

Digging Deeper Sermon Series: *Submerged*,  
Sermon Title: *Lost & Gained*, Sermon Subject: *Persecution*  
by Robert Lee  
Scripture Lesson: Acts 5:12-42

**Monday** – Pray for Spiritual Healing then read Acts 5:12-16. In this passage we find that the Apostles performed many signs and miracles (wonders) among the people. Their ministry was attracting an increasing number of believers, both men and women. Not all who came were from Jerusalem as some came from nearby towns. Believers brought those who were tormented by impure spirits and laid them in the streets so at least the shadow of Peter may fall on them. This act, among others, demonstrated the power of the Lord. How many specific *miracles* are recorded in the Book of Acts? At least 20; nine of which are combined with specific *signs*. Why was it necessary for miracles and signs to be performed in Acts? God's purpose for performing them was to validate the ministry of the apostles, just as He did with the ministry of Yeshua (Jesus), Son of God. It is important to note that God does not always bring miraculous deliverance from danger and suffering to His children. Seasoned believers accept the fact that miracles always come, just not always *when* we expect them to. *Faith*, therefore, is a Christian character that will be tested and must be practiced.

**Tuesday** – Pray for Spiritual Courage and Obedience then read Acts 5:17-21. We find in this passage that the *so-called* spiritual leaders' hearts were filled with jealousy after witnessing the signs and miracles that God was performing (through the Apostles) on this increasing number of believers. In verse 18, the high priest and all his associates who were members of the party of Sadducees

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“arrested the Apostles and put them in jail.” But several miraculous acts occurred immediately following the night of their capture. First, a messenger (angel) of the Lord appeared in jail where the Apostles were being held captive. He opened the guarded door that was securely locked, and he escorted the Apostles out of jail. These miracles were performed without any of their accusers or captors’ knowledge. Then, in verse 20, the messenger of the Lord gave the Apostles a very specific command, and in verse 21, we find that they faithfully carried out their assignment.

**Wednesday** – Pray for Spiritual Wisdom then read Acts 5:22-26. Here we find how foolish it is for anyone to continue to fight against the power of God, especially after being so easily defeated. One can only imagine the panic and embarrassment the *so-called* spiritual leaders must have felt, having brought the full assembly of the elders of Israel together to confront the Apostles, only to find out that they had escaped. The hearts of these religious leaders were already filled with *envy* (verse 17). Based on their reaction, it appears that their hearts were also overtaken with *pride* and *wrath*. Someone found the Apostles in their moment of obedience to God (verse 25) and reported their whereabouts to the religious leaders, who had them arrested again. But this time, we notice that the guards did not use force (verse 26), because they feared that the people (believers) would stone them.

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**Thursday** – Pray for Spiritual Obedience. Read John 18:12-14 then read Acts 5:27-33. In John 18:12-14, we learn that it was Annas (high priest that year) who Yeshua (Jesus) was brought to first to stand trial after he was arrested. We also learn that Caiaphas, who later became high priest, was the one who had “advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man (Yeshua) died for the people.” In Acts 5:27-33, the Apostles spoke boldly before the Sanhedrin about their commitment to being obedient to God rather than humans. Religious leaders of the Sanhedrin were furious with the Apostles and wanted to put them to death because they were spreading truth in and around Jerusalem about the high priest and his court’s involvement in having Yeshua killed.

**Friday** – Pray for Spiritual Wisdom and Boldness then read Acts 5:34-39. Thank God for Gamaliel, a highly respected Pharisee who “stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that (the Apostles) be put outside for a while” so he could address the court. In verse 38, he “advised the court to leave these men alone,” because he knew that “if their purpose or activity was of human origin, it would fail.” In verse 39, Gamaliel went on to say that “if the purpose or activity of (the Apostles) is from God, men of the Sanhedrin “would not be able to stop them” from telling all about this new life.

**Saturday** – Pray for Strength when Suffering Spiritual Persecution after reading Acts 5:40-42. The word of God spoken through Gamaliel convinced the Sanhedrin to let the Apostles go, but only after they were flogged (hit

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repeatedly with whip or stick) and warned “not to speak in the name of Jesus.” How did the Apostles respond to being flogged? Verse 41 states that “they left the Sanhedrin rejoicing, because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.” And in verse 42, we find that they “continued teaching and proclaiming, day after day in the temple courts and from house to house, the good news that Yeshua is the Messiah.” Also read Matthew 5:1-12 and Luke 6:20-23 for additional information about how believers are expected to respond to spiritual persecution.