

The Second Persecution of the Church (Part I): A Picture of Abuse

Acts 05: 12–25

1 *The reasons for persecution*

- a. Performing miraculous signs and wonders
- b. Possessing a great unity
- c. Holding public worship
- d. Being separated and different from the world
- e. Reaching out and evangelizing
- f. Attracting huge crowds
- g. Meeting the needs of the public
 - 1) Physical needs
 - 2) Spiritual needs

2 *The persecution*

- a. By religionists and secular leaders
- b. Arrested and jailed

3 *The miraculous deliverance through and from persecution*

- a. God's care and deliverance
- b. God's purpose:
Go — stand — speak
- c. The disciples' obedience

- 12 The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade.
- 13 No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people.
- 14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.
- 15 As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by.
- 16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.
- 17 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy.
- 18 They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.
- 19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.
- 20 "Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life."
- 21 At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.

4 *The failure of persecution: Utter perplexity and frustration*

a. The court convened

b. The guards found
the apostles missing

c. The persecutors were perplexed

d. The persecutors made
an unbelievable discovery

21 At daybreak they entered the temple courts,
as they had been told,
and began to teach the people.
When the high priest and his associates arrived,
they called together the Sanhedrin —
the full assembly of the elders of Israel —
and sent to the jail for the apostles.

22 But on arriving at the jail,
the officers did not find them there.
So they went back and reported,

23 “We found the jail securely locked,
with the guards standing at the doors;
but when we opened them,
we found no one inside.”

24 On hearing this report,
the captain of the temple guard
and the chief priests were puzzled,
wondering what would come of this.

25 Then someone came and said,
“Look! The men you put in jail
are standing in the temple courts
teaching the people.”

The Second Persecution of the Church (Part II): Reasons for Remaining Loyal Acts 05: 26–42

1 *The disciples were rearrested*

- a. Were arrested without violence
- b. Were brought to court before the ruling body of the government, the Sanhedrin
- c. Were accused with a threefold charge
 - 1) Breaking the law of the government
 - 2) Teaching a false doctrine: Stirring up the people
 - 3) Threatening insurrection: Falsely accusing the government of murder
- d. Were courageous in their response

2 *Reason 1:*

God has raised up and exalted Christ

- a. To be a Prince and a Saviour
- b. To give repentance
- c. To give forgiveness

3 *Reason 2:*

God has made us witnesses

4 *Reason 3:*

God has a will that must be done

- a. God's will opposed by the unthinking men of the world
- b. God's will recognized by the thinking men of the world

26 At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them.

27 Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest.

28 “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said.
“Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood.”

29 Peter and the other apostles replied:
“We must obey God rather than men!

30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead — whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.

31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

32 We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

33 When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death.

34 But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honoured by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while.

1) Seen in the events of history and revelation: Theudas and Judas 2) What is not of God will come to nothing 3) What is of God cannot be stopped 5 Reason 4: <i>God is able to deliver through hardship</i> a. Able to stir a sense of privilege b. Able to stir joy c. Able to stir the courage to continue teaching and preaching	35 Then he addressed them: “Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. 36 Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. 37 After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. 38 Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.” 40 His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.
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