

Scripture Reference: Acts 5:12-42

Scripture Verse: We must obey God rather than human beings! Acts 5:29b

Main Truth: We must obey God rather than human beings

A few weeks ago we learned how God used Peter and John to heal the man who could not walk. The apostles continued to do this, they would perform many signs and wonders among the people. Many people realized that Jesus is God and that He died for their sins so they put their faith in Him. More and more people were becoming believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This should have been a joyful time, but there were some people that were mad about people believing in Jesus, they were called the Sadducees. They were filled with jealousy. They arrested the apostles and put them in jail. During the middle of the night an angel of the Lord opened the door of the jail and told the apostles, "Go, stand in the temple courts, and tell the people all about the new life they can have when they believe in Jesus." The apostles did as they were told and began to teach the people.

That same day the high priest called together the Sanhedrin (all the elders of Israel) to determine what to do with the apostles. So, they called for the apostles to be brought there from the jail. The officers looked all around the jail, no apostles! They went back to the Sanhedrin and said "We found the jail all locked up with guards at the doors, but no one was inside!" The captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were very worried about what this meant. Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles to the Sanhedrin.

The high priest questioned them, "We gave you strict orders not to teach about Jesus, yet you did it anyway!" Peter and the other apostles replied, and this is our verse today, "We must obey God rather than people! The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead, who you killed by hanging Him on a cross. God exalted Him to His own right hand because He is the Savior of the world that takes away the sins of the world. We are witness of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

When the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and wanted to kill the apostles. But a Pharisee that was there named Gamaliel said, "Don't harm these men. If what they do is not from God, it will fail on its own. But if what they teach is from God, then you will not be able to stop these men, you will only find yourselves fighting against God." This changed the Sanhedrin's mind about killing the apostles. They had them whipped, ordered them not to speak about Jesus, and let them go.

Do you think the apostles were discouraged after being put in prison and whipped? No! They left the jail rejoicing (explain this word to them, maybe demonstrate what they must have been like as they walked away from the jail) because they had suffered for teaching about Jesus. That sounds crazy, why would you be happy to suffer? The apostles knew God's promises. They knew they would be rewarded in heaven for obeying God even though they were suffering. They knew what an honor it was that they were sharing in God's work. We can share in God's work too. God has a special job for each of us, different ways He wants us to go out and tell the world about Him. Do you think the apostles stopped

teaching about Jesus? NO! The Bible says day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house that they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Savior.

When we believe that God sent Jesus to pay for the sins of the world, we become part of the Lord's army. He has a job for us. He wants us to show others the joy, freedom, and new life that comes when we believe in Jesus. This job boys and girls is more important than anything. God is more important than anything. So, remember our verse today, "We must obey God rather than people."

Who went around performing signs? The apostles

By their own power or by God's power? God's power

Who were jealous of the apostles and what they were teaching? Sadducees

Who put them in jail? Sadducees

What happened at night? An angel of the Lord opened the gates of the jail

What did the angel tell them to do? Teach the good news about Jesus in the temple courts

When the high priest asked the apostles why they taught after they were told not to what did the apostles say? We must obey God rather than people

What did the Sanhedrin do to the apostles? Whipped them

Were the apostles sad or rejoicing as they left the jail after being whipped? Rejoicing

Why? They knew God's promises that they would be rewarded in heaven for their suffering

Did the apostles stop teaching about Jesus or keep teaching about Jesus? Kept teaching about Jesus

Were only the apostles supposed to teach about Jesus or should we tell people the good news about Jesus too? We should tell people the good news about Jesus too.

Toddler story:

The apostles, Jesus' friends and helpers, were going around healing people and performing signs to show the power that is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This made the Sadducees mad and jealous.

The Sadducees threw the apostles in jail.

In the middle of the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the jail and told to apostles to go out and tell people the good news about Jesus.

So the apostles went to the temple courts and told people that Jesus is God and He died for the sins of the whole world so that anyone who believes in Him will have eternal life.

The Sadducees became even more furious when they found out that the apostles got out of jail and were teaching about Jesus again.

They asked the apostles, "Why are you teaching about Jesus again when we told you not to do that?"

The apostles said, "We must obey God rather than people!"

The Sadducees hurt the apostles and threatened them to stop teaching about Jesus.

The apostles kept teaching about Jesus because they knew that doing God's work was most important.

God wants us to tell people the good news about Jesus too.