

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 7TH–8TH, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

IMPRISONED (ACTS 5:17–26) JEALOUSY

The Sadducees, filled with jealousy, sought to extinguish this growing movement the apostles were a part of.

- Peter and the other apostles were gaining more respect from the public than the religious leaders, which threatened their hierarchy.
- The difference is that while the religious leaders demanded respect, the apostles aimed to bring respect and honor to God.

AN ANGEL OF THE LORD

The apostles were arrested and put in jail.

- God, who never fails to make a point, sent an angel to release them.
- The Sadducees, who were known for their political ideals in trying to appease both the Romans and the Jews, did not believe in angels.
- The important truth is that even if someone does not believe in the things of God, it does not make them any less true.

RESCUED

As the angel set them free, he encouraged the apostles to persist in their mission despite this minor setback.

- The reason for the rescue was to continue delivering God's message to His people in the temple that early morning.
- We should trust God, believing He can do miraculous things, and hoping to witness more of them. This is not so we can live for ourselves but to dedicate all we have for Him.

NOWHERE TO BE FOUND

As the officers went to retrieve the apostles, they found them missing, even though the jail and the guards remained in place.

- The captain of the temple and the chief priests stood bewildered by this extraordinary turn of events.
- After all, professional guards do not simply lose 12 prisoners.

ARRESTED AGAIN

The apostles, driven by command and unwavering faith, were in the temple at daybreak preaching about this life in Jesus Christ.

- Imagine the profound conviction and trust they held in the truth of Christ and His resurrection, empowered by the Holy Spirit to boldly return to what had led to their arrest a few hours earlier.
- Envision the astonishment of the council upon discovering the apostles were fearlessly back in the temple.

WITHOUT VIOLENCE

The apostles returned to custody calmly, without causing an uproar or appealing to the crowd.

- Their past experiences with God's power gave them the faith they needed for their current situation.
- Once again, the hearts of the religious leaders were revealed. They feared the people, but they did not fear God, who was clearly working through the apostles.

TRUTH (ACTS 5:27–32)

JERUSALEM IS FILLED WITH THEIR TEACHING

When they were brought in front of the Sanhedrin, they were questioned about why they continued teaching about the one the religious leaders refused to acknowledge directly, Jesus.

- Despite their fear of being deemed guilty for His murder on the cross, months earlier they proclaimed, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27:25).
- Little did they realize how much they needed His blood to be sacrificed for their salvation.

WE MUST OBEY GOD

Peter and the apostles responded quickly, just as they did in Chapter 4.

- While we are called to obey those in authority (Romans 13:1) and to pursue peace with everyone (Romans 12:18), there will be moments when obeying God stands in contrast to these paths.
- In those times, let us remember that the most powerful voice isn't always the loudest. We need to speak the truth in love.

TESTIMONY

Peter declares the gospel to the Sanhedrin. He states:

- It was God who raised up Jesus
- Because of our guilt
- He was crucified
- And resurrected
- For the forgiveness of sins
- The question for them was, would they respond? Will we?

ADVISED (ACTS 5:33–42)

GAMALIEL

After Peter shared the gospel with the Sanhedrin, the council wanted to kill him and the other apostles. Yet a voice of reason emerged from a distinguished member of the council.

- The previous night, God used an angel to rescue the apostles; now, He used a Pharisee, who likely didn't support their teachings, to intervene.
- Often times God will use the most unlikely sources to accomplish His will. Are you ready to embrace that possibility in your life?

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

Gamaliel, while discussing some uprisings, explained that if the movement was initiated by man it would fail; however, if it was from God, it would ultimately succeed.

- His acknowledgment of God's sovereignty is powerful, yet he chose to remain undecided in the face of compelling evidence.
- Do we have family or friends who are sitting on the fence? Are we ourselves sitting on the fence?

BEATEN

Although the council accepted Gamaliel's advice, they did not let the apostles off easily, choosing instead to have them flogged.

- While God had protected them before, He chose not to rescue them from the pain of the 39 lashes.
- God may not always spare us from suffering, but He is ever-present in our trials. Are we resting in His embrace?

REJOICING

After being beaten and ordered not to speak anymore about the name of Jesus, the apostles left with hearts full of praise to God.

- Despite imprisonment, threats, and suffering, their response in the face of adversity was to rejoice.
- How often should we choose to offer God our praise instead of letting grumbling take over?

THEY CONTINUED PROCLAIMING

Instead of instilling fear in the apostles, everything they experienced only made them more courageous.

- They couldn't contain the hope that they had inside of them, so they continued teaching in the temple (big building) and from house to house (smaller buildings).
- We are learning in a bigger building right now. Will we continue to learn this week in homes?

RESPECT

- We all have a desire for some form of respect.
- **We want our importance to be acknowledged. In our pursuit of this validation, we may demand respect and go to great lengths to maintain it.**
- **The greatest form of respect is the one that is freely given, not taken. Do we truly desire to see that God receives all of the respect and honor that He deserves?**

SUFFERING

- What does it mean for us to suffer for Christ?
- **Even though God is capable of protecting us from suffering, He still allows us to experience it.**
- **The real question is: will we relentlessly pursue God, even when He doesn't deliver us from our trials? With what kind of boldness will we face suffering for the sake of the gospel?**

REJOICING

- As Christians we are called to rejoice in the Lord always.
- **What does this look like?**
- **It doesn't mean celebrating our circumstances at all times. It means that despite what is happening around us or to us, we rejoice because we know God! We need to remind ourselves of the truth of who God is. In what areas of our lives do we need to do this more? Where can we take time this week to pause and praise God more intentionally?**