

Acts 5:12-42

1. In this passage, we see that the apostles are doing the kinds of things that Jesus did, and therefore experiencing the kinds of opposition Jesus experienced.

a. Jesus has made the power of God available to us by the Holy Spirit.

1) When was the last time that you saw God moved in power in your life or someone else's you know?

2) How did you respond to what you saw and what does this reveal about your faith? (Where is it weak, strong, or both?)

b. In this passage, we see two groups who are responding to the Apostle's ministry in different ways. First, there are those who respect them but don't want to join them. Then there are those joining them and stepping out in faith, bringing to the sick to them.

1) Was there a time when you were more like the first group? If so, when was it and what was going on?

2) What changed in you to move you from respectful observer to active participant?

3) Are there any ways or aspects of the church's life where you still tend to be a distant observer? Why is that?

4) What would it take for you to begin to participate in this way?

2. In all likelihood the disciples were surprised by their angelic rescue. Have you ever experienced a situation where God miraculously rescued you from a dire situation in an unexpected way? If so, what was it and how did that experience affect you?

3. The angel's instructions reveals that a key purpose for their rescue was so that they could keep preaching at the temple. We see here the principle that when God intervenes to rescue people it isn't just for their personal benefit. Instead, it is for the benefit of others as well, that others might also hear and see what God has done and who He is. Ultimately, God sets us free to do His work.

a. Think back again to a time when God delivered you. Since then when have you taken the time to tell others about God has done for you?

b. Who can you share and encourage with what God has done in your life right now?

4. The angel told them to go back to the temple to preach. The temple was the center of Jerusalem's religious life, and a natural place to engage people on spiritual things. At the end of the passage we also see that they engaged people in their homes.

a. What are the most natural and appropriate places for us to engage people about Jesus today in our culture?

b. God's specific calling for them was to stand the temple courtyard and preach. Where has God called you to preach and testify? What context has he uniquely gifted you to be a witness in?

5. Pastor Jason pointed out that it is a temptation for us to substitute serving for sharing the gospel. How have you faced this in your own life?

a. What the difference between serving in Jesus' name and serving in a way that isn't?

b. When have you seen this done well?