**Acts 5:1**

\*Christian generosity led to carnal greed! Whereas, Barnabas attempted to encourage generosity among members, Ananias (“Jehovah is gracious”) and Sapphira (a blue gem) conspired to exalt themselves! They had liberty to keep possession, to give part of it, or to give all of it. They did not have liberty to lie about the amount of the gift to the assembly. Church communalism was coming to an abrupt end!

\*Barnabas gave a land possession and ***freed him from the entrapment of land*** to do the will of God!

**Acts 5:2**

\*Luke revealed the fraud! First, they kept back part of the price of the land (see v. 3). Second, they were in cahoots (cf. I Tim. 6:10). Third, their prideful desire for spiritual prominence before the apostles betrayed their sin! The *“aura of pride”* becomes obvious to Christians in the Baptist assembly!

**Acts 5:3-4**

\*Peter, with the gift of prophecy, the *“discerning of spirits”* (I Cor. 12:10), and Spirit-filling (Acts 4:31), was able to detect sinful deceit!

\*The pastor asked four questions and made one assertion. First, he knew the source for the lie—Satan (Jn. 8:44) and asked why. They were “filled” or under the control of Satan (cf. Eph. 5:18) and lied to the Holy Ghost!

 \*As they lied to the leader and leadership of the assembly, they lied to God (all sin is against the Lord)!

\*Lying is against persons and not objects! This verse teaches that the Holy Ghost is a Person and not merely a force!

 \*The following three questions had to do with ownership, liberty, and purpose!

 \*Since they lied to the Holy Ghost, they lied to God. The Spirit of God is a ***Person*** of the ***Godhead***!

**Acts 5:5**

\*Ananias was speechless! He was caught in the presumptuous sin (Num. 15:30). He fell down and gave up the ghost! The Lord killed him (Mt. 10:28)!

\*The Lord judged the church member(s) and brought fear among the Baptist assembly. Communalism ceased! Public or semi-public acts of communalism promote pride and continued thoughts of ownership (e.g., members who give personal funds for physical properties [i.e., church building] have the mindset of their ownership of such). Private tithing/giving became the manner for church support (Mt. 23:23).

**Acts 5:6**

\*Apparently, the sin was exposed publicly and young men wound his body and buried him. This incident was a wrap! The younger generation would remember the sin and consequences!

**Acts 5:7-8**

\*Within three hours Sapphira entered, perhaps looking for her husband being ignorant of his death, but continued with the deception. Peter asked the pointed question, giving her the opportunity to confess and repent! She affirmed the lie!

**Acts 5:9**

\*Peter gave her the convicting clincher, confirmed complicity, condemned concealment, and confessed conclusion of her certain cessation!

**Acts 5:10-11**

 \*Sapphira fell down, died, and was buried by the youth. The church feared because great judgment accompanied great miracles! The Lord purged from within and now purging was coming from without.

**Acts 5:12**

\*Having dealt with *perversion from within* the Baptist church, the Lord allowed *persecution from without* (vv. 17 ff.). Luke gave the Reason (vv. 12-16), the Result (vv. 17-28), and the Response (vv. 29-42).

\*The apostles continued with signs and wonders (Acts 2:22, 43; 7:36). The Lord used signs and wonders specifically for the Jews (I Cor. 1:22 [not Gentiles]) at significant times in the history of Israel: beginning of the Nation (Egypt/Wilderness); apostasy of the Nation (Elijah and Elisha); First Coming of Christ (Gospels/Acts); Second Coming of Christ (Tribulation)! No signs for now since about AD 70!

\*Also, the members were with one accord (cf. Acts 1:14). The Baptist assembly continued to meet in the open area of Solomon’s porch (see Acts 3:11).

**Acts 5:13**

\*The *“rest”* were unsaved Jews (rich, great, proud, & religionists [i.e., Nicodemus & Joseph of Arimathaea]).

\*The *“rest”* were attracted to the miracles (Jn. 20:30-31) but feared being put out of the Synagogue (cf. Jn. 12:42-44; also 9:22). They *feared man*!

**Acts 5:14**

\*Contrastively, they that *feared God* were Jews who believed the *Tanak* and responded in repentance and faith and were added to the Lord (see Acts 2:47).

 \*The growing movement of saved Jewish men and women caused consternation for the religionists.

\*Luke again mentioned the salvation of women which in the pagan Roman Empire were considered as mere chattel or second class citizens! Cf. Gal. 3:28.

**Acts 5:15**

\*Baptist Christianity was a growing movement. Those in Jerusalem brought the sick in beds or couches for healing. They wanted the miracle of healing but not necessarily the Healer.

\*The Lord Jesus took as His life-verse the prophecy of Isa. 61:1-23 to heal the sick (Lk. 4:18 ff.; 10:9).

\*In the paganism of the Jewish people since they were superstitious (cf. Acts 17:22), they believed that the mere shadow of Peter might overshadow them and bring healing (cf. Acts 19:11-12).

\*The Lord prohibited this idea of “magic” as the women with the issue of blood was called out by the Lord to clarify that she was healed and saved because of faith in Him and not in magic (Lk. 8:43-48)!

**Acts 5:16**

\*Jerusalem became the world-wide hot bed for apostolic signs and wonders! The city was the center of the Lord’s ministry for his preaching/healing, crucifixion/resurrection, and church plant.

\*The apostate city of Jerusalem had great demonic activity, afflicting the apostate people throughout Israel (cf. Mt. 8:28-34; 24:5; Rev. 13:13).

\*Jesus of Nazareth was the *“Light of the world”* (Jn. 8:12) Who came in *“the fulness of time”* (Gal. 4:4) to the spiritually darkened world (Lk. 1:78-79).

\*Multitudes from cities around Jerusalem brought the infirm, obviously causing indignation to the religionists (cf. v. Acts 5:17).

\*Physician Luke listed the afflictions, namely *“sick folks”* (*astheneis*) and them vexed with *“unclean spirits”* (*pneumaton akatharton*). The human physician observed that the divine Physician healed all physical and spiritual sicknesses (Lk. 19:10)!

**Acts 5:17**

 \*The Result of the persecution was because of the Reason of phenomenal growth of Baptist Christianity.

\*The pattern for Baptist churches was set: divine blessings and then satanic attacks (see Gen. 2-3)! The religionists were upset with the unabated growth in Jerusalem and the cities around about.

\*The high priest Annas (cf. 4:6) of the Pharisees and the *“sect”* (*hairesis* > contrary “choice” [Acts 15:5; 24:5, 14; 26:5; 28:22; etc.]) of the Sadducees (4:1) were indignant of a non-approved religious movement!

**Acts 5:18**

\*With successive *aorist* verbs, the religionists *“laid”* hands and *“put”* the Baptist apostles in *“common prison”* (4:3). The Baptist church was without divinely-given leaders (cf. Acts 14:23). How would the church function?

 \*Of course the Lord was the Head of the Baptist assembly (Col. 1:18).

**Acts 5:19-20**

\*The attack upon the apostles/pastors of the Baptist assembly was egregious and *“the angel of the Lord”* (resurrected Jesus [see Acts 27:23]) protected those in His right hand (Rev. 1:16). By night He came and opened *“the prison doors”* (Isa. 61:1).

 \*The Lord commanded them to go, stand, and speak in the Temple the words of this *“life”* (Jn. 11:25).

**Acts 5:21**

\*The twelve heard the command and went early in the morning taught the word, no doubt with *“boldness”* (Acts 4:29).

\*Annas met with the Sanhedrin and the *“senate”* (*gerousia* [1x]) or the “geriatrics,” and sent officers to the prison!

**Acts 5:22-23**

\*Unbeknownst to the Sanhedrin, elders, and officers divine deliverance occurred. The officers came, found not, and returned!

 \*The officers gave 3 truthful facts: 1) prison intact; 2) guards present; 3) jail cell empty (Acts 12:5-18)!

**Acts 5:24-25**

\*The religionists doubted (*diaporeo* [5x]) or were perplexed about *what happened* and *what the consequences*? The report was that the “inmates” somehow escaped and were standing and teaching in the Temple.

**Acts 5:26-27**

\*The twelve apostles were brought to the Sanhedrin without violence. The Baptists were not fighters but submissive to government (Rom. 13:1-4). The officers and guards *“feared the people”* (cf. Mk. 11:32; 12:12).

\*Contrastively, the Baptist apostles feared God (Prov. 29:25) because they knew they were *“hid with Christ”* (Col. 3:3; cf. also Dan. 3:16-17). Before the Sanhedrin they were asked again!

**Acts 5:28-29**

\*Annas asked them about teaching in this *“name,”* accused them their doctrine spreading, and charged them with bringing *“this man’s blood”* on them (Mt. 27:25)! Who is the Man and what is His name?

\*With great boldness, Peter with the other 11 apostles declared, *“We ought to obey God rather than men”* (see also Acts 4:19)!

**Acts 5:30**

\*Speaking of *“this man’s blood”* (v. 28), Peter responded succinctly and directly with unity, truth, and guilt of the crucifixion and resurrection. He directed the full culpability of the crucifixion of Jesus on the Jewish religionists whom they *“hanged on a* ***tree****”* (*xulon* [19x]), attempting to accurse publicly the Lord (Dt. 21:22-23). Later, the apostle Paul affirmed this truth (Gal. 3:13).

**Acts 5:31**

\*Pastor Peter added to his previous preaching and declared that the Prince/Saviour was exalted. This was the first time he called Jesus *“Saviour”* (13x in the *Tanak*; see Isa. 45:21-22).

\*They knew Jesus said *“repent ye, and believe the gospel”* (Mk. 1:15). The Lord reciprocates man’s response. If the convicted sinner turns from sin (repentance of evil), God turns from judgment on repentant sinner (Jon. 3:9-10).

\*God gives repentance and forgiveness of sins to all (Israel) and to each. The Lord requires repentance (Lk. 13:3, 5). Peter had already preached repentance (Acts 2:38). Even repentant Sanhedrin members like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea repented and received forgiveness of sins (cf. Lk. 24:45-48).

**Acts 5:32**

\*Peter recognized that the Lord commanded His disciples to be *“witness”* as they had power of the Holy Ghost on them (Acts 1:8).

\*The implication was that the regenerated apostles had the Holy Ghost and thus obeyed the Lord, whereas the members of the Sanhedrin members had not the Spirit because they had not obeyed in repentance!

**Acts 5:33**

\*Pastor Peter preached the powerful, pointed, and pertinent proclamation which pierced the permanently perverted hearts of the Sanhedrin! The Spirit-filled preaching of the Scripture caused them to be *“cut to the heart”* (see Acts 7:54). When preached with Spirit-filling, the Word of God is powerful (Heb. 4:12).

\*Convicted sinners have three options: ignore, receive, or reject. Unlike the 3000 who repented and believer (Acts 2:38, 41), these hardened sinners rejected and wanted to eliminate by murder the convicting Christians.

**Acts 5:34**

\*A wise and tolerant scholar and rabbi (Mt. 23:7) stood and gave advice to the frenzied religionists. Somehow Luke knew what he said (i.e., through Saul now Paul)! The renowned Doctor *“Gamaliel”* (“my reward is God” [see Acts 22:3]) was Saul’s mentor and gave sage advice to the angry religionists!

\*He commanded that the apostles be put forth *“a little space”* (*brachus* > brachylogy = condensed writing).

**Acts 5:35-36**

\*Gamaliel gave candid counsel from past experience. He warned the Sanhedrin about rash behaviour, using two reasons. Apparently, he recognized something unusual about the *“Jesus”* the apostles preached and advised that they may be fighting God (v. Acts 5:39).

\*Two, he reminded the religionists about a recent uprising of Theudas who was slain and about 400 men who were scattered. Of course, by now the Jerusalem Baptist Church probably had 20,000 members!

 \* He seemed to parallel Theudas and Jesus, both of whom were slain, and their followers who dispersed.

 \*His counsel seemed to be “wait and see; this movement will come and go.”

**Acts 5:37**

\*Gamaliel had two contemporary examples of insurrectionists who had followers and caused problems for the religionists and failed. The aged counselor’s cautious message based on experience was “to wait and see” if these rebels were of God or not!

\*He mentioned Theudas and now Judas of Galilee. Both were known to the immediate audience. The latter apparently rebelled during the days and about the taxing (*apographa* [2x] literally “write off”).

\*Perhaps Judas was a zealot like the former Simon Zelotes the Canaanite (Acts 1:13; Lk. 6:15; Mt. 10:4).

\*Nevertheless, Judas drew away a large following and perished and the followers dispersed.

\*Gamaliel hoped that with the deaths Jesus, Theudas, and Simon their respective disciples would disperse. “Toleration” for the Sanhedrin was the watchword.

**Acts 5:38-39**

\*Gamaliel commanded with two *aorist* imperatives to *“refrain”* and to *“let them alone.”* He punned on the same word *“drew away”* and *“refrain”* (*aphistemi*) saying “draw away from those who drew away.”

\*Although his counsel was true in some cases about men’s movements, it was not true relative to the age-old heresies of Hinduism, Catholicism, or Islam.

\*The aged sage did caution about the movement that it may “be of God” and it cannot be overthrown. \*He probably recognized that Jehovah’s blessing on Shem and later on Abraham and Jacob (Israel) was of God and was not destroyed by the Assyrians, Babylonians, nor Grecians (Dan. 2:38-40).

\*Further, he seemed to sense that there was something unusual about Jesus and His miracles, crucifixion, empty tomb, and deceased people wandering around in Jerusalem, etc.

\*He warned about *“haply”* (refers to verb “to happen” not to “happily” or “happy”) fighting against God (*theomachos* [1x]) and the consequent danger.

\*In this instance, fighting against God was “fighting against the Lord’s church leaders and church.” It is spiritually dangerous to oppose biblical pastors or churches (Rev. 1:16, 20; see also Mt. 16:18)!

\*Since the Baptists preached “resurrection,” Gamaliel may have wanted advantage over the Sadducees.

**Acts 5:40**

\*Apparently, out of respect for the aged counselor, the Sanhedrin consented. Luke gave five successive *aorist* verbs as the result of counsel. First, the members agreed. Second, they called the apostle back to the meeting.

\*Next, they beat the apostles (who did they call on to beat them but the henchman—Saul of Taurus?!). \*After Paul’s conversion, he met with Peter three years later for fifteen days (Gal. 1:17-19)!

\*After the beating they warned the Baptists about preaching in *“name of Jesus”* (Acts 2:38; 3:6; 4:10, 18; 8:12; 9:47; 16:18; 26:9; Phil. 2:10). Then they released the beaten and threatened apostles!

**Acts 5:41**

\*The Baptists left the council and were rejoicing for the privilege and blessing of suffering in the will of God (Heb. 12:2).

\*Their attitude was being *“counted worthy”* (by the Lord) to suffer for His *“name.”* They were not **proud** of their stand for the Lord’s name, but recognized that it was a divine **privilege** (4:17-18; 5:28).

**Acts 5:42**

 \*The Baptists continued to teach and preach publicly in the name of Jesus the Christ! Obedience costs!