



Title: The Church is Unstoppable

Text: Acts 5:17–42

CONTEXT |

The reputation of the church is growing. The Jewish religious leaders assumed the movement would die down once they had the leader, Jesus, killed. But, of course, he rose from the grave as he said he would and the movement is increasing much more rapidly than it ever did during his 3-year earthly ministry. We have seen the power of God at work in the preaching and healing done through the apostles as well as in the many ways every member reinforces the gospel with their testimony. The religious leaders tried to slow the movement by threatening the apostles (ch. 4), and that didn't work. Satan even tried to use corruption on the inside, but that didn't work. Now we see the opposition growing because the church is not slowing down.

MAIN IDEA |

God will use all people to accomplish his plan; some will enjoy it and some will not.

KEY VERSES |

³⁸ ...if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; ³⁹ but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!

Acts 5:38–39 ESV

DISCUSSION QUESTION IDEAS |

- Consider the apostles' willingness to continue preaching instead of letting things settle after they were released from prison: Do we share their boldness or value other things over our mission?
- In what ways does this passage strengthen your trust in God?
- Do you think should celebrate persecution or opposition when it comes? Is persecution a good thing or bad thing? Why?
- Spend time praying for one another and God's work through us as a church.

EXPLANATION |

These verses are full of irony. The apostles are arrested by religious leaders who do not believe in angels, and set free by an angel. Upon gaining their freedom in the night, they go back into the spotlight to continue to do what had them arrested—preach the gospel. The most respected and powerful people of the day were afraid to do harm to the apostles because of the crowd. The apostles rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer for Jesus. The most well-respected teacher for the religious elite was brought in to help them understand how to deal with these blasphemers and he seemed to side with them and warned the religious leaders that they could be trying to oppose God.

Here is the ironic summary of all of it: Efforts to foil the work of the church added fuel to the fire God ignited. This is a beautiful picture of God's sovereign hand at work to accomplish his plans through his church—and using opponents as further opportunity.