

Sports & Rec Plus

THE BOOK OF ACTS

Lesson 10: The Apostles Heal Many
Acts 5:12-16 (NIV®)
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The Apostles Heal Many

Acts 5 12-16

¹² The apostles performed many 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 impure spirits, and all of them were healed.

INTRODUCTION

Here is a general account of the miracles which the apostles did. The purpose of the miracles was to attest to the validity of the messengers, the Apostles, and the message of these Apostles, the Gospel.

Rick's Part – Acts 5:12-14

The Apostles Heal Many

Acts 5 12-16

5:12 The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. These miracles that they wrought proved the divine mission of the apostles. The signs and wonders were evidence of the Divine presence and power in their ministry.

“**Wonders**” is the amazement people experience when witnessing supernatural works (miracles). “**Signs**” point to the power of God behind the miracles—miracles have no value unless they point to God and His truth. Such works were often done by the Holy Spirit through the apostles (Acts 5:12) and their associates such as Stephen (Acts 6:8) to authenticate them as the messengers of God's truth (2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3-4).

A **miracle** is when God makes something come into existence from nothing.

A **sign** is when God makes something from things that already exist. It can also be used to endorse or endorse something—to show approval of a person or something openly and with authority and with great force.

A **wonder** is when God does something that brings and/or causes awe, amazement, astonishment, and possible surprise among people.

And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. This was one of the effects of the miracles. They met in Solomon's porch. This was made possible because there were also many merchants there—buyers and sellers—so the believers were not prohibited from preaching there because the religious and government leaders there allowed other types of people to speak there too.

They all met in public worship. They were there in one accord.

This might have been another one of the effects of the separation of the hypocrites—Ananias and Sapphira—from among them. This made the people more sincere to follow the Lord and cling much closer to each other and to the Lord.

5:13 No one else dared join them. They were afraid concerning the seriousness of hypocrisy and sin in the church. The people learned that actual physical death can be the consequence of sin, not just spiritual death which is always the consequence of sin, *For the wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23). Fear extended beyond those present to all who heard about the divine judgment.

even though they were highly regarded by the people. The unbelievers had respect for the followers of Jesus but feared the deadly potential of joining the church. This helped keep the church “pure.”

APPLICATION: This is very different from what we see in today's world and church—where people can join a church for how it might help their social or professional standing in a community.

It should be noted here that if those in the church became more intolerant of the sin in the church and begin to exercise church discipline, we would see a purifying effect on the church. As the church becomes more godly, more unbelievers would be attracted to the Church, and we would see growth in the Church.

5:14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. While the unbelievers stayed away from the church due to the fear of the consequences of sin, there were multitudes who heard the Gospel witness, joyfully believed, and joined the church.

Rod's Part – Acts 5:15-16

5:15 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. Imagine the scene! The people knew that a great power of

God was upon Peter. And this power was only because of God. Peter was a normal person. By birth he was Galilean. By trade he was a fisherman. His standing in the community considered him as an uneducated person with no social status. But by God, he was a chosen vessel. God does not look on the outside. One of the greatest errors Christians make is that they attempt to put on a special look to appear greater than they are. Paul stated it best in 1 Timothy 6:6 where he said, *“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”* Remember that Paul had already suffered many things when he wrote this book. He had been beaten, shipwrecked, and put in jail numerous times including the prison in Rome. Yet Paul understood that status was nothing. When Christians try to make themselves look greater than those around them, they are not content and for certain are not seeking godliness. They are merely trying to climb the social ladder of worldly success. Unfortunately, I have even seen pastors all around the world get caught up in this trap in wanting luxury cars and mansions here on earth. Our home is in heaven, not here on this planet. As Christians we cannot ever forget our calling and must remember that we are just through this world as heaven’s ambassador. We need to remember this at all times. In our passage today, Peter understood his calling and responsibility as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Peter now filled with the Holy Spirit of God did have a great power. But that power was not his own. It was the power of God! And the people of Jerusalem recognized this power. We read that if just the shadow of Peter touched them, those that were sick would be healed. This reminds of the story of the woman with the bleeding issue who had suffered for twelve years and tried everything to get well in Matthew 9:21 said to herself, *“If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.”* And of course she did touch the hem of Christ’s garment, and she was healed. Peter’s ability to heal was much the same. Just his shadow touching a sick person healed them.

So, the people brought the sick to line the streets. They all knew that there was something very special about these men who had been with Jesus. In our previous lesson we learned that even the religious leaders recognized that there was something special and unique about these men who had been with Jesus. And they knew that many miracles were taking place and yet through the hardness of their hearts didn’t believe. But many people did believe that God was at the center of all of these things. Their belief was so great that in just a short time, the number of believers had grown from one hundred twenty people to thousands.

I want to pause here for one more thought. Jesus, the Son of God and second person of the Trinity walked on earth for about thirty-three years. His earthly ministry was about three and a half years. During that time, He spoke to tens of thousands of people and yet there were only a hundred twenty believers gathered together. This seems like a paradox to me. How could there be only a hundred twenty believers when it was Jesus who was preaching the kingdom of heaven? Yet, this was all there was. Well, the reason is that is all God needed to change the world. From that small beginning, there are now billions of names written down in the Lamb’s Book of Life. Pastors and Christian leaders listening to me today, you don’t need to speak to thousands of people. You need to be impactful on the lives of those God has brought to you today. If God gives you a congregation of one, then pour your whole life into that single person just as Jesus poured His life into the twelve. Then stand back and watch the power of the Holy Spirit change lives.

That is what is happening in our passage today. Lives are being changed one at a time. Let’s look at our next verse.

5:16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed. Word quickly spread. Remember, they didn’t have cell phones, the internet, or television to spread what the Apostles were doing. It was word of mouth. From Jerusalem, word went out every direction. Immediately nearby towns like Bethany (less than a mile away), Bethlehem (five miles away), and Emmaus (seven miles away) probably got word right away. Then other towns as people traveled on business would hear the exciting news. Towns like Jericho (about eighteen miles away) and eventually even Galilee (about one hundred forty miles away) would hear about the great miracles and work of God in going on in Jerusalem. It is no wonder that the crowds were gathering. As people heard that the sick

were cured, and demons were cast out, they immediately would seek the help that they needed. When you are sick and without hope and hear that a cure is in Jerusalem, you would do whatever was necessary to get there. Remember that Jesus spoke to many people. He healed them of every kind of sickness. He cast out demons. He raised the dead. Now hearing that His disciples were also healing the sick and casting out demons, they had hope. Of course, the hope they sought was not what they really needed. What they really needed was salvation in Jesus Christ. Salvation is the ultimate healing of the broken relationship with God caused by sin. And we know that only the shed blood of Jesus on the cross of Calvary can satisfy God. As we read in Acts 4:12, there is not any other name under heaven but the name of Jesus that can save us. Fortunately for the crowds who gathered to be healed of their infirmities, Peter and the other Apostles preached the message of salvation in Christ alone. They would tell them how that Jesus came down from heaven a baby born to a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for the sins of all men, was raised from the grave on the third day, ascended back to heaven, and is now at the right hand of the throne of God. And that message was not only for those crowds, but for us today also. That same message has been passed down from Christian to Christian for nearly two thousand years. The same message of hope that Peter spoke on those dusty streets of Jerusalem is our message of hope today. Jesus is the only way.

I want to close today by answering two questions. The first question is, “Does God still heal today?” Of course, the answer is emphatically yes which leads to the second question, “Does God still use men to perform miracles like He did using Peter and the other Apostles?” The answer to that is emphatically no. The gift of miracles was a sign used as proof that the message of Jesus Christ given by the Apostles was truly from God. You see, the early church did not have the Bible as we do today. Galatians, the first written book in the New Testament, wouldn’t be written by Paul for over thirteen years later. Today, we have the complete Word of God revealing to us the completed message from God to mankind. We don’t need signs and wonders any longer. We know from Scripture that God heals through prayer. He at times uses doctors and medicine, but it is the healing power of God that brings about the healing. You might be thinking right now that you got sick and even ended up in the hospital where you got well. The truth is it wasn’t the doctor or his medicine that healed you, but it was God answering your prayers. Remember back when millions of people were sick with Covid? People in the hospital all got the same treatment. Some people died but most people lived. Why did some survive while some did not? Was it because the doctors took better care of some people, but others did not receive as good a care? No, the reason is that God chose to heal some. We won’t go into the sovereignty of God in our message today as to why He might heal one person and not another. That is not our lesson, but I will say that God knows everything. He does what is perfect every time and in every situation. The task before us is to live by faith and trust Him in all things. We cannot and should not question the will and actions of God but always seek His face in prayer. As we pray, we must pray as Christ prayed. Jesus always prayed for the will of the Father to be done. This is how we should pray, “Thy will be done.”

You may be thinking right now that there are many faith healers out there today claiming to have the gift of healing from God. I can only say that you need to run away from these charlatans. These men and women are serving their own interests, and that is not for the glory of God, but rather to fill their bank accounts with your money. In a future message in Acts 8:9-25 we will be looking at a man named Simon who practiced sorcery in Samaria. Sorcery is an evil practice of witchcraft that comes from Satan trying to imitate the power and majesty of God. Sorcery uses secrets rites and sayings to perform fake miracles. We saw this when Pharaoh’s magicians performed the same miracle as Moses by turning a stick into a snake (which was an easily reproduced trick in those days as it is today). When Simon saw the healing power of the Apostles, he wanted to buy their secret from them saying, “Teach me how to do these things.” He knew that what the Apostles had was real and wanted this same ability which would make him rich. But he could not buy it since it is only from God.

But as I said, signs are no longer needed because Scripture teaches us that prayer is our healing strength today. Does God still heal? YES, He does! He does it through His sovereign will and the prayers of His people.

Let's pray.

Our prayer here at **Sports & Rec Plus** for you is that every message we send out is an inspiration and blessing in your personal walk with the Lord. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about this or any of our messages. And take a few minutes to visit our website and see how we can come alongside you, as you take the Gospel to your community and the world. Here is our contact information:

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