encouragement, sold some land and gave it to the church
- 5:1-6 | Ananias is struck dead because he lied concerning his offering
- 5:7-11 | Sapphira is struck dead for the same reason
- 5:12-16 | Activities of the Apostles and the growth of the church
- 5:17-21a | Apostles arrested and delivered by an angel
- 5:21b-26 | The Council requests the prisoners but found none
- 5:27-32 | Confusion regarding how the apostles were released
- 5:33-39 | Gamaliel's counsel - wait and see
- 5:40-42 | The apostles are flogged, released, and continue preaching.

Reflections

In these three chapters, we find the solidification of the role of the apostles in the early church through the miracles they performed, their commitment to preaching the gospel, and the death of a couple who lied regarding the gift they gave to the church. We also find in them the commitment of fellow Christians to aid other Christians who were in need. These were all accredited to the Holy Spirit working in the lives of the apostles and others resulting in the growth of the church.

Jesus had promised that the apostles would do many wonders like Jesus did during His earthly ministry and in these three chapters we see some of these signs and wonders described and the resulting chastisement from the Jewish religious leaders, just as He said would happen.

Matthew 10:25 NASB "It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!"

John 15:20-21 NASB "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. **21** But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me."

Twice Peter and John are arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin or Council to give account of the miracles and of their message. Each time they are told to no longer preach in the name of Jesus, but each time Peter refuses.

Acts 4:8-12 NASB Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people, **9** if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, **10** let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead--by this name this man stands here before you in good health. **11** He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone. **12** And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven

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that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

Acts 4:18-20 NASB And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. **19** But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; **20** for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Acts 5:27-32 NASB When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, **28** saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." **29** But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. **30** The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. **31** He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. **32** And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Acts 5:41-42 NASB So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name. **42** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

It is interesting to note what the disciples prayed for after Peter and John's first arrest.

Acts 4:29-31 NASB "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, **30** while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus." **31** And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

The very things that they had been arrested for, they prayed that God would continue to do through them! Would you be willing to pray for something like that? This act of faithful prayer resulted in the house being shaken and boldness imparted through the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel.

These three chapters give a glimpse into the lives of the disciples who are willing to give themselves to God and the leading of His Spirit in their lives to proclaim the good news of the gospel to any who would listen. Let it be our example in this day and time as well.

Heavenly Father, the One who gives good gifts and imparts His Spirit on those who would believe. We ask for the same boldness to proclaim the message of the gospel today as Your apostles did in the first days of the church. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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