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**LESSON 11 GOD USES MIRACLES**

(pages 38-42)

**BEFORE CLASS****Scripture Reading**

Acts 5:12-23

**Teacher Meditation**

This may be a routine day in your classroom, or it may take an unexpected turn. Either the routine or the unexpected might be comfortable, or it might feel otherwise. Those around you may be blessed by your ministry, but they may question what you're trying to accomplish. God alone knows how your school day will be.

How should you prepare for unknowns?

- Yield to God and His ways *now*.
- Be faithful to God and your calling *now*.
- Steady yourself in Jesus and His Word *now*.
- Pray for the Spirit's power *now*.

**Lesson Emphases**

## Signs and wonders

- God confirmed the Gospel by enabling the apostles to do miracles.
- When Peter's shadow fell on the sick, they were healed.
- Many people were healed in the name of Jesus.
- Thousands of Jews accepted Jesus and united with the church.
- When the apostles were thrown in prison, God sent His angel to free them.

## Rejecting the truth

- Despite many signs and wonders, many Jewish leaders rejected God's truth.
- The leaders cared more about staying in power than about the truth.
- These leaders had chosen the way of darkness so long that they became blind to the truth.
- When people love sin, they reject the truth.

**TEACHING THE CLASS****Introduce the Lesson**

Remember that Acts is a record of Jesus living His life in His people through the Holy Spirit for the first time in history. In Acts 5:20, notice what the angel of the Lord commands the apostles who had been freed from prison: they were to speak to everyone "the words of this *life*." The Gospel the apostles preached wasn't just a new belief system or a new way of living. The Gospel offers a completely *new life*. That new life consists of Jesus living within His people through the Holy Spirit. What the apostles offered to the seeking Jews, the Gospel still offers us today—new life!

**Lesson Plan**

You may wish to read the introductory material for *Section 3: Challenges for the Church* from page 37 of the LightUnit with your students, and preview the memory verse for this section.

Have the students turn to Acts 5 and encourage them to scan verses 12 through 23 for help as you use some or all of the following to stimulate discussion.



## Solomon's Porch

- Compare verse 12 with the prayer the Christians prayed in Acts 4:29, 30. Many miracles were done "by the hands of the apostles" (5:12). For what reasons did God use miracles at this time? Answer *yes*



## God Uses Miracles

### Read Your Bible

**Read** – Acts 5:12-23

Write your initials in the blank after you have read this passage. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Bible Vocabulary

**durst** (dɜrst): dared

**vexed** (vekst): harassed by mobs

#### Answer the questions.

- Where was a common meeting place for the early Christians?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**the temple (Solomon's porch)**
- Besides people being healed of physical sickness, what are two other miracles found in this passage?
  - healing from unclean spirits**
  - the prison doors opened at night**
- How many believers were added to the Lord because of the miracles done by the apostles?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**multitudes of men and women**

### ANALYZE THE BIBLE READING

It is sad to watch someone reject the truth. Have you ever known someone who understood the truth, but just did not want to accept it? Maybe they refused the truth because they disliked the person who shared it with them. Some people reject the truth when they realize they must give up something if they embrace the truth. The real cause for rejecting truth is that people love sin. Many of the rulers in Jerusalem rejected the truth God revealed to them.

God confirmed the truth of the Gospel by enabling the apostles to do many signs and

wonders. They healed many sick people in the name of Jesus. These healings were so notable that people laid the sick along the street so that at least the shadow of Peter might fall over them. We know there is nothing magical about a shadow. God was moving in the apostles with mighty power. The disciples had asked for power to glorify Jesus, and God answered their prayer. God is always ready to bring glory to the name of Jesus Christ. He often does miracles when the Gospel is preached to those who have not heard it before.

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or *no* to the following.

- To prove the apostles' personal power? (*No.*)
- To show that God meets human needs? (*Yes.*)
- To affirm the resurrection of Jesus? (*Yes.*)
- To bring glory to the apostles? (*No.*)
- To bring many souls into the church? (*Yes.*)
- To show God's approval on the apostles? (*Yes.*)
- To gain them a following? (*No.*)
- To confirm the truth of the Gospel? (*Yes.*)
- To humiliate the Jewish leaders? (*No.*)
- To give those who had killed Jesus another opportunity to repent? (*Yes.*)

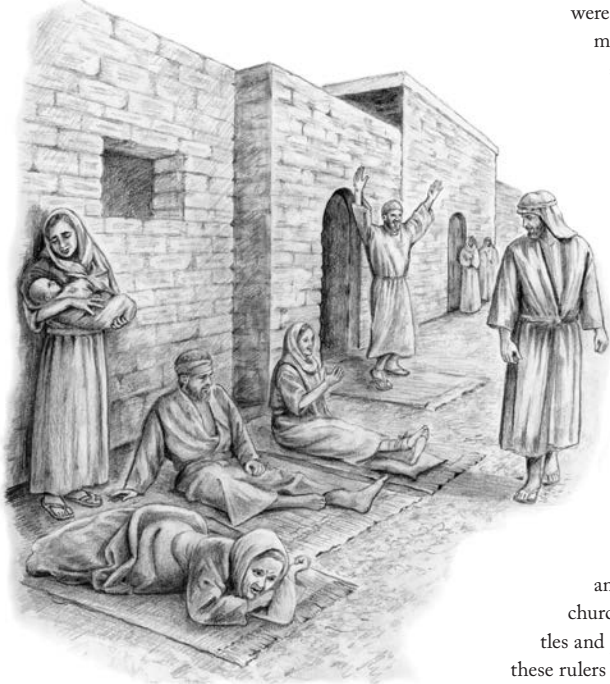


### SOLOMON'S PORCH

Herod's temple and its courts were built on a huge platform. Much of the area was a public place where people could gather. Solomon's porch was the area of the original temple that survived, probably because of its beauty and immense size. It was a magnificent open area on the east side of the temple supported by double rows of Roman columns. In Solomon's time it was paneled from floor to ceiling with cedar. He used it as a hall of judgment. Solomon's porch overlooked the Kidron Valley facing the Mount of Olives.

- To answer the prayers of His people? (*Yes.*)
- (*vv. 17, 18*) Have a student look up the word “indignation” in *Strong’s*, find its Greek root, and share the English translations. (#2205 *zelos*: *emulation, envy, fervent mind, indignation, jealousy, zeal*)
  - The high priest and the Sadducees were filled with jealousy and fervent envy because the multitudes gave such attention to the apostles.
  - *Zelos* is translated *envy* in Acts 13:45—again in the context of the Jews seeing the multitudes attracted to the Christians.
- In Lesson 7 (Acts 4:10, 11) we noticed that Peter informed the Sanhedrin that God had worked against them, undoing their evil deeds. In today’s passage, how did God undo another one of their deeds? (*They put the apostles in prison, and the angel of the Lord let them out.*)
- How was this incident both a warning and an invitation from God to the Jewish leaders?
  - *Warning: You are working against the Lord God Jehovah, the God of your fathers.*
  - *Invitation: I have shown you again that I am God. These are my messengers. Listen to them. Repent. I’m giving you more time.*

Lesson 11



However, the Jewish leaders were incensed. They had commanded the disciples not to speak about Jesus, but now thousands of new converts were taking up the cause. These enthusiastic Christians threatened the authority and position of the Jewish leaders, who cared more about staying in control of the people than about truth. So the desperate and determined Jewish leaders threatened the early Christians. The high priest and the Sadducees were willing to do almost anything to put a stop to the church. They arrested the apostles and put them in prison. But these rulers were resisting God, so He sent His angel to open the prison doors and set the apostles free. The angel of the Lord commanded the apostles to keep preaching Christ to the people.

A wonderful thing in the early chapters of Acts was that multitudes were converted. Thousands of Jews came to Jesus, embracing the truth of the new covenant and uniting with the church. God granted the disciples’ requests because He wanted every person in Jerusalem to know the truth about Jesus. Thousands found freedom in Jesus.

When the Sanhedrin sent their officers to bring the apostles to court the next morning, they found the prison shut and the guards at their posts, but no apostles inside! Soon they heard that the apostles were once again preaching Jesus in the temple! You would think at some point, the high priest and his supporters would have realized they were resisting God. But they had chosen the way of darkness for so long and hardened their hearts so much, they had become spiritually blind.

The residents of Jerusalem were impressed by the power of the Gospel, and the new church was esteemed by many people. Some made the difficult decision to become disciples of Jesus; others kept their distance, but admired the Christians nonetheless.

What a tragedy! All the signs and wonders!

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### Vocabulary Focus

- **durst**

Have you ever wanted to do a thing, but did not dare because you were afraid of the consequences? Maybe people would laugh at you, or some harm would come to you. You *durst* not do it, because you were afraid. This is how some people felt about joining the church after Ananias and Sapphira died. (Acts 5:13) They did not dare join the Christians because they were afraid they would also be judged.

Teacher Notes

## Lesson 11

All the glorious change in the lives of converted people! To the priests and elders, these things were just obstacles preventing them from grasping what they wanted. They were willfully blind.

Rejecting God's truth so that we can have our own way is very dangerous. If we do not repent of rejecting the truth, God will judge us. Thankfully, not all of the Jewish leaders rejected the truth. In the early years of Christianity, many priests and elders turned to Jesus for salvation. God's grace and mercy were extended to everyone who was willing to receive it.

## UNDERSTANDING THE LESSON

**Circle the letter of the answer.**

4. *Think!* What was the most wonderful thing happening at this time?
- A. Everyone heard the Gospel preached.  
 B. Thousands were converted.  
 C. The Jewish leaders began to lose their influence.  
 D. Peter's shadow healed people.
5. God worked many miracles during this time for two reasons:
- A. The apostles were extraordinary Christians.  
 B. God was confirming the Gospel.  
 C. The Jews needed many miracles to convince them that Jesus was the Son of God.  
 D. The disciples had asked for miracles to glorify Jesus.  
 E. God had ordained that the apostles could do miracles that no other person can do.

**Answer the question.**

6. Why were the Jewish leaders a threat to early Christians?  
They were desperate and determined to put a stop to the church. or They cared more about staying in control than about the truth.
7. Why were the Jewish leaders spiritually blind?  
They had chosen the way of darkness and hardened their hearts.

**Spiritual Conflict**

The early chapters of Acts record events during a very important time in church history. Spiritual foundations were laid for the church and Satan's prison camp was invaded. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, Satan began to lose his hold on people, and thousands found freedom in Jesus. In Acts we read of miracles, but also of intense persecution. God gives special grace and power to His people during times of much change and growth. However, Satan also increases his resistance and stirs the hearts of wicked people to try to stop God's kingdom from being built.

Throughout the history of God's people, we see this pattern occurring often. When God laid the foundations of the nation of Israel, He gave Moses miraculous power to bring plagues on Egypt so that Pharaoh would release the Israelites from bondage. But Pharaoh persecuted the Israelites and made their bondage more severe. The same pattern sometimes occurred during the era of the prophets and judges. But even in times of Satan's attacks, the church moves ahead triumphantly because Jesus promised, "I will build My church."

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• **vexed**

You know what it means to be bullied. The only thing worse than a bully is two bullies. But imagine being vexed by a hundred bullies all at the same time! *Vexed* means *troubled*, but the meaning of this word in Acts 5:16 goes even deeper—it has the idea of being harassed by a mob. The Greek root of *vexed* is translated "multitude" in Scripture. The man of the Gadarenes (Mark 5) had a legion of devils vexing him. People such as this man were brought to the apostles to be freed from the evil spirits that vexed them.

 **Assign Lesson 11 in the LightUnit.****WHERE ANSWERS ARE FOUND**

Activity    Location

**Read Your Bible**

- 1    Acts 5:12  
 2    Acts 5:16, 19  
 3    Acts 5:14

**Understanding the Lesson**

- 4    p. 39, para. 1  
 5    p. 38, para. 2  
 6    p. 39, para. 3, 4  
 7    p. 39, para. 5  
 8    p. 40, sidebar

- 9 p. 39, para. 1
- 10 p. 39, para. 3
- 11 p. 40, para. 1
- 12 p. 39, para. 4
- 13 Acts 5:23
- 14 p. 38, para. 2

**For More Understanding**

- 15 inference

**Bible Memory**

- 16 Acts 5:42

**Review**

- 17 p. 33, para. 4
- 18 p. 33, para. 3
- 19 p. 34, para. 4
- 20 p. 33, para. 5
- 21 p. 33, para. 2
- 22 p. 33, #2;  
p. 34, para. 2



**Bible Memory**

The early Christians used the temple as a meeting place. Have students notice in Acts 5 all the references to the Christians being gathered in the temple, or the apostles preaching there.

- (vv 12-16) These signs and wonders (miraculous healings) may have happened on Solomon’s porch on the east side of the temple.
- (vv. 20-25) The angel told the imprisoned apostles to go speak in the temple “all the words of this life.” That is exactly what they did.
- (v. 40-42) Even after the Sanhedrin had beaten the apostles and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, they continued to do so “daily in the temple”!

Besides the temple, where else was Jesus Christ constantly preached? (“in every house”)

Give students opportunity to recite the memory verse, either to you or to each other.

- 8. What happened as a result of Satan losing his hold on people?  
Thousands found freedom in Jesus.
- 9. What did God want everyone in Jerusalem to know? the truth about Jesus

**Circle T if the statement is true or F if it is false. Correct any false statements.**

- 10.  T  F *Staying in control of the people* mattered more to the Jewish leaders than learning the truth.
- 11.  T  F ~~All~~ Not all or Some of the priests and rulers rejected Jesus.
- 12.  T  F Because they *would not stop preaching Jesus*, the apostles were put in prison the second time.
- 13.  T  F When the officers arrived at the prison, the guards were ~~asleep~~ standing at the doors and the apostles were missing.
- 14.  T  F Mighty miracles were a direct answer to the *early Christians’ prayers*.

**FOR MORE UNDERSTANDING**

- 15. *Think!* What enabled the apostles to continue going to the temple when they knew the Jewish leadership would oppose them? Give two answers.  
A. Examples: commitment to their calling  
B. courage, faith

**BIBLE MEMORY**

**Write this section’s memory verse, including the reference.**

- 16. “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” Acts 5:42

**REVIEW**

**Complete the exercises.**

- 17. Name three blessings we receive as part of God’s grace.  
A. God’s goodwill and favor  
B. God’s enabling power and wisdom  
C. circumstances worked out for our good
- 18. To make sure no one was in need, some early Christians sold their land and houses so they would have money to share.
- 19. What act of judgment brought the fear of God on the early church?  
the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira



Teacher Notes

## Lesson 11

20. Write a sentence explaining how grace becomes effective for Christians.

Grace becomes effective as a result of Christians' growth in  
commitment and surrender to Jesus.

**Circle the letter of the answer.**

21. Because God answered the early church's prayers for spiritual power \_\_\_\_ .
- A. the Sadducees decided to leave them alone
  - B. they no longer needed to meet together for fellowship
  - C. they had spiritual life and were full of love
  - D. all of the above
22. Choose two true statements about Ananias and Sapphira's motive for lying to the Holy Spirit.
- A. Satan prompted them to lie.
  - B. They wanted to cause trouble in the church.
  - C. They wanted the approval of others.
  - D. They wanted to please God.
  - E. They gave grudgingly because they were forced.