



Acts 5:12-16 “More Than Ever”

Intro:

Throughout the book of Acts we have seen several moments where the church experiences significant growth. The Lord produces various signs and wonders, His disciples proclaim the gospel, and people are saved and added to His church. We first see this pattern in Acts 2 when God pours out His Holy Spirit upon the believers, enabling them to proclaim His mighty works in languages they had never learned. Peter then preaches the gospel, and about **3,000 souls are added to the church**. Then, in Acts 3, the Lord heals the lame man through Peter. Once again, Peter proclaims the gospel, opposition immediately follows, and yet **the church grows to about 5,000 believers**. Then, in Acts 5, the Lord pronounces judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira for their deception, and again, as we will see in this passage, **“more than ever believers were added to the Lord.”** It is important that we do not isolate this passage from what we studied last week. *In my opinion, God's judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira should be understood as part of the mighty signs and wonders that testified that Jesus Christ is alive and committed to building His church.* It was not only the healing of the lame man that pointed people to Christ, but also His judgment upon sin within His church. God used both His healing and His judgment to open the door for the proclamation of the gospel and prepare hearts to receive it.

This is significant because the spiritual revival we are witnessing in Acts did not consist only of miraculous healings but also of God's holy judgment. Judgment is not opposed to the growth of the church; it is one of the means God uses to preserve its purity. Discipline and judgment are essential to the health and growth of the church. We must understand not only the grace of God but also His holiness—that in His great love for His church, He is zealous for its purity. It is when we rightly understand both God's abundant grace and the seriousness with which He deals with sin that believers mature as disciples and, in turn, become the kind of disciples through whom God continues to build His church, making more disciples. That being said, this morning we will observe five fruitful results of God's discipline and judgment within His church, while asking Him to help us not make light of His discipline, but rather submit to it, that **more than ever** our lives may bear the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Hebrews 12:5–11).

V.11-16

“And **great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things**. Now **many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles**. And **they were all together** in Solomon's Portico. **None of the rest dared join them**, but the **people held them in high esteem**. And **more than ever believers were added to the Lord**, multitudes of both men and women, so that 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. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and **they were all healed**.”

1. **Fear/ Reverence** (V.11,13)

God's judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira produced great fear within the church, reminding the believers that Christ is not only their Savior but also the holy Head of His church, who is deeply committed to its purity. God's discipline should never cause us to become bitter toward Him, but rather lead us to humble ourselves before Him. Every act of His discipline reminds us that He is God and we are not, and that He lovingly disciplines His children for their good and His glory. This fear was not limited to the church. Those outside also developed a reverence for God's people. No unbeliever dared casually identify himself with the church for selfish or hypocritical motives because they had witnessed God's powerful hand not only in healing but also in purifying His people. Yet this holy fear did not produce contempt for the church but respect. As God refines His people through discipline, He often uses that very refinement to make them a powerful testimony before the watching world. *Read Psalm 119:67,71,75*

2. **Answered Prayers** (V.4:30, 5:12)

In Acts 4:30 the believers prayed, "while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." As we come to Acts 5, we find God answering that very prayer. Signs and wonders continue through the apostles just as the church had asked.

In my opinion, it is worth considering whether God's judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira should also be understood as part of that answer. Through both His mercy in healing and His holiness in judgment, Christ continued to testify that He was alive and actively building His church. God's answer was greater than they may have expected. He not only gave them miraculous signs but also purified His church, strengthening their witness and emboldening them to continue proclaiming the gospel.

3. **Signs and Wonders** (V.12,15-16)

Luke tells us that many signs and wonders were regularly done through the hands of the apostles. These miracles were never ends in themselves, nor were they meant to entertain or merely amaze the crowds. Their primary purpose was to authenticate the apostles as Christ's chosen witnesses and to confirm the truth of the gospel they proclaimed. Every miracle pointed beyond itself to the risen Christ and the message of salvation found in Him. Although the apostolic age was uniquely marked by these signs and wonders, God is still at work today. He continues to answer prayer, heal according to His will, and powerfully accomplish His purposes. However, the greatest evidence of His work has always been transformed lives. As God's people humbly receive His discipline and walk in obedience, they become a living testimony to the power of the gospel before a watching world.

4. **Fellowship** (V.12)

Luke again emphasizes that the believers were together in Solomon's Portico. Throughout Acts we have repeatedly seen the importance of the church physically gathering together. Unity describes the shared heart and mind of God's people, while fellowship is the visible expression of that unity. God's discipline reminds us what truly matters. One of its fruits is often a renewed commitment to God's people and to gathering with them. Notice that their fellowship was not merely social; it centered around worship, the apostles' teaching, prayer, and the life of the church. Our fellowship may take place in different settings, but it should always be centered on Christ and His people.

5. **Growth** (V.14)

he final result is exactly the opposite of what many would expect. After God's severe judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira, Luke tells us that "more than ever believers were added to the Lord." God's holiness did not hinder the growth of His church; it purified it.

As believers respond rightly to God's discipline by fearing Him, pursuing holiness, and prioritizing His kingdom, they become increasingly fruitful. Mature disciples naturally reproduce. They proclaim the gospel, make disciples, and God continues to add to His church. The healthiest churches are not those that ignore sin, but those that lovingly pursue holiness while faithfully proclaiming Christ.

Conclusion:

Read Hebrews 12:3-11 and Revelation 3:14-22

Main Idea:

God's discipline is ALWAYS good for, let us turn from our indifference and receive His discipline with a humble heart so that we may see it produce the same fruitfulness in our lives and our church as we see here in the life of the early church.

