

Acts 5:12-42 An Unstoppable Force

What comes to your mind when you hear the word UNSTOPPABLE ?

A) Sports fan LEBRON JAMES - Cleveland might not make it out of the first round

B) The Warriors? – Looking a little thin w/out Curry

C) A Jet? – Flock of birds brought a Jet down in New York – a few years back – Captain Sulley

D) A Nuc? – Even that is not unstoppable

Here is something that you probably didn't think of at least right away! – THE GOSPEL.

A) Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

B) There is power in the message of the gospel
1) Power is in the message – not the messenger

C) We are reminded of that here in the book of Acts

Recap

Ch.1 Waiting

CH.2 Outpouring

Ch.3 – Healing

Ch.4 Opposing

Ch.5 Purifying – Explain

Result

V.11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. 13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, – the idea is people were not joining the church casually – try it out but the people esteemed them highly. So there was a great respect – the Church was being esteemed highly –

14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, Although people were not casually seeking Christ – people were still being added to him! – Men and women

This is the first time, Luke mentions the salvation of women.

A) Both in his Gospel and in Acts, Luke has a great deal to say about women and their relationship to Christ and the church.

B) There are at least a dozen references in the book of Acts to women.

1) Luke shows the role that women played in the early church

C) This is a remarkable thing when you consider the general position of women in the culture of that day

1) Women were degraded – thought to be lesser
2) But Jesus elevated the status of women

So the Lord was continuing to move in the Life of the early Church – Growing – exciting

A) God was validating his work and the message of the Apostles – by the miraculous.

15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. 16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

B) Peter's shadow was not powerful in and of itself.

1) It was simply a point of contact and a place of release for people pp's faith – those who were prepared to receive healing.

Bb) Anoint with oil - Laying on of hands – Elders

C) End of V.16 All were healed { Great move of God

D) Imagine the excitement – But not everyone was excited.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, {Violent Jealousy} The kind that makes pp do crazy things

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

So all the Apostles get arrested here!

A) Think about this: Were the apostles doing anything wrong?

B) Was God unhappy with them?

1) Had they failed in some way? Were they doing it wrong?

C) No they were perfectly in God's will.

1) They were facing opposition

Lesson: Harmony is not always blessing and Opposition is not failure.

Everything is harmonious right now in our house God is really blessing us – there is peace.

A) That might be true: But you could also be experiencing the peace of a Draft dodger.

Aa) **Peace by avoiding the battle** – peace by avoiding what needs to be dealt with – peace by avoiding saying what needs to be said.

B) **Harmony is not always blessing and opposition is not always an indication of failure**

C) **Just because you are being opposed and put down for the truth doesn't mean God is not blessing.**

D) The Enemy was seeking to Muzzle the message.

1) But God would not have it!

19 But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out,

A) The enemy was seeking to MUZZLE the message – so God sends an Angelic MESSENGER to show the Apostles – that is not possible.

B) God was teaching the 12 that he can deliver his servants from the world's oppression anytime he sees fit.

1) Later Peter Acts 12 / Paul Silas Acts 16

C) The apostles now knew that God could deliver them from the world's clutches anytime, anywhere!

2 Timothy 2:9 "The word of God is not bound."

Man cannot stop the word of God – man cannot stop the Power of God.

Not only were the Apostles Divinely delivered they were Divinely Commissioned.

The Angel said, 20 "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

A) I wonder if one of them wanted to say: Excuse me – but don't you know – that is how we got here

B) We were preaching about Jesus in the temple – Are you sure you want us to go back?

Notice also the angel says – Go back and speak ALL the words....

A) **Not a time to change the message** Don't lower the flag. Don't soften the message.

B) **Don't get strategic or subtle or clever.**

1) **Just get back to work, boys.**

C) **Speak all – Why? Because they were speaking the words of Life.**

"All the words of this life"

A) I like that phrase! You see, we're not just talking about future life, afterlife, or eternal life.

B) Jesus said, **"I have come that you might have life now and have it more abundantly"** (see John 10:10).

C) **Quality of life that starts right now!**

1) **People are searching for life.**

D) Peter would later write that **"God has given us everything that pertains to life and godliness through knowledge of Jesus."** (2 Peter 1:3).

1) It's all in the Word. It is all related to our relationship with Christ.

So the Angel instructs them to get back to work – how would they respond?

21 And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught.

Note that: They entered into the temple early in the morning.” I like that! It doesn’t say, “

A)They went into the temple the first chance they had,” or “They waited until noon.”

B)No, following their release from prison the night before, the apostles headed straight for the temple early the next morning.

C)Do you know what the Largest nation in the world is today? procrasti-nation.

D)It is true: Our tendency is to say: I will take care of it tomorrow. I will deal with that next time

1)How many of you have at least one thing – You have been procrastinating about?

Procrastination may not be a big deal when it relates to things of everyday life. {Marriage

A)But Procrastination is a real problem in our spiritual life.

B)Procrastination stifles the work of God in our lives!

1)Do the next thing!

C)Quit worrying about 5 yrs from now – just do the next thing

1)Do what God is telling you to do now!

D)More doors will open

1)Don’t complicate – just respond!!!

Shark – tank – I wish I would have thought of that?

A)I often Wonder: Did Someone think of that but never followed through?

B)I read of one very wealthy inventor who said, “Without exception, after I have invented something and patented it, at least ten men come to me and say, “I thought of that a long time ago.”

C)But the difference between their poverty and my wealth is that they thought about it, and I *did* it.”

The same thing is true spiritually. You want to be Rich in the Lord?

A)When the Lord speaks to your heart, be it in Bible study, in devotions, through a book you read, or through a sister or brother,

B)Learn to respond immediately.

1)When you do the Lord will speak more often – open more doors

C)Are you Waiting for God to speak or open a door?

1)Seems like nothing is happening – Is God waiting on you to respond to what he told you last week or month?

D)So the Apostles went to the Temple immediately the next morning.

What happens next is Hilarious {Love it V.21b But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, High priest shows up with his entourage and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported,

Came and reported: I have 3 pieces of good news and one piece of bad news – which do you want first

Good news first

23 saying, "we found the prison{good The doors were shut securely, {great the guards standing outside before the doors; {excellent

Now the bad news:

but when we opened them, we found no one inside!" The prisoners were not there ☺

24 Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be.

Poor Translation – not strong enough at all. Perplexed - frantic – freaking out

These officials were greatly disturbed. they wondered "What next?"
Who are we dealing with?

Then V.25 this guy comes cruising in – how would you like to be this guy.

25 So one came and told them, saying, "Look, the men whom you put in prison { guess where they are at? They are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"

REACTION – AGAIN – REALLY

26 Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned.

Can you picture this scene:

A)They approach all gingerly - Excuse us – we would like to speak to you guys again – is that ok – could you please come with us.

B)We want to talk to you – just not in front of everyone else

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, 28 saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?"

The High priest says – look we didn't tell you that you couldn't speak – We simply told you that you couldn't speak about someone.

A)There was a particular name you were not to use

B)The High Priest doesn't want to say the name

1)Doesn't want to say JESUS

C)It is all about the name { Pattern

Acts 2:38 :Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;"

Acts 3:6 "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Acts 4:10 "....that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole."

Acts 4:18 "So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus."

Acts 5:28 Don't speak in that name.

It is all about the name of Jesus

A)Even today – talk religion – Fine – ok just about anything – just don't bring up the name of Jesus

B)People freak out -

C)Every thought – why a Swear word: Not Oh Buddha – Oh Mohammed – Oh Hari Krishna

1)The name of Jesus – Satan wants to de-emphasize

the Power in that name

V.28b And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine

A)What a wonderful indictment!

The name: Their Doctrine was about Jesus

B)The gospel is an unstoppable force

1)The name of Jesus and what he represented filled the city

C)Wouldn't it be awesome if that was the legacy of CV – you filled Vista with your doctrine

1)Everywhere.

Notice the question they asked: Do you intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"

A)Matthew 27:25 {These very leaders shouted to Pilate lets his blood be upon us and our Children – now they are having 2nd thoughts

B)Yet here they are complaining because they're being made to feel guilty & responsible for the death of Jesus.

29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.

A)There was only one in the audience that they were concerned with pleasing and that was God.

B)With that type of conviction they were an unstoppable force.

C)Living for an AUDIENCE OF ONE!

Peter continued V. **30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. 31 Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."**

God honored Jesus but you want us to dishonor him?

A)The fact that Jesus Christ is at God's right hand is a key theme in the Scriptures.

B)The right hand is, of course, the place of honor, power, and authority.

1)The Scriptures make numerous references to Him being at that Place.

C)Also worth noting that in his second sermon, Peter had called Jesus **"the Prince of life"** (Acts 3:15); and here he called Him "a Prince and a Saviour."

The word *Prince* means "a pioneer, one who leads the way, an originator." AUTHOR

A)As the **"Pioneer of life,"** Jesus saves us and leads us into exciting experiences as we walk "in newness of life" (Romans. 6:4).

B)There are always new trails to blaze.

Hebrews 2:10 calls Him "the Pioneer [captain] of our salvation," for our salvation experience must never become static.

"The Christian life is not a parking lot; it is a launching pad!" Warren Wiersbe

Now there are two reactions to the gospel

A)You can embrace it – receive it and receive forgiveness of sins – and the life Jesus gives

B)Or you can continue to harden your heart and reject it –

1)These religious leaders opt for the latter

33 When they heard this, they were furious and plotted to kill them.

C) Right then, the death of the apostles was set in motion.

1)We had not previously read that they wanted to **kill them**, but now it is clear.

34 Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while.

A)Gamaliel was A brilliant thinker and one of the most influential teachers in all of Jewish history,

B)He was called **"The Beauty of the Law"** by his contemporaries.

1)Due to his knowledge of the law and because he walked with great integrity in his attempt to keep the law,

C)Gamaliel mentored Saul of Tarsus – Paul the ...

35 And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men.

36 For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing.

37 After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed.

Now Gamaliel first mentions a revolt by a guy named Theudas

A)We are not sure who is this is he is talking about –

B)Josephus, the Jewish historian, mentioned a **Theudas** who led a rebellion, but at a later point than this.

1) It could be that Josephus had his dates mixed up or that this was a different **Theudas** (a common name).

C)Josephus did describe a **Judas of** who may be the same one mentioned here.

The point is Gamaliel is saying guys we have seen this before – they come and they go!

A)But then he says something interesting: -

38 And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; 39 but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it — lest you even be found to fight against God."

B) I wonder if Saul of Tarsus was in this group – we will see him in Ch. 6 –

1) Stoning of Stephen – they put their coats at the feet of Saul who would become Paul

C) Jesus would say: hard for you to kick against the goads

But this is an interesting thing to consider and one of the reasons why the gospel is unstoppable

A) When you try to stop it – you are fighting against God!

B) History of the Church – try to stop it – It grows

1) Russia yrs ago and today –

2) China – huge opposition but the largest group of believers in the world

C) Countries like Iran – The gospel is spreading

D) Interesting: here in the USA – we are free- Almost seems weaker – we don't understand the value

We tend to think - The gospel is so common!

A) We must never stop sharing –

B) Happened in places like the UK – the gospel was a unstoppable force

1) Until the church took it for granted –

C) It's power was diminished – lack of use!

1) Seeing a bit of a resurgence today

D) So Gamaliel gives some good advice

40 And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, Beat with Rods – they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 So they departed from the presence of the council, licking their wounds – no – scared – no

41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

A) That last line is so convicting – rejoicing – counted worthy to suffer for THE NAME.

B) They were rejoicing that they were able to partake in the fellowship of Christ suffering –

C) Convicting - We shrink – back – we don't want to be looked at the wrong way.

1) Face ridicule or be ostracized –

D) The apostles today – like so many in foreign countries were beaten for their faith!

E) We desperately need to be bold and stand

1) We need to get spiritually tougher here in the USA

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Acts 5:42 summarized the apostolic pattern for evangelism, an excellent pattern for us to follow.

Closing note 5 points

1. To begin with, they witnessed “daily.”

A) Witnessing is not just something we go and do
Go witnessing

B) We are to be a witness – Pray each day Lord give me an opportunity –

1) If you are praying in that way – He will – You will start to notice opportunities you never saw before.

2. The believers witnessed “in the temple.”

A) To witness = to testify : Testifying of Jesus in the temple –

B) Jesus is to be the focus of the Church.

1) What is Jesus doing? Sharing – teaching

3. The early Christians also witnessed “in every house.”

A) Jesus is to be the focal point in our homes.

B) Kids – what is Jesus doing.

C) Face booking – Jesus Post

4. The witness of the church included both “teaching and preaching.” and that is a good balance.

A) The word translated “preach” gives us our English word *evangelize*, and this is the first of fifteen times it is used in Acts.

B)However, proclamation must be balanced with instruction so that the sinners know *what* to believe and the new converts understand *why* they believed.

5. Finally, it was Jesus Christ who was the center of their witness.

A)Not Church -not the Apostles – Not a Pastor

B)They were all about the name of Jesus.

Winston Churchill once defined a fanatic as someone **who can't change his mind and won't change the subject.**

That's what these guys did. They wouldn't change their minds, and they didn't change the subject.

Knowing Jesus is Lord, they kept talking about Him wherever they went.