

FACING OPPOSITION

Acts 5:12-42

INTRODUCTION

In spite of the Sanhedrin's threats, the apostles rely on God to infuse them with boldness as he performed many signs and wonders among the people. The outcome of all of this outworking of God's power through the apostles was that many were converted to Jesus. Unfortunately, this ministry success threatened the religious leader's influence among the people.

THIS WEEK:

Opposition in some form will always be the experience of anyone openly sharing Christ (2 Tim 3:12). This week, discover how the promise of opposition in the Christian life also brings with it the promise of unspeakable joy.

OBSERVATION *What does it SAY?*

Discover key details of the passage by reading Acts 5:12-42 and then answering the following questions:

1. What was the impression the believers and apostles left on the people (vv. 12-16)?
2. What attitude did the leadership have towards the believers and apostles? What was the reason for this attitude (vv. 17, 28)?
3. What did the Sadducees do to the apostles? What did God do to the apostles (vv. 18-19)?
4. What specifically did the Angel of the Lord tell the apostles to do (v. 20)?

5. Why were the commander and servants so careful in their handling of the apostles (v. 26)?

6. What reason did Peter give the leaders for their persistent preaching (v. 29)?



Horne, Charles, and Julius Beyer. *The Bible and Its Story: Acts–Epistles, Apostles to Revelation*. Vol. 10. New York, NY: Francis R. Niglutsch, 1910.

7. What was Gamaliel's advice to the Sanhedrin?
What was his rationale for this advice (vv. 33-39)?

8. What did the Sanhedrin end up doing to the apostles? How did the apostles respond (vv. 40-42)?

INTERPRETATION *What does it MEAN?*

Use the Bible to interpret the Bible. Look up the cross references and use them to interpret the passage under study:

9. The words "no one else" in v. 13 are literally, "none of the rest" (tōn loipōn oudeis). This phrase is found in other parts of the NT and translated as "others" in Luke 8:10 (cf. Rom. 11:7; Eph. 2:3; 1 Thes. 4:13; 5:6). Based on these other passages, and the context of v. 13, what would you say is the spiritual status of the people called "none of the rest"? Why do you suppose the "none of the rest" joined them?
10. How does the response of the religious leaders in Acts 5:17-42 compare to the persecution promised in other parts of the New Testament, such as Luke 21:12-19; Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:18-25; 1 Pet. 4:12-16)?
11. What promises are there in God's word about suffering (Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3-4; 8:17; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; Phil. 1:29; 1 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 3:12; James 1:2-4)? Name as many as you can:

12. In what ways is the suffering of Jesus found in 1 Peter 1:11; 2:21, 23; 3:18; 4:1, 13; 5:1) to be emulated by His followers (c.f. 1 Peter 1:6–7; 2:19; 3:13–17; 4:1, 12–19; 5:9–10)?

APPLICATION *Why does it MATTER?*

Now that you have discerned what the passage means, how does it apply to your life?

13. Beyond salvation, what must also happen in our hearts for us to choose obedience and allegiance to God above the societal and cultural pressures of our day?
14. Reflecting on the apostles' response to persecution in Acts 5:40-42, what will cultivate a mindset of rejoicing in the midst of trials and adversity in our own lives?

TAKE AWAY *How does this change me?*

15. What does this passage reveal about God?
16. What does this passage reveal about humanity?
17. What is the Holy Spirit revealing in this passage about your life?

Have your kids do the word find puzzle on the next page or read to them Acts 5:12-42. Use the following questions to have a discussion about how God knows our secret desires and actions.

1. Who performed many signs and wonders among the people according to Acts 5:12?
Possible answer: The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people.
2. What did the high priest and his associates do to the apostles in Acts 5:18?
Possible answer: The high priest arrested the apostles and put them in public prison.
3. What did God do in Acts 5:19?
Possible answer: God sent an Angel of the Lord to release the apostles so they could teach the people.
4. How did the apostles respond when they were released from prison in Acts 5:29-32?
Possible answer: The apostles said, "We must obey God rather than men," and continued to preach and teach about Jesus.
5. Why were the apostles rejoicing after they were beaten and commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus in Acts 5:41?
Possible answer: The apostles rejoiced because they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus. They understood that following Jesus might involve suffering, but they were willing to endure it for His sake.
6. How can we share the good news about Jesus with others, like the apostles did, even when it's not easy? (Acts 5:42)
Possible answers: We can share the good news about Jesus by telling others what He has done for us, inviting them to church or youth group, and praying for opportunities to share Jesus' love with our friends and family.

Take some time to listen to your child's answer and then lead them in a prayer that calls upon God to help the them yield to him and depend on his strength to be bold for him.

WORD FIND

Acts 5:12-42

Many signs and **wonders** were being done among the **people** through the **hands** of the **apostles**. They were all together in Solomon's Colonnade. No one else dared to join them, but the **people** spoke well of them. Believers were added to the **Lord** in increasing numbers—**multitudes** of both men and women. As a result, they would carry the **sick** out into the streets and lay them on cots and mats so that **when Peter came** by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them. In addition, a **multitude came** together from the towns surrounding Jerusalem, bringing the **sick** and those who were tormented by unclean **spirits**, and they were all healed. **Then the high priest rose** up. He and all who were with him, who belonged to the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. So they arrested the **apostles** and put them in the public **jail**. But an angel of the

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life." Hearing this, they entered the **temple** at daybreak and began to **teach**. **When the high priest** and those who were with him arrived, they convened the **Sanhedrin**—the full council of the Israelites—and sent **orders** to the **jail** to have them **brought**. But **when** the servants got there, they did not find them in the **jail**; so they returned and reported, "We **found** the **jail** securely locked, with the guards **standing** in front of the doors, but **when** we opened them, we **found** no one inside." As the captain of the **temple** police and the chief **priests** heard these things, they were baffled about them, **wondering** what would come of this. Someone **came** and reported to them, "Look! The men you put in **jail** are **standing** in the **temple** and **teaching** the **people**." **Then** the commander went with the servants and **brought** them in without force,

"Didn't we strictly **order** you not to **teach** in this **name**? Look, you have filled Jerusalem with your **teaching** and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." **Peter** and the **apostles** replied, "We must obey God rather than **people**. The God of our ancestors raised up **Jesus**, whom you had murdered by hanging him on a tree. God exalted this man to his right **hand** as ruler and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy **Spirit** whom God has given to those who obey him." **When** they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to **kill** them. But a Pharisee **named** Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was respected by all the **people**, stood up in the **Sanhedrin** and **ordered** the men to be taken outside for a little while. He said to them, "Men of Israel, be careful about what you're about to

was **killed**, and all his **followers** were dispersed and **came** to nothing. After this man, Judas the Galilean **rose** up in the days of the census and attracted a **following**. He also perished, and all his **followers** were scattered. So in the present case, I tell you, stay away from these men and leave them alone. For if this plan or this work is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You may even be **found** fighting against God." They were persuaded by him. After they called in the **apostles** and had them flogged, they **ordered** them not to speak in the **name** of **Jesus** and released them. **Then** they went out from the presence of the **Sanhedrin**, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be treated shamefully on behalf of the **Name**. Every day in the **temple**, and in various homes, they