

# ACTS CHAPTER FIVE

## Preaching and Prison

### Overview

#### 1. Ananias and Sapphira: (Verses 1-11)

This chapter highlights the sin unto death and Ananias and Sapphira demonstrate the result of committing the sin unto death. Our individual accountability before God is also highlighted.

#### 2. Signs and Wonders by the Apostle's Hands: (Verses 12-16)

The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira brought great reverence for God in the hearts of the early believers. Many signs and wonders were performed through the hands of the apostles and although sinners did not join themselves to the apostles, the church had a good report among them. As a result of the signs and wonders, many believers were added to the Lord. Many unsaved were drawn to the healings performed.

#### 3. The Second Arrest of the Apostles: (Verses 17-24)

The high priest and Jewish religious leaders were enraged by the popularity Christianity was gaining through the preaching and miracles performed by the apostles. They arrested the apostles and put them in prison. As a sign to the Sanhedrin, an angel released the apostles from prison. The next day it was reported to the religious leaders that the apostles were found teaching in the temple.

#### 4. The Third Arrest of the Apostles: (Verses 25-27)

When the religious leaders discovered the apostles teaching the Word of God in the temple, the captain and his officers went to arrest them again. The captain's instinct was to make a public display of the apostles, but out of fear of the crowd's reaction, they arrested them quietly.

#### 5. The Apostles Brought Before the Council: (Verses 27-42)

The council confronted the disciples about continuing to preach the gospel, which the council had strongly forbid them to do. But Peter and the other apostles made clear to the council that they must obey God rather than men. Peter boldly accuses the religious leaders of crucifying Jesus, but points out that God negated their decision by exalting Jesus to the highest position in heaven as Savior over mankind and the nation of Israel. The council was so enraged at what Peter said they wanted to immediately put the disciples to death. However, Gamaliel reasoned with the council pointing out that if the Christian movement was of God, they could not stop it and if it was not of God, it would die out. The council listened to Gamaliel, threatened the disciples to stop preaching the name of Jesus, and released them. The disciples rejoiced at suffering for the Lord and continued to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

### The Challenge of Chapter Five:

The story of Ananias and Sapphira should cause us to examine our own heart motives in giving to the Lord. It should also cause us to realize the seriousness of lying to the Holy Spirit and the results. We are told that “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). Jesus told us “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” Religion hates the gospel and will do everything to stop its influence in the world. Living a godly life according to the principles taught in the Word of God will cause persecution in our lives. Similar to the first apostles, we will suffer tribulation in this life, but we can be of good cheer knowing the gospel cannot be stopped because Jesus has already won!