**The Witness Of God’s Word, People And Spirit**

Hope Chapel Honolulu

Acts 4:32-5:42

“Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to

suffer dishonor for the name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house,

they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.”

(Acts 5:41-42, ESV)

**Introduction**

I agree with the apostle Paul who wrote the following: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, ‘The righteous shall live by faith’” (Romans 1:16-17, ESV). However, we live in an increasingly secular society where the Word of God is no longer given its proper place and the power of the Holy Spirit is confused with some other spirit. It would seem that God has arranged creation so that people who trust and obey His Word are essential for the Spirit of God to use their faithful, if imperfect, words, works and relationships to draw others to the Father’s love.

**1. Learning to serve God and not Mammon. (Luke 16:10-13; Acts 4:32-5:11)**

a) The apostolic and community witness of words and works in truth and in love.

b) This was neither communism nor socialism, but community and care without coercion.

**2. Signs, wonders, conversions and help in the face of persecution. (Acts 5:12-32)**

a) Signs, wonders, healings and countless conversions from within the city and beyond.

b) Angelic help and deliverance in the face of political pressure and targeted persecution.

**3. Teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus. (Acts 5:33-42)**

a) The wisdom and discernment of Gamaliel who was also the future apostle Paul.

b) “…In the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching...” (v.42).

**Conclusion**

The witness of the apostles and disciples to the kingdom of God and its righteousness regarding power and possessions is probably unnerving to some of us today. Their fear of the LORD and awareness of the presence and purity of the Holy Spirit indwelling and connecting them with one another in Christ seem to have enabled them to use the things of this world such as money and property without greed or fear of loss. The contrast between Barnabas who sold unused property to help other believers in need, and the attempt by Ananias and Sapphira to gain attention and favor through deception, is stark. We cannot be coerced into loving community; only by loving one another as ourselves can we enter it.

**For our prayerful study, discussion and application:**

1) Compare Acts 2:42-47 with 4:32-5:11. What did Luke observe about the fellowship of believers?

2) Read Acts 5:12-42. How did the apostles respond to gospel opposition, persecution and hardship?

3) What are the Word and Spirit of God showing and telling you about your devotion to the fellowship?

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