

PETER'S CHALLENGES

Acts 5

We dare not avoid challenges but rather engage them and watch God work with us and through us.

I. A SINNING COUPLE (1-11)

A. THE SIN (1-2)

1. Pride: A desire to gain the attention and admiration of others
2. Protection: Wanting a safety net if this new church venture didn't quite work out

B. THE CONFRONTATION (3-4, 7-9)

1. Some Questions (3-4b) > For Ananias
 - a. Why the lie? (3) > That was Satan-inspired and Spirit-deceiving
 - The lie involved deliberately denying the Spirit's conviction (see I Thess. 5:16 and Eph. 4:30)
 - b. Why the choice? (4a) > No one forced you to sell or give
 - c. Why the deliberation? (4b)
 - This was a sin carefully planned and carried out
2. The Conclusion (4c)
 - You've not lied to men but God
3. A Co-conspirator (7-9a) > Sapphira was questioned and condemned as well

C. THE OUTCOME (5-6, 10-11)

1. Death for the guilty (5-6, 10) > Sudden and dramatic
 - a. It's dangerous to say "no" to God's convicting Spirit!
 - b. This is the judgment of God not Peter
2. Fear for the observers (11)
 - In the church and the community

II. THE THREATENING AUTHORITIES (12-42)

- Peter has been here before (4:7-22)

A. THEIR SITUATION

1. Jealousy (12-17)
 - Stated in v. 17
 - a. Due to apostolic miracles (12a) > They couldn't do this!
 - b. Because the believers were united (12b) > They never had this!

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- c. For the esteem of outsiders (13) > They didn't get this!
- d. Because the church was constantly growing (14) > They couldn't ignore this!
- e. Due to the hyper-popularity of Peter (15) > They couldn't compete with this!
- f. For the regional impact being made (16) > They couldn't stop this!

2. Humiliation (18-26)

- a. God overrode their imprisonment (18-21a)
- b. God disrupted their tribunal (21b-26)

B. THEIR CHARGES (27-32)

- 1. Stated (28)
 - a. You're affecting the people!
 - b. You're attacking us!
- 2. Answered (29-32)
 - a. There is One higher than you!
 - b. There is One more powerful than you! (30-31)
 - c. There is One who offers hope to you! (31b-32)

C. THEIR REACTIONS (33-39)

- 1. Rage rather than repentance (33)
- 2. Reason rather than rage (34-39)

D. THEIR DECISIONS (40)

- 1. They took Gamaliel's advise
- 2. They flogged the apostles
- 3. They ordered them not to speak (that hadn't worked well before)
- 4. They let them go! > There was nothing to hold them on ... just as before

E. THEIR IMPACT (41-42)

- 1. The apostles rejoiced! (41)
- 2. The apostles reported! (42)

CONCLUSION:

When challenges come ... watch God work!

- He judged a sinful couple (1-11)
- He protected persecuted proclaimers (12-42)

**We have the same God who can do the same things in the midst of whatever challenges we face
- Let us praise and proclaim Him!**