

# ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## Lesson #5 -Of God or Man?

Scripture Reading: Acts 5:38-42

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### Introduction:

1. Know your roots / foundation. The book of Acts shows the beginning history of the church we are now a part of!
2. The church of Christ is a work of God, not of man!
3. In this lesson we will observe some providential evidence that supports this claim.

## I. GAMALIEL'S ADVICE -5:33-39

### A. TWO MEN CLAIMING GREATNESS

1. Theudas -5:35, 36
  - a. All we know about Theudas is the contents of this verse
  - b. Josephus mentions a Theudas who led a revolt. His revolt however, occurred between ten and fifteen years later.
2. Judas of Galilee -5:37
  - a. He led a revolt against the taxation of Caesar in 6 AD
  - b. His work was destroyed by the Romans
  - c. His sons were executed. What exactly happened to him is unclear, but we know he did perish.

### B. HIS CONCLUSION

1. If the plan or work is of man, it will surely perish and come to naught.
2. If this plan or work is of God however, one will never be able to stop it!
  - a. Keep in mind Gamaliel is not a believer in Christ, nor a supporter of the apostles.
  - b. He is using his wisdom to arrive at a logical conclusion concerning these men.

*In the previous verses, Luke reveals to his readers whether this work is of God or man; observe...*

## II. ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA -5:1-11

### A. THEIR DEED

1. They had a plot of land and sold it, but kept back a portion for themselves.
  - a. Nothing was wrong in this action. The money was theirs. -5:4
  - b. Perhaps they were wanting to look good in the eyes of man -4:36, 37
2. Ananias laid a portion of the proceeds at the apostles feet, claiming it was the full amount.

### B. THEIR PUNISHMENT

1. Ananias was struck dead at the apostles feet -5:5, 6
2. Sapphira also lied to the Holy Spirit and died -5:7-10
3. NOTE: The immediate death of this husband and wife shows this is the power of God and not of man!

### **III. THE CONTINUING POWER IN THE CHURCH**

#### **A. THE SIGNS AND WONDERS -5:12-16**

1. We observed the speaking in tongues (Acts 2) and the healing of the lame man (Acts 3)
2. Luke reveals that many signs were done through the apostles
  - a. Many wanting the shadow of Peter to fall on them -vs 15
  - b. Unclean spirits were cast out -vs 16

#### **B. THE APOSTLES SET FREE -5:17-21**

1. The high priest and the Sadducees were angry with the apostle and imprisoned them.
2. An angel of the Lord sets them free and tells them to preach to the people in the temple

#### **C. ON TRIAL AGAIN -5:22-32**

1. The apostles cannot be found in the prison, but are in the temple preaching the word!
2. They are brought before the council without violence for fear of the people
3. They are reminded to stop preaching Jesus as the Christ -vs. 28
4. "We ought to obey God rather than men!" -vs 29
5. They consented to the death of Christ. Through Him however, they can find repentance and forgiveness for their souls.

#### **Conclusion:**

1. Despite all the efforts to stomp out the Christian teaching, the apostles would not be stopped!
2. They beat the apostles and commanded them to stop preaching in the name of Jesus -vs. 40
3. They rejoiced for being counted worthy to suffer for Christ -vs. 41
4. They continued to teach and preach -vs. 42
5. Today, we continue to be this church that belongs to Christ. It is great joy to know that God's hand is in His kingdom both then and now!