

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for February 6, 2011

The Authentication of the Apostles
Acts 5:12-16

The report on the ministry of the apostles (Acts 5:12-16) serves to introduce the second stage of persecution against God's people (Acts 5:17-42).

1. The apostles revealed (5:12)

The "signs" speaks of God's communication to the mind while "wonders" refer to the remarkable nature of this communication. These miraculous events testify to the place the apostles held as God's representatives.

2. The apostles' relationship (5:12)

The description of the location of the apostles included a statement regarding the quality of their relationship because unity is essential to ministry success.

3. The people refrain (5:13)

Two reasons why people were reluctant to associate with the apostles:

- a. The death of Ananias and Sapphira
- b. The developing opposition from the Jewish leaders

The reluctance of the community to join with the apostles resulted in the church being pure in faith and not weakened by unbelievers from within.

4. The apostles respected (5:13)

One reason the apostles were highly respected was because of their pursuit of ministry in spite of opposition.

5. The number of believers rise (5:14)

Unlike the two previous reports of the growth of the church (Acts 2:41, 4:4), the reports of growth no longer include a number. God's work in the lives of people will result in the growth of the church.

6. The people restored (5:15-16)

The purpose of the inclusion of Peter's shadow was not that it provided healing, but it showed how close the people were trying to get to him.

Comparison of Acts 5:15-16 with healers of today		
	Today	Acts 5:15-16
Location	Church	Streets
Time	Scheduled	Unscheduled
Extent	Functional	Organic
Sickness	Unverified	Obvious
Response	Advertising	Word of mouth
Number	None	All
Faith	Required	Not required

The clear conclusion is that the miracles of Acts are unique demonstrations of God's miraculous power that God is not choosing to reproduce today.

So What?

1. The lack of appreciation for modern medicine
2. The lack of appreciation for God's miracles
3. The lack of appreciation for God's Word

As is found often in the Gospels (cf. Matthew 4:23-24), delivering people from unclean spirits is seen in the context of healing. Those afflicted are healed as with other sicknesses, and there is no moral improvement apart from true faith in Christ.