



Week 4

Acts 5: Gospel

Text: Acts 5

OPEN

This is our fourth week of our series in Acts called **“Unstoppable”** based on Acts 5:42 which says, “Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, **they never stopped** teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.” Like a powerful waterfall, the book of Acts is the story of the unstoppable movement of Jesus. It is the story of the birth, life, and ministry of his Church that we are part of today as a **people of God, filled with the Spirit of God, to fulfill the mission of God, by sharing Jesus with others.** Through this series we will be following the story of birth the Church and how it followed in the footsteps of Jesus’ Spirit-led life and ministry. Like Jesus, his body the Church is Spirit-born, Spirit-filled, to be a Spirit-empowered people, sent to continue in the mission and ministry of Jesus.

READ

- **Read Acts 4:32-36 & Acts 5:1-11.** Compare these two accounts that describe the spirit of sharing in the church.
 - What challenges you about both the good (Acts 4:32-36) and bad (Acts 5:1-11) examples of sharing?

Ananias and Sapphira are not judged because of the amount they gave but because they lied about their gift. They were more concerned with the appearance rather than the actual spirit of generosity.

- Ananias and Sapphira teach us of the *priority of purity* that God requires in the church. How do we prioritize reflecting the character of Christ when it comes to sin in our lives?
- **Read Acts 4:27-31 & Acts 5:12-16.** Bold preaching, accompanied by signs and wonders was a direct answer to a specific prayer. How does James 4:2 challenge your prayer life to move past “safe prayers” to pray more specifically for the things that only God can do?

REFLECT

- The early church was devoted to prayer. What’s importance does prayer take in your life? How has God answered a specific prayer you had? How did that shape your trust in him?
- Read the quote below. How does the “barrenness of busyness” in your life compete with the journey of knowing God through prayer?
“If our everyday lives are filled with the barrenness of busyness and no serious urgency to pray, then we miss the wonderful journey of being conformed to the image of Christ and knowing our God more intimately.”—W.L. Seaver

Throughout Acts we see how signs and wonders *demonstrate* the power of the gospel which *validated* the message of the gospel (cf Acts 14:3). Spiritual gifts are given to point people not to the gift but to the giver; Jesus.

- Can you think of a time when the Holy Spirit enabled you to share Jesus with others? What happened? What was the result?
- Following the news of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:13-14 tells us that the people carefully considered what commitment to Jesus would cost them. (1) How can we avoid what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called cheap grace which teaches that because “[sin] has been paid, **everything can be had for nothing**”. (2) How does viewing the cross as a starting line instead of a finish line help us understand “costly grace”?

APPLY/PRAY

- Think back to Acts 4:27-31 and how the church prayed specifically for God to do what only God could do. What is something you need to pray more specifically to God for? Pray that together.
- Who do you need to share Jesus with? Pray that the Holy Spirit would fill you with boldness and wisdom to share your faith.
- Does your connect group currently serve with a missional opportunity? If not begin praying each week that God would reveal the right opportunity for you to share Jesus in a missional way. *For help finding your fit speak to Glendyne Gerrard who is our community outreach coordinator.*

