



## Sermon Text: Acts 5:12-18

Sermon Date: October 15, 2017

One of the most difficult challenges of interpreting Acts is determining which aspects are merely descriptive and which are prescriptive—prescribing patterns for what should continue to happen in the church. Our passage thrusts us into the core of this dilemma. Should signs and wonders, along with mighty healing ministries, be a regular part of church life today? The key to faithfully understanding Acts is to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture, to let the clear parts of Scripture shine light on the more difficult parts. When we do so, we discover that Acts 5 is a unique moment of salvation history, not something that is a normal part of church life. Nevertheless, we saw six aspects of our text that are important for us today.

### **GOD ANSWERS PRAYER**

We see that everything the church prays for in Acts 4:29-30—boldness, healing, signs and wonders—are here in our text. The church prays and God answers. When we pray for God’s glory and the success of the gospel, God answers. Therefore, let us pray with confident faith.

### **GOD IS POWERFUL**

The miracles of our text remind us that God is powerful. They are meant to remind us that God is Lord over all Creation. He upholds the universe by the word of His power. Sickness and spiritual oppression are nothing compared to His infinite strength.

### **GOD SAVES!**

A danger of a text like this is that our eyes fixate on “signs and wonders” and we overlook the greatest miracle of all—“and more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women.” Salvation is the most striking miracle of all. God breaths resurrection life into spiritual corpses.

### **A SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH IS PECULIAR AND ATTRACTIVE**

The church was both feared and held in high esteem. No one dared to join them, while more than ever believers were saved. They were odd and attractive. Sadly, too often churches are either weird for the wrong reasons or comfortably indistinct from the world. But a Spirit-filled church is both, peculiar and attractive. Frightening because God is among them and appealing for the same reason.

### **A SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH IS PURE AND COMPASSIONATE**

The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira teach that God cares about the church’s holiness. We are to be pure and holy because we are God’s people. And yet, in the name of purity they didn’t stop caring for the world around them. They rolled up their sleeves and got down into the dirtiness of a fallen world, caring for the hurting around them.

### **A SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH IS EFFECTIVE AND OPPOSED**

The church was growing. More than ever, people were being saved. Multitudes of men and women were being added to the Lord. And in this environment of effective ministry, Satan counter-punches with opposition. Effective ministry awakens opposition. This fact forces us to uncover our hidden priorities. What do we truly want—sinners to be saved, the gospel to spread, the church to grow? Or do we want safe, comfortable Christianity?

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?
2. Why is it important to distinguish between which parts of Acts are descriptive or prescriptive?
3. What do you want more—gospel effectiveness or an easy life?