



## Study 5—The Unstoppable News

### Acts 5:12-41

The Apostles have been performing miraculous signs and wonders—the sick were being brought out on the streets so that even Peter’s shadow might fall on them. And anyone who was sick, or troubled by an evil spirit, was healed.

But as the strength of the church grew, so did their opposition. Often, we’re timid in the face of opposition. But let’s take a look at the Apostles and how they react when the heat is on.

#### Breaking the Ice...

What do you think it would be like to spend time in prison? If you’ve ever been inside a jail (even just as a visitor!) describe it for your group.



Read what happens from Acts 5:12-21

1. Who are the main opponents of the apostles (v17-21)
2. What is it that’s burning them up?

Sneak Peak—Even though the high priest and his associates are the main source of persecution, take a sneak peak ahead and see what happens by the end of Acts 6:7!

3. Compare the events of 5:17-18 with what happens in 4:1-3. What are the similarities and differences?

**God sends some remarkable encouragement to the jailed apostles in the middle of the night. An angel opens the doors of the jail, and brings them out!**

4. For what reason does the angel release them?
5. How does the angel describe the essence of the message they are to preach?
6. How does this description of their message connect with what you recall of the apostles preaching so far (eg. 4:33, 3:15, 2:32, 1:22)?

**Read 5:22-33**

a) In what ways is this meeting of the Sanhedrin different to the one described in chapter 4?

b) What similarity can you see in the cross-examination, and Peter's response, to the things said in 4:18-20?

c) List the points made by Peter in his speech from v30-32. Which points do you recognize from his previous sermons? (Do you spot a trend here?)

d) According to Peter, Jesus is Saviour and Lord ("*raised and exalted as Prince and Savior*" v31. What happens when we lose sight of either one or the other of these aspects of Jesus?

**The Sanhedrin is furious and wants to put the apostles to death. But then, there is a very surprising intervention!**

1. Who from the Sanhedrin speaks up and what is the point that he makes?

2. What is the implication of verse 39 when you read it against the rest of Acts?

3. Last time Peter and John were in court, they were let off with a warning. What happens this time?

Perhaps when we read verse 40 and 41 the pain doesn't hit home. Usually, when prisoners were flogged, it meant 39 lashes—ie. the same punishment that nearly killed Jesus.

4. Again they are ordered "not to speak in the name of Jesus." How do they respond to the order?

5. What encouragement and challenge do you draw from the example of the apostles here?

Do **you** ever thank God for "*being counted worthy of disgrace for the Name*"? What do you tend to do instead?

7. If we take the challenge of this passage seriously, what concrete steps can you take to bring people into contact with this good news? What possible “disgrace” do you fear as you do this?

### **Pray**

Pray through some of these issues in your group, focusing on asking God to help you be faithful to the gospel.



*“Interaction, relationships, and reflection are some of our key words and goals as we aim to be growing followers of Jesus.”*