

Subject	Lessons from Acts Series	4405
		Acts 5
Title	7 Lessons from Acts 5.	
Proposition	To study Acts 5.	
Objective	To consider seven lessons which Acts 5 helps me to consider and appreciate and apply in my own life.	

7 Lessons from Act 5

Introduction:

1. If we are not careful we might develop some wrong ideas about the 1st Century Church.
2. We see how zealous they were and we see how quickly the message of salvation spread in Jerusalem.
3. That does not mean that there were no difficulties for them.
4. This chapter surely helps us to see that the saints in Jerusalem in the 1st Century were just ordinary people.
5. Let's always strive to follow the perfect plan presented to us in the NT and learn from mistakes we find therein revealed.

DISCUSSION: Acts 5 Helps me in that it—

I. Presents Lessons Taught by Ananias & Sapphira (5.1-11).

Acts 5:1-11 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, (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. (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? (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. (5) And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. (6) And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. (7) And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. (8) And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. (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. (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.

1. **Coffman points out: The STRONG AND SWIFT punishment of this sin should help us see the ENORMITY of the sin these two committed.**
 - 1) The apostles were men who were able to perform MIRACLES and to DISCERN the thoughts of men.

- 2) They claimed **INFALLIBILITY**—since they were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit!
 - 3) If such a fraud as this undertaken by Ananias and Sapphira had stood without rebuke (*and then perhaps they would brag about it sometime in the future*), it would have been a severe discrediting of the apostles and their authority!!!
2. **A LIE may be ACTED as well as TOLD.**
- 1) The fact is that when the gift was given, Ananias did not SAY that the money he brought was the whole price of the land.
 - 2) What he did do was to allow others to form that conclusion.
 - 3) And we KNOW he did this by the clear statement in verse 3—**WHY HAS SATAN FILLED YOUR HEART TO LIE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AND DKEEP BACK PART OF THE PRICE OF THE LAND FOR YOURSELF.**
 - 4) In our day of OPEN dishonesty, we may have a tendency to make light of this sin, but if we read Acts 5, we should get the clear picture of what it means to God.
 - 5) Their deception was actually a demonstration of **HYPOCRISY**, which was one of the sins Jesus strongly spoke out against (Matthew 23).
3. **The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.**
- 1) When we examine our hearts and find any sign of the **LOVE OF MONEY**, we must be alarmed by it.
 - 2) **Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.** *Mammon being a FIGURE for wealth.*
4. **God can unmask the hypocrite and ALWAYS knows about the hypocrisy.**
- 1) **Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.**
 - 2) **Luke 12:2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.**
5. **God has another side to His character—STERNNESS.**
- 1) God is merciful toward the penitent.
 - 2) However, He is **SEVERE** toward the insincere (vv., 5, 10).

Acts 5 Helps me in that it—

II. Once again demonstrates the POWER with which the church was established and developed (5.12-16).

1. Miracles had a purpose.
2. The purpose is seen clearly in the development of the Jerusalem church.
3. The apostles having **POWER** to heal the sick and perform many different miracles was intended to produce **FAITH** in the minds of those who saw those miracles.
4. Verse 14 tells us: **AND BELIEVERS WERE INCREASINGLY ADDED TO THE LORD, MULTITUDES OF BOTH MEN AND WOMEN.**
5. God's plan for the growth of the church was working.

6. People were seeing miracles and they were LISTENING to the message preached by these POWERFUL preachers!

Acts 5 Helps me in that it—

III. Shows that it was NOT without opposition that growth came to the 1st Century Church (17-28).

1. The High Priest and the Sadducees **WERE FILLED WITH INDIGNATION** (v. 17) because of the preaching and the success of the church.
 - 1) These men were obviously greedy for power and they saw it slipping away from them.
 - 2) Those who love power are not going to give it up with no resistance.
 - 3) As we go out with the message of salvation today, we are facing people who love to have the POWER over their own lives. *SELF is on the throne.*
 - 1- We are asking them to release that power and allow Jesus to reign in their hearts.
 - 2- This is a difficult thing to accomplish.
2. Even though there were power-hungry opponents of the message of the gospel, the Lord sent an angel to set these men free from prison and sent them out to preach—**GO STAND IN THE TEMPLE AND SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE.**
 - 1) This is **OUR CHARGE** as well!
 - 2) Paul told Timothy— 2 Timothy 2:2 **And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**
 - 3) What a great privilege we have to tell others about **THIS LIFE.**
 - 4) The life of a forgiven Christian is the life the **ENTIRE WORLD** needs to hear about **FROM FORGIVEN SAINTS!**
 - 5) They did hear about it in the 1st Century, and it is up to you and me for people to hear about it in the 21st Century!!!
3. They had opposition in the spreading of the gospel message; we should not expect anything different.

Acts 5 Helps me in that it—

IV. I SEE GREAT BOLDNESS on the part of the apostles as they carried out their mission (5.29-32).

Acts 5:29-32 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.** (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. (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.

1. They had just been imprisoned and warned not to preach Christ.

2. But here they are found **STANDING IN THE TEMPLE AND TEACHING THE PEOPLE. (V. 25).**
3. When they are once again confronted about their disobedience to the instructions of the council, they have an answer: **WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN.**
 - 1) That is all they could say to these powerful leaders of the Jews.
 - 2) What choice did they have?
 - 3) Obey the council and disobey God?
 - 1- What a disappointment it is that these supposed rulers of God's people—the Council—had to be confronted with such a choice,
 - 2- And then, could not humble themselves to answer the question correctly!
4. If the Jewish leaders would only consult their own history, they would have known how to answer...
 - 1) The Hebrew midwives obeyed God, not Pharaoh (Exodus 1.17).
 - 2) Hezekiah listened to the Lord and not to the king of Assyria (2 Kgs 19.14-37).
 - 3) Down through the history of God's dealing with men, He teaches us that God blesses obedience but abhors disobedience.
 - 4) Therefore, the apostles must obey God rather than the orders of the High Priest!
5. That they had the courage to endure this confrontation and boldly refuse to obey orders that contradicted God's sets before US a strong example to follow!

Acts 5 Helps me in that it—

V. It shows how WRONG men's ideas about heaven's message can be (33-39).

1. Most of the time we are quick to PRAISE Gamaliel for his advice to the council.
2. He was a VIP on the council.
 - 1) A **TEACHER OF THE LAW (v. 34).**
 - 2) 33.248 νομοδιδάσκαλος, ου m: a person who is skilled in the teaching and interpretation of the law (in the NT referring to the law of the OT)—‘teacher of the Law, expert in the Law.’¹.
 - 3) He did use his respected position to give some advice to the council.
3. *John G. Butler points out: Basically, Gamaliel said to LET TIME BE THE JUDGE.*
 - 1) First, this was NOT good advice because it is based upon bad standards.
 - 1- It may sound good at first.
 - 2- But it is BAD ADVICE!
 - 3- Is TIME the only criteria by which to judge the gospel message?
 - 4- What about the facts of the gospel?
 - 2) It was using an improper comparison.
 - 1- Gamaliel compared the apostles to THEUDAS (v. 36) and JUDAS OF GALILEE (v. 37).
 - 2- In o way did these two men compare to the apostles!

¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, [*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*](#) (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 415.

- 3- Those two were renegades whose behavior was criminal.
- 3) It was the wrong action.
 - 1- **KEEP AWAY FROM THESE MEN AND LET THEM ALONE**, was what Gamaliel suggested to do with the apostles.
 - 2- Wrong, wrong, wrong!
 - 3- YES, they should refrain from prosecuting these men, but they should NOT leave them alone and pay no attention to their message!
 - 4- They should listen to the apostles' message.
4. When there are those who oppose our message today, we certainly do not want them following the philosophy of Gamaliel in regard to how they receive our words!
 - 1) Rather, we want them to consider our words carefully.
 - 2) Weigh them in their own minds.
 - 3) Compare our message to the standard of Scripture.
 - 4) Then accept the saving message and help to spread it to others!

Acts 5 Helps me in that it—

VI. Points to the NEED to determine on whose side I wish to be found (v. 39).

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

1. Gamaliel's words of advice did end with a powerful truth!
2. When we are doing the Lord's will by following the NT as our guide, we are on God's side of the spiritual battle lines!
3. How fearful a position is it to find yourself FIGHTING AGAINST GOD?
4. Can you imagine a more desperate situation than this?
5. That which makes no sense in what Gamaliel says is that plenty of PROOF had already been displayed (by the mighty miracles performed by the apostles) to demonstrate on whose side they were!!!
 - 1) Someone opposing God and His will would not have supernatural abilities.
 - 2) The reaction of the Jews who had the Law and John to prepare them for the reception of the message of the gospel **SHOULD HAVE BEEN IMMEDIATE YIELDING** to the message of the cross.
 - 3) But, they had closed their eyes to the truth presented by these bold proclaimers!
6. What do we do about those who are in a similar frame of reference in our day?
 - 1) We can continue to show to the world our own strong convictions in the way we live our lives.
 - 2) We can be kind and caring and interested in the souls of those who are lost.
 - 3) We can seize every opportunity to speak a word of truth to those who so desperately need it.
 - 4) We can encourage one another to continue faithfully serving— Hebrews 10:24 **And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:**

- 5) We can thank God that we have received the saving message and thank Him constantly for loving us that much.

Acts 5 Helps me in that it—

VII. I learn HOW to react to mistreatment and misunderstanding of my purpose in spreading the gospel (5.41-42).

Acts 5:41-42 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. (42) And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

1. REJOICING THAT THEY WERE COUNTED WORTHY TO SUFFER SHAME FOR HIS NAME...
 - 1) The way they responded to the persecution is the way you and I must respond when our efforts are rejected and even worse things happen.
 - 2) We must see all of our lives as a time to follow Christ and tell others that is what motivates us— 1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:.
 - 3) When this stand is not appreciated or when it is despised, we must continue in it.
 - 4) We must realize that Jesus was likewise despised by some.
 - 5) He suffered for us—we must feel HONOR in opportunities to suffer for Him.
 - 6) Will that be an easy assignment?
 - 7) No, it will be very difficult.
2. Whatever the result, we must not cease to **TEACH AND PREACH JESUS CHRIST.**

Conclusion:

1. Our history book will help us carry on the great work that was begun in the 1st Century.
2. We should read, study, and apply that which is recorded for us in our history book!