

Acts 5

The great prayer of the Apostles we studied last week found in Acts 4:23-31 that we do not add to God's information when we pray, nor do we persuade Him to have kinder feelings toward us. We cannot increase His desire to work on our behalf. He already loves us beyond comprehension ... but one thing prayer can do is open the door for God to do that which He would like to do. Prayer is putting myself into a position to give God a channel through which He can do what He already wants to do.

Now picking up at the conclusion of the Apostles prayer:

Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, behold their threatening: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, **30** By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

The Apostles end their prayer with two petitions:

First: Give us bold courage to discharge the trust you have given us as witnesses.

Second: Continue to make known your presence and approval by tangible signs in the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

The answer to their prayer came immediately by a shaking of the house ...

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any [*of them*] that ought (any) of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Acts 4:33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

Acts 4:34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

Acts 4:35 And laid [*them*] down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Why does Luke repeat the story found in

Acts 2:43-47 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all [*men*], as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Pentecost had brought an enthusiasm but would it last? A fellow may feel like giving away an overcoat/blanket on a hot day, but how about in the cold winter?

The community of property was not in the possession and ownership of it but in the use of it.

Acts 4:36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, [*and*] of the country of Cyprus,

Acts 4:37 Having land, sold [*it*], and brought the money, and laid [*it*] at the apostles' feet.

Barnabas plays an important role in Acts from his introduction here through his disappearance at Acts 15:39. His qualities of character are shown in his nickname "Son of encouragement or consolation" He was a Levite from Cyprus, Hellenistic Jew. And he was wealthy. Barnabas was not going to allow the fellowship to be broken at its weakest point financial. He took part of his estate and sold it and turned the proceeds over to the Apostles. Naturally the praise of Barnabas was on the lips of the membership of the whole church for his generosity.

This gave the devil a toe hold to set aflame the jealous selfishness of a greedy Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 5: 1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

So sinful is the human heart ... Play acting at religion is not confined to modern Televangelist and spellbinders they are found in every day and age in history.

Acts 5:2 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.

Acts 5:3 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?

Acts 5:4 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.

Acts 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.

Acts 5:6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried [him] out, and buried [him].

Acts 5:7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

Acts 5:8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

Acts 5:9 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.

Acts 5:10 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.

The sin was not in keeping back part of the sale price of the land they sold cf v:4. No one had to sell property or possessions and give to a common communistic treasure. Ananias did not have to sell and after selling he did not have to give.

The sin was not stinginess. He gave liberally. They gave far more than a tithe. He conspired with his wife and to convince everybody that they were giving the current market price of a piece of real estate. In order to deceive the Church they would have to give at least 80% or 90% of the actual price otherwise who would believe him.

The sin lay in the lie and their attempt to deceive God and His people/ the Church.

There will be a final reckoning a final judgment where we will give an account.

II Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [*done*] in [*his*] body, according to that he hath done, whether [*it be*] good or bad.

Acts 5:11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

What God is saying in this story is that God is in his body the Church and that no one can abuse or misuse the church. If he does he rests under the verdict of death.

The sacred character of this new institution the Church is revealed. God is no more to be found in the temple on Moriah's Mountain, He has moved into the heart of his people the Church of Christ.

The sanctity and Holiness that had once been attached to Tabernacle and later to the Temple is now in the church. ... God is to be found tabernacling in His people.

Acts 5:12 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.

Acts 5:13 And of the rest durst (dared) no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

Acts 5:14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

Acts 5:15 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.

Luke does not tell us that any of the people upon whom Peter's shadow fell were healed ... it would appear that the purpose of including this is to emphasize the overwhelming popularity that attached to the Twelve

Acts 5:16 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.

There were no failures among the cures and healings by the Twelve Apostles.

Acts 5:17 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.

The Sadducees saw in Christ's resurrection as the refutation of their system; and therefore they violently seized the apostles, because the Apostles preaching resurrection was fatal to the Sadducees doctrine, tenets and belief system.

Acts 5:18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

In Acts 4:3 the preaching of the resurrection was the cause of their first arrest and the repudiation of the Sanhedrin's authority was the result of the first arrest. In the second arrest here in 5:18, the again the resurrection of Jesus was a cause; but also the growing respect and the popularity of the Apostles and the church fired the jealousy of the Sanhedrin and caused the second arrest. The result was the opened establishment of the Apostles as the new authenticated teachers of God's truth.

Acts 5:19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

An angel of the Lord ... This is another of the supernatural wonders that attended the inception of Christianity. In the very nature of things, the new faith could never have been established without the providence of God. Jesus had promised that he would be "with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20); and of course he was. All of the powers of hell now embodied in the hatred of the Sadducees would be frustrated in the establishment of the true faith on the earth ... which you can now find in New Testament Christianity.

Acts 5:20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life

All the words of this Life ... This means all the words relative to the eternal life in Jesus Christ. ... embodied in the Great Commission.

Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; 20 Teaching them to

**observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you
always, [*even*] unto the end of the world. Amen.**

**Acts 5:21 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.**

**The council ... and all the senate ... Most learned men have suggested that
"senate of the children of Israel" was added by Luke for the benefit of Theophilus
to whom the book of Acts was addressed. Theophilus, was a Roman official, and
would more readily understand the nature of the Jewish Sanhedrin Court by
speaking of it as a senate.**

**Acts 5:22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they
returned, and told,**

**Acts 5:23 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.**

**Sign after sign was given the hard-hearted leaders of Israel, but they remained
adamant. Under the circumstances, they could not have failed to know that God
was with the apostles of Christ, but they were determined to carry forward their
opposition.**

**Acts 5:24 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.**

NIV "... Puzzled wondering what would come of this."

**The officials being puzzled or perplexed ... The reason for this perplexity does
not seem to be any doubt of how the apostles escaped, but rather a perplexity
regarding the rapid spreading of the Church and the kingdom of God, which had
already grown far beyond anything they could have thought possible. It seems to
have been utterly beyond their comprehension that God would remove their
whole nation rather than allow them permanently to block the world-wide
proclamation of the Gospel and faith in Christ Jesus.**

**Acts 5:25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in
prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.**

Acts 5:26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

Lest they should be stoned ... The popularity of the new faith was such, at the moment, that the Sadducean priests simply did not dare to arouse the anger of the Jerusalem mob ... which were notorious for running amok.

Acts 5:27 And when they had brought them, they set [*them*] before the council: and the high priest asked them,

Acts 5:28 Saying, Did not we straightly 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.

Did not we straightly command you that ye should not teach in this name?
At the first arrest the Sanhedrin said:

Acts 4:17-18 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

“... ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us ...

No kidding ... this is what they have preached from day one Pentecost the first sermon ... His blood is upon them.

Acts 2:22-23 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

At the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate the Apostles told the 5,000:

Acts 3:13-15 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let [*him*] go. 14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15 And

killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

At the first arrest the Apostles told the Sanhedrin cf:

Acts 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, [*even*] by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Now at the second arrest:

Acts 5:29 Then Peter and the [*other*] apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Now they tell them the same thing they told them the first time they arrested them for healing the cripple at the Gate Beautiful and preaching the resurrection at Solomon's portico.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

Acts 5:31 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.

Repentance to Israel ... This statement that Israel needed to repent was totally unacceptable to the Sanhedrin. That they, the religious leaders of the people, needed to repent was preposterous in their eyes.

They were as much incensed and furious as a body of bishops would be today, if the same charge should be made against them. They had absolute confidence that their descent from Abraham guaranteed them complete possession of every promise of the Old Testament.

Prince and a Saviour ... The word "prince" has the meaning of "Author," as in the "Author of eternal Life," being the same word as in Acts 3:15.

Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and [*so is*] also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

Acts 5:33 When they heard [*that*], they were cut [*to the heart*], and took counsel to slay them.

Acts 5:34 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;

Wikipedia: Gamaliel the Elder or Rabban Gamaliel I, was a leading authority in the Sanhedrin in the early 1st century AD. He was the son of Simeon ben Hillel, and grandson of the great Jewish teacher Hillel the Elder. Gamaliel is thought to have died in 52AD ... the later Byzantine Church taught He converted to became a Christian.

Acts 5:35 And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

Acts 5:36 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 noughting.

Theudas ... the Jewish historian Josephus records a uprising led by a Theudas.

The point of Gamaliel's appeal to the example of Theudas was simply that God did not bless his efforts and that all came to nothing, meaning that without God's blessing, the work of the apostles would also fail.

Acts 5:37 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.

Judas ... was said to have been "of Galilee," because that was the seat of his insurrection against Rome.

The days of the enrollment ... Gamaliel mentioned this because Judas "was the leader of the Jewish uprising which opposed the census ordered by Augustus. The enrollment here, as well as the one that led to Joseph and Mary's trip to Bethlehem, was also carried out by Quirinius.

The point, exactly like that about Theudas, was that God did not bless the insurrection; and, therefore, it failed.

Acts 5:38 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:

Acts 5:39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

Acts 5:40 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.

“...they had called the apostles, and beaten [*them*],

They beat ... There was nothing mild about such a punishment. They were brutally beaten with "forty stripes save one, a penalty inflicted upon Paul five times (II Corinthians 11:24). The excuse for such punishment was the apostles' disobedience of the Sanhedrin's injunction against teaching in the name of Jesus, an injunction they issued once more in connection with the punishment.

Matthew 10:17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

Mark 13:9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

“... they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus” as before:

Acts 4:18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

Acts 5:41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

The fierce Sadducees would have resorted to murder, except for the danger of alienating the Pharisees; and we should not suppose that they were impressed with Gamaliel's suggestion that they might be fighting against God. Gamaliel's speech, under the circumstances, "was little less than a guarded admission of the truth" but the concern of the Sadducees did not relate to what was true, but to what was popular, or expedient for themselves.

Romans 5:3 And not only [*so*], but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

**James 1: 2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;
3 Knowing [*this*], that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience
have [*her*] perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.**

**Acts 5:42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach
and preach Jesus Christ.**

**Ceased not to teach and to preach ... Teaching and preaching, while similar in the
function of conveying information and making arguments, are different in that
preaching is "public" teaching, this distinction appearing here in the words "in
the temple and at home." They taught privately and in homes where they had
opportunity; but they also proclaimed publicly in the temple the wonderful
message of the Gospel of Jesus the Christ.**

**Sources: KJV, Burton Coffman's, Clarke's, World Conquest, Alexander Campbell,
H. Leo Boles & B.W. Johnson's Commentaries. Wikipedia,**