

Acts Part 12 – Many Signs and Wonders

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney Wednesday, November 18, 2015

Acts 5:12-18¹

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

15 Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

Last week we looked at the first 11 verses of Chapter 5 which dealt with the first internal Church problem. We saw that a man named Ananias and his wife Saphirra lied to the Holy Ghost about the amount of money they were giving and when Peter called them out on it both of them dropped dead. This was a judgment by God for the sins the two had committed. The last thing we read was that great fear come upon all of the Church and as many as heard what had happened.

So we pick up tonight after all of that happened and it is back to business for the Apostles.

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

We see that the power of the Holy Ghost is continuing with the apostles. Jesus was the one Who said that they would be given such power right before he ascended into Heaven. We see that in **Acts 1:8** **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

The "signs and wonders" were outward signs that convinced many of the Jews to believe in Jesus Christ. I hate to keep repeating it but in case you have forgotten, the Bible says this: **1 Corinthians 1:22** **For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:**

These signs that the Jews were seeking after included: speaking in tongues, healing, prophesying, and raising people from the dead. The Apostles were given the power to do all of those things. And these were needed in those days of the early New Testament Church. But, let me stress again; those sign gifts that were given to the Apostles were just that, sign gifts given to the Apostles. These gifts are no longer valid today. These so-called "Faith Healers" you see on TV today are nothing but a bunch of phony bologna.

²**Interview with Forgotten Word Ministries** – The Bible Man Answers (Hank Hannegraaff) & Joni Erickson Tada:

Kenneth Copeland or Kenneth Hagin or Benny Hinn - they've never called me and asked me to come on their program.

...I had read some portions of Scripture that seemed to indicate that if God's Word abided in me, and I abided in Him, I could ask whatever I wished and the request would be fulfilled and my joy would be brighter.

I took that to mean that God wanted me healed. And my sister packed me into her station wagon and a couple of friends, and we drove down to the Washington DC arena and Kathryn Kuhlman swept on stage and praise choruses and testimonies and songs and all of us in the wheelchair section, we kind of like with baited breath were waiting and wondering, and nothing happened. In fact, the ushers came up to all of us in the wheelchair section, about 35 or 40 of us, and said, "Let's escort you all out early so as not to create a traffic jam, and so there I was, Hank, number 15 in line of 35 people in wheelchairs or on crutches, waiting at the stadium elevator to go up to the parking lot, and we could still hear the distant strains of the organ and piano - Kathryn Kuhlman's meeting was still going on - and I looked up and down this line of solemn-faced individuals and saw so much disappointment, and I thought "Something's wrong with this picture.

Either I wasn't reading God right in His Word or God is not coming through on His promises." And I knew that wasn't true, and so Hank, it was that experience that drove me into God's Word so deep I started reading people like R. C. Sproul and J. I. Packer and Jeremiah Burrows and John Owen and Jonathan Edwards and other contemporary authors - Dr. John MacArthur, there's so many. I really dove into God's Word with both sleeves rolled up to understand the Lord's perspective on healing and I can say now that I am so grateful for the wisdom of God.

So there you see the danger in this false teaching that men still have the Apostolic gifts that were given to the early Church.

(and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. Again we find the early Church gathering on Solomon's porch. We've already discussed what that was in our earlier studies. But this seems to be a common place for them to gather for preaching, healing, and being together.

13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

This verse is a very difficult verse to interpret and there are at least as many interpretations as there are Bible commentators. The way I read this is that the people who were unconverted at the time that Ananias and Sapphira were stricken dead for their sins, stayed far away from the Apostles. Maybe out of fear or embarrassment. But we see in the very next verse that people continued getting saved.

¹ All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version

² <http://www.forgottenword.org/joni.html>

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

So, despite the strong discipline the Lord required from His Church and members, more and more were added unto the Lord. That means they were saved. We aren't given a specific number this time only that word "multitudes," which most likely was thousands. We do see some qualities of the New Testament Church given in this passage though.

1. The early church members led holy and pure lives.
2. The early church was in one accord, and had all things in common.
3. The early church had great leaders that helped and taught the people.
4. The early church had great power as demonstrated through the Apostles.
5. The early church had great respect and influence in and outside of the community.

Churches today should also exhibit all of these same qualities. Our leaders may not be able to perform miraculous healings but we certainly can demonstrate the power of God through preaching and teaching of His Word and leading in prayer.

15 Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

Due to the miraculous healing that had been exhibited by the Apostles, mainly, Peter, people are coming by the droves to be healed of sickness and diseases. There were so many of them that they were lying along the streets in hopes that Peter might walk by and just by the casting of his shadow upon them they might be healed.

I want you to note that nowhere in the Bible do we read that people were actually healed because Peter's shadow came across them, not that the Holy Spirit couldn't work that way because as we will study in a few weeks from now when we get to Chapter 19 we see miraculous forms of healing by the Apostle Paul:

Acts 19:11-12: And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

But, we are not told that people were healed by Peter's shadow. The way it is written it is as if that was the hope of the sick people. There were so many of them that there was no way that Peter could get to them all in one day. Much like the woman in Luke 8 that had the issue of blood for 12 years. All she wanted to do was touch the hem of his garment.

16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

So, we can see that all of these healings had to take place over a matter of days or even weeks due to the amount of people. The word had spread everywhere about the great healing revival that was taking place in Jerusalem so people from cities all around were flocking there to be healed.

Notice that phrase, "vexed with unclean spirits." This means that they were possessed with devils. They were called "unclean" because they caused the people

to sin and live impure lives. There were many people afflicted with unclean spirits in those days and there are many people with unclean spirits living in our present day, we just pass a law that says their sin is legal and we allow them to keep on doing them. The truth is they need to be healed from their sickness too.

And we see that they were all healed EVERY ONE of them. It doesn't necessarily mean they were saved... but they were healed.

Often times you hear people say things like; "Well, if we could see real miracles like they saw back in the Bible days more people would believe in Jesus and get saved." But is that really true? Because even in Jesus day people saw the miracles, and even were the subjects of his miracles but still did not trust in him as Savior.

We see a very good example of that in Luke 17 in the story of the 10 lepers:

Luke 17:11-19

11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

The Lord Jesus healed all 10 of them but only one of them had saving faith in Christ. They were all healed but only one of them went away whole. So just because someone may witness a miracle it still doesn't mean they will believe in Jesus.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

And, so, we see once again persecution coming from outside the Church. These so-called "religious leaders" were the ones doing the persecuting. They were so jealous of the power the Apostles had and the crowds they were gathering that they had to do something to try and stop it. **were filled with indignation** that word "indignation" means "with zealous envy and jealousy."

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

And here they go again... you would think they would have learned their lesson the last time they did this but they didn't. They do what all weak minded men do when faced with a problem, they lash out and do the only thing they know to do, resort to violence. They have them arrested.

And we are going to stop right there and pick back up on next Tuesday Lord willing and see what happens after this arrest.