



# Acts of the Apostles

Witness to the World

Lesson 4

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- The Sovereignty of God and prayer(Acts 4:23-31)

*Acts 3-6 relate a series of problems which struck at the church from both within and without.*

Chapter	3:1 - 4:22	5:1-16	5:17-42	6:1-7
Distress in the Church	<b>External Problem</b>	<b>Internal Problem</b>	<b>External Problem</b>	<b>Internal Problem</b>
	Peter & John <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrested</li> <li>• Tried</li> <li>• Released</li> </ul>	Sin within the Church	Apostles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jailed</li> <li>• Tried</li> <li>• Released</li> </ul>	Schism & Complaint
Growth in the Church	Number of believers rises to 5,000	Fear of the Lord	Disciples increase in numbers	Disciples increase & Priests converted

- An abundant sharing
- Barnabas (Joseph)
  - a. *Bar* is the Hebrew word for "Son."
  - b. *Nebu'ah* is the word for "prophecy."
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- Ananias and Sapphira, an abominable hypocrisy
- The Persecuted Church
- Gamaliel

1. Barnabas will be a prominent figure in the mission and teaching ministry of the early church. What does this introduction reveal about him? (vv. 36–37)
2. How is what Ananias and Sapphira do different from what Barnabas did? (v. 2)  
What do you think motivated this couple?
3. What impact does God's swift judgment have on those who hear about it? (vv. 5, 11)
4. Read Acts 5:12–16. How does this passage show God's answer to the believers' prayer in Acts 4:29–30? Where do the believers meet? (v. 12b)
5. The Sadducees' jealousy is not merely envy of the disciples' popularity; it also contains elements of a “fervent but misguided” zeal for God’s honor.<sup>1</sup> What does this jealousy lead them to do? (v. 18)
6. What unexpected event follows the apostles' imprisonment? (v. 19)
7. What does the high priest accuse the apostles of? (v. 28)
8. The high priest commanded the apostles “not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus” (4:18).
9. What would obeying this command mean for the apostles? (v. 29; 4:19)
10. The apostles have been imprisoned, tried, and flogged, yet they leave rejoicing. How do they then spend their freedom? (v. 42)

*A healthy church—a church that is genuinely being the church—will be marked by a fellowship of love. John says very clearly: If you don't love your brother and sister whom you see, how can you say you love God whom you don't see (1 Jn. 4:20-21)! Jesus said, they'll know you're my disciples if you love one another (Jn. 13:34-35). Michael J. Matossian*

*The local church was founded by God for the purposes of God and the glory of God. Our task is not to define it according to our own desires or anyone else's, but to learn how God defines it, then to follow him in obedience. Ultimately, the church exists to bring glory to his name through worship, discipleship, and evangelism. In this way and so many others, the local church is God's plan. It is the hope of the world. Tim Challies*