Jail Break January 8, 2023

*Acts 5:12-26 Series: Unstoppable Church*

Courage is fear that has said its prayers. – General George Patton

Intro: What was holding Gary Haugen back?

1. Jesus is building His church, but some are afraid to get involved
2. The Holy Spirit ministers in power through His people

v. 12 *Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles.*

v. 14 *believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women*

v. 15 *they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them*

1. Some are afraid of the cost of getting involved

v. 12 *And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.*

v. 13 *None of the rest dared join them …*

Acts 4:18 *So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.*

1. Some are afraid, but Jesus keeps building His church anyway

v. 13 *None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem.*

v. 14 *more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women*

* How might “the rest” have justified not joining the apostles?
* What fears have kept you from serving God?
* Why would God heal people with Peter’s shadow?
1. Jesus is building His church, but some are afraid of what they might lose
2. Some who are threatened by Jesus oppose the work of God

vv. 17-18 *But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.*

1. Some oppose it, but Jesus keeps building His church anyway

vv. 19-20 *But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, “Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.”*

v. 21 *And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.*

Psalm 34:7 *The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.*

* What kind of jealousy do you think motivated the religious establishment to arrest the apostles?
* When have you feared that you might lose something in following Jesus? What did you fear losing?
* John the Baptist was left in prison until he died. Why do you think God chose to miraculously release the apostles here?
1. Jesus is building His church, but some are afraid to change
2. People struggle to accept facts that contradict their beliefs

v. 23 *We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them we found no one inside.*

v. 24 *Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to.*

Acts 2:12 *And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”*

1. People threaten, but God’s people can stand without fear

v. 21 *And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.*

Isaiah 41:13 *For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.”*

2 Timothy 1:7 *for* *God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control*

1. Some fear change, but Jesus keeps building His church anyway

v. 26 *Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.*

Matthew 16:18 *I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

* Why is it strange that the priests were “greatly perplexed” at the news that the apostles were gone from the prison?
* Has God’s working ever “greatly perplexed” you in a way that it made you rethink what you previously believed?
* What fears for yourself, the church, or our country does this passage help you see differently? How?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Acts 5:27-42

Notes