

Acts 5:12, 16-20, 27-32, 38-42 (NIV)

¹²The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade.

¹⁶Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

¹⁷Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. ¹⁸They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. ¹⁹But 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.”

²⁷Having 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.” ²⁹Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than men! ³⁰The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead--whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. ³²We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

³⁸Therefore, 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. ³⁹But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.” ⁴⁰His 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. ⁴¹The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. ⁴²Day 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.

44-05-01-The New Life's Full Message

healing, deliverance, renewal, resistance, perseverance

Acts 5:16-20, 27-32, 38-42

Jesus is the *truth* Who leads the *way* to a new *life* in our fallen world.

INTRODUCTION:

–Jesus said (**John 14:6**), “I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me.” Some hate His message for its exclusiveness: He alone can lead us to God. Many love the certainty it gives: He truly can bring us to God. Others ignore Him: they don't want to find God. But the message persists: *It's God's only plan.* **HOM.idea.**

–**Acts 5:12a** says, “*The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people.*” That's what Jesus had been doing. So, when the Holy Spirit came, He kept it up through His disciples. *Miraculous healing weren't for show. They announced a restored humanity, which had been ruined by sin in the Fall– v.16-20, Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed. Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. “Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people the full message of this new life.” (title). That message told that...*

I. This New Life Renews Fallen Life

- A. The miracles in Acts showed that *Jesus wasn't finished yet*. He was just getting started with His promise: “I will build my church”...
- B. These miracles were done “among the people,” not privately, but in public, where *the reality of Christ would challenge unbelief*.
- C. Sin had marred life with *disease and demonic influences*. (These “miraculous signs” declared a **new life** had arrived, where the “*sick and those tormented by evil spirits*” could be “*healed*” in Jesus' name.)

TRANS: *Jesus hasn't quit announcing this new life*. When His Gospel is *resisted*, its spread has persisted. They may stop His messengers, but never His message. [“The body they may kill; God's truth abideth still,” said **Luther**. “The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church,” said **Tertullian**.] When “rulers...authorities... the powers of this dark world... spiritual forces of evil” try to imprison His Word, Jesus says: “*Go, stand in the temple courts... and tell the*

people the full message of this new life.” God wants lost people to hear the good news that **Jesus is the truth Who leads the way to a new life in our fallen world.** Another part of that “full message” was that...

II. This New Life Defeats the Old Life

- A. New life in Christ is in direct conflict with our old life— v.27-32, *Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. “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.” Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than men! The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead--whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”*
- B. When Jesus is as King, all other allegiances become secondary— “We must obey God rather than men!” (What does that mean? Does God’s will override all other wills?... those of relatives, friends, schools, jobs, the law, the nation, the church? Yes, it does! And if we obey Him, it may mean trouble, suffering, but Jesus said— John 16:33, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”
- C. By raising “Jesus from the dead,” God gave us access to *Christ’s new life*— Rom 6:4, We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (Baptism symbolizes our “repentance” and God’s “forgiveness of sins.” It signifies death and defeat to the old life: it becomes a physical confession of faith in Christ.)
- D. This *new life* inspired Peter earlier to tell this same group in Acts 4:20, “we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” The world hates hearing, “*Jesus is the answer! Jesus is the way! Jesus is Lord!*” Why? Because He cancels false answers; He nullifies religious ways; He subordinates other lords [like Pilate], telling them “You would have no power... if it were not given to you from above.”

TRANS: One man among those *proud religious authorities* heard in Peter’s words a note of *defeat* for the *old life*, the *old answers*, the *old ways*, and *defeat for themselves* as *lords of the old regime*. Gamaliel’s voice at last spoke wisdom— v.38-40, *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. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.” 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. But, the wise Gamaliel was right...

III. This New Life Is As Unstoppable As Jesus— v.41, *The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.*

- A. Hostile powers can’t stop Christ’s *invisible* “kingdom,” especially when His subjects feel honored to suffer for the glory of their invisible King. (Christians ought never have a martyr-complex, but we all need the spirit of the church’s martyrs who really believed “Only one life, ’twill soon be past; only what’s done for Christ will last.”)
- B. When Jesus told the apostles to evangelize the world, He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go...” (They might have remembered His words, when the angel let them out of prison and told them “Go, stand in the temple courts... and tell the people the full message of this new life.” Jesus was reassuring them that He was still in control; He wasn’t finished yet, neither were they— v.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.*

CONCLUSION:

—[A poem I recently found: “**The Anvil of God’s Word**”...]

Last eve I paused beside the blacksmith’s door, / And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime; / Then looking in, I saw upon the floor, / Old hammers, worn with beating years of time. // “How many anvils have you had,” said I, / “To wear and batter all these hammers so?” / “Just one,” said he, and then with twinkling eye, / “The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.” // And so, I thought, the Anvil of God’s Word / For ages skeptic blows have beat upon; / Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard, / The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.

—No... it says, “*they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ*”: an **unstoppable message** about an **unstoppable Savior**. Some would despise this message for its exclusiveness, others would embrace it for its reassuring certainty... *Certainty about what? Jesus, the truth Who leads the way to a new life in our fallen world.*