

Standing Together

Read: Acts 5:17-42

Main Idea: The unity of believers in Christ empowers them to stand firm and boldly proclaim the Gospel, even in the face of persecution and adversity.

Key Verses: “The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.” **(Acts 5:30-32)**

Key Principles:

- Faithful gospel ministry provokes opposition from those who resist God’s work, yet it also brings divine blessing and kingdom expansion.
- External hostility, often rooted in jealousy over the church’s success, seeks to silence the proclamation of Christ but cannot thwart God’s sovereign intervention.
- Divine deliverance reinforces believers’ resolve to continue witnessing, highlighting God’s protection amid threats to freedom and security.
- Bold obedience to God models how unity in Christ equips the church to confront challenges with courage and clarity in proclaiming the resurrection.
- Wise counsel, even from unexpected sources, can temper persecution, reminding believers that God’s purposes prevail despite threats to life and well-being.
- Rejoicing in suffering for Christ’s name strengthens communal bonds, energizing the church to persist in teaching and evangelism across all settings.

Discussion:

1. How does this passage illustrate the progression of opposition to gospel ministry? Share a time when you’ve experienced or observed resistance to faithful witness.
2. In what ways do threats to our freedom test our mindset? Discuss personal prejudices or fears that might hinder bold proclamation.
3. What challenges arise when God shakes the foundations of those opposing His work? How does the Holy Spirit equip believers to step into available opportunities?
4. How does Peter’s response model standing firm when courage is challenged? Discuss practical steps for obeying God over men in modern contexts.
5. Why is Gamaliel’s advice significant in showing that the world cannot ultimately stop God’s mission, even when life is threatened?
6. How does rejoicing in suffering affirm the church’s unshakeable purpose, and what does this truth motivate in pursuing communal boldness?

Prayer:

- Pray for openness to God’s plan to confront hostility and build unity amid opposition.
- Pray for:
 - Courage to proclaim the gospel boldly, reflecting God’s sovereign protection.
 - That your members will experience the Spirit’s empowerment to rejoice in trials.
 - Boldness to stand together and share Christ’s hope with others.

Standing Together
Acts 5:17-42

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| I. | Your <u>mind</u> will be threatened. | 5:17-25 |
| 1. | The world may <u>steal</u> your <u>freedom</u> . | 5:17-18 |
| 2. | The Lord will <u>secure</u> your <u>future</u> . | 5:19-21 |
| 3. | The Lord will <u>shake</u> their <u>foundation</u> . | 5:21-25 |
| II. | Your <u>heart</u> will be threatened. | 5:26-32 |
| 1. | Your <u>courage</u> will be <u>challenged</u> . | 5:26-28 |
| 2. | Your <u>audience</u> will be <u>available</u> . | 5:29-32 |
| III. | Your <u>body</u> will be threatened. | 5:33-42 |
| 1. | The world <u>can</u> take your <u>life</u> . | 5:33-40 |
| 2. | The world <u>can't</u> take your <u>purpose</u> . | 5:41-42 |

NEXT WEEK:
Bless the Lord
Psalm 103