

Acts Chapter 5:12-42 - Jealousy, Control and The Unstoppable Gospel

Message to Conversation Guide

Acts 5:12-42

12 The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. 13 No one else dared join them, **even though they were highly regarded by the people.** 14 Nevertheless, **more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.** 15 As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. 16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

17 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, **were filled with jealousy.** 18 **They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.** 19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. 20 "Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life." 21 At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people. When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin — the full assembly of the elders of Israel — and sent to the jail for the apostles. 22 But on arriving at the jail, the officers did not find them there. So they went back and reported,

23 "We found the jail securely locked, with the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside." 24 On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were puzzled, wondering what would come of this.

25 Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." 26 At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. **They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them.**

27 Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. 28 "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." 29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men! 30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead — whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. 31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. 32 We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

33 **When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death.** 34 But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. 35 Then he addressed them: "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. 36 Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. 37 After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. 38 Therefore, in the present case I advise you:

Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God."

40 His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, **they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.** NIV

Discussion Questions

1. The Apostles and the early followers of Jesus were extremely popular which ultimately led to their conflict with the religious authorities. Read and discuss the verses below that summarize what the people thought of the Apostles and followers of Jesus.

Acts 5:12-15

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2. Read and discuss the verses below that deal with jealousy.

Song 8:6

*6 Place me like a seal over your heart,
like a seal on your arm;
for love is as strong as death,
its jealousy unyielding as the grave. NIV*

1 Cor 13:4

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. NIV

James 3:13-16

*16 **For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.** NIV (See also **James 3:13-15, 1 Cor. 3:3, Gal. 5:19-21 & Proverbs 14:30**)*

3. The Sanhedrin was filled with rage. Discuss the frequent correlation between jealousy and anger.

Acts 5:33

*33 When they heard this, **they were furious** and wanted to put them to death.,*

"Brain studies show that when you're angry, the amygdala, a small structure in the primitive, impulsive limbic center, hijacks your conduct by triggering the release of the

stress hormone cortisol, which then surges through your system.” Ginny Graves, The Science of Emotions, Time Magazine Special Edition

“When you note ‘I’m angry,’ you shift activity from the limbic system to the prefrontal cortex, the rational part of the brain that helps you think through how to best handle the situation.” Ginny Graves, The Science of Emotions, Time Magazine Special Edition