

ACTS: To the Ends of the Earth

Study 11: Stubborn, Joyful Obedience

READ Acts 5:12-42 and **LISTEN** to the [sermon](#) by Pastor Craig.

Following Jesus is not easy and often leads to suffering; after the earlier arrest of Peter and John, all the apostles are arrested and interrogated, as the Jewish leaders in the Sanhedrin contemplate their execution. At the same time, following Jesus entails joyful faithfulness, bold proclamation, and divine protection in the midst of suffering. God wants to instill in all His children the same stubborn, joyful obedience as that displayed in the lives of His apostles.

Big idea: We must be willing to obey God come what may, by proclaiming Jesus Christ as both Saviour and Lord.

Questions:

1. Due to the tense environment the apostles were working under “none of the rest dared join them” (v. 13) as they ministered for Jesus in the temple. What do you think was the source of their courage? See 4:16-21, 29-30; 5:1-16.
2. Why were the authorities “jealous” (v. 17)? Why should we expect opposition when we do faithful gospel ministry?
3. What does the apostles’ divine deliverance and divine command tell you about God’s sovereignty and love (vv. 17-21)?
4. Why did the apostles not obey the Sanhedrin (vv. 27-32)? When is it right to disobey civil authority? Should Christians try to topple an evil ruler (eg. Hitler)?

5. What are the core elements of the gospel Peter presented (vv. 30-32) and what does each one mean?
6. How assertive should we be in proclaiming Christ? Where is the balance between being subtle and being outspoken?
7. What do you make of Gamaliel’s wisdom (vv. 38-39)? How does this encourage you as you obey God in your witness?
8. After receiving a beating and being released, the apostles were “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the name.” What does this mean? Have you ever rejoiced after suffering dishonour for the gospel?
9. In light of the apostles’ example to obey God despite all obstacles, what might it look like for Christ to be first in your life: family, work, relationships etc?
10. Put yourself in the apostles’ position, and many at the moment around the world, and spend some time praying for the persecuted church.

STOP AND PRAY:

Praise: *God that nothing in heaven or on earth will overthrow the cause of Christ*
Thank: *Jesus for times of suffering and persecution you have experienced for Christ*
Pray: *for courage and the Holy Spirit’s enabling to be a faithful witness to Jesus*