



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V26 N39 September 29, 2024

CITY ON A HILL CAMPAIGN

"Light to Our Neighbors"

Acts 5:12-16

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Evangelism

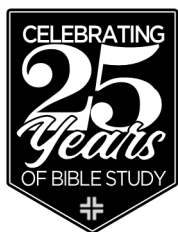
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8



How do we know that the gospel is true?



Ironically, sometimes our language obscures the meaning we intend to express. This is particularly true of religious language. When we talk about things pertaining to our faith, we often use familiar expressions that are used by other Christians or that "sound" sacred. Because the words are familiar or have a certain "ring," we seldom stop to clarify *precisely* what we mean by them. "I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel" is this kind of expression. It begs the question, "How exactly do I do this?" There are statements like this in Scripture, too — statements that must be clarified before we can act on them. We hear Jesus say, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it," and wonder what he means. We read, "Offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God," and wonder what to do. We should continue to use this kind of language, but we should use it thoughtfully and listen to it more carefully.

It seems that these statements carry the same *type* of message. Live in obedience to God. Live *missionally*. That is how we lose our lives for Jesus and the gospel, how we offer ourselves as living sacrifices to God. I obey God's will for my life rather than go my own way. I partner with God in the accomplishment of his mission on earth. For some people obedience is *coincidental*. God, however, calls us to *premeditated* obedience and mission living.

Romans 6:15-23 says the same thing in different words. According to Paul, people are slaves to whatever or whomever they choose to obey. We were once slaves to sin, but we have been set free — not to do as we please but to be slaves to righteousness. Paul talks in the following terms: choose to sin and be a slave to sin or choose to obey God

and be a slave to righteousness. There appears to be no middle ground. Joshua put it this way centuries ago, "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve (or obey)." Then he set an example for us to follow by saying, "But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Jos 24:15). Because righteousness is his will for us, Paul can say that choosing to obey God makes us slaves to *righteousness* (v. 18) as well as slaves to *God* (v. 22). I share Jesus with others by living in radical obedience to God's will — by living in obedience to God's Word — by living missionally, that is, by "proclamation and demonstration of the gospel." Peter puts it this way, "Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear" (1Pe 1:15, 17). The book of Acts gives us the example of the apostles and the early Christians who did this very thing.

I *share Jesus* with others when I tell them that God has authorized him to forgive sins (Mk 2:10). Anyone who isn't perfect — and nobody's perfect — can simply ask Jesus for forgiveness. Believing that he is authorized to forgive sins and believing that he will forgive sins when asked, results in forgiveness for anyone who simply asks for it. And with the forgiveness of sins comes the experience of salvation (Lk 1:76). "As the scripture says, "Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved" (Ro 10:13, GNT). This gospel message was confirmed by the resurrection (Ac 2:31-33) and by the "signs and wonders" performed by the apostles. Those who proclaim it can therefore be assured that they are telling the truth. And I share Jesus with others when I demonstrate his love for them through acts of acceptance, kindness, and compassion.

1 EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read Acts 5:12-16

12 The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. 13 No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. 14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. 15 As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. 16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.

Read in another translation

12 Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. 13 None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. 14 And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 15 so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. 16 The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. (ESV)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "apostles" in v. 12.
- Bracket "signs and wonders" in v. 12.
- Circle "people" in vv. 12, 13, 15.
- Bracket "all the believers" in v. 12.
- Circle "Solomon's Colonnade" in v. 12.
- Bracket "no one else" in v. 13.
- Circle "dared" in v. 13.
- Circle "them" and "they" in v. 13.
- Box "nevertheless" indicating *contrast* in v. 14.
- Bracket "believed in the Lord" in v. 14.
- Box "so that" indicating *purpose/result* in v. 15.
- Underline "Peter's shadow" in v. 15.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Identify the *various* characters in this narrative.

 2. *Who* is doing *what* according to verse 12a, and *why*?

 3. Verse 12b (lit., “they all,” ESV) refers to either all the *believers* (NIV) or all the *apostles*. What do you think, and what difference does it make? (See note.)

 4. What do you think made Solomon’s Colonnade a strategic place to meet?

 5. Identify “no one else,” “them,” and “they” in verse 13.

 6. Luke’s use of “dared” in verse 13 is fitting. How so? (Cf., v. 11)

 7. Explain the *contrast* in verse 14.

 8. What do you infer about Peter from verse 15?

 9. Explain the *significance* of any parallels that you see between Peter’s ministry (vv. 15, 16) and Jesus’ earlier ministry (cf., Mk 3:7-12; 6:53-56).

 10. **Discussion:** Talk about *who* was behind the healing and exorcisms in this passage and *why* it mattered.
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Commentary On The Text

“Acts falls naturally into two divisions: the mission of the Jerusalem church (chaps. 1-12) and the mission of Paul (chaps. 13-28). Each of these may be subdivided into two main parts. In the Jerusalem portion chaps. 1-5 treat the early church in Jerusalem; chaps. 6-12, the outreach beyond Jerusalem. In the Pauline portion 13:1-21:16 relates the three major missions of Paul; 21:27-28:31 deals with Paul’s defense of his ministry” (John B. Polhill, *Acts*, NAC, 72). Along the way, Luke punctuates his account with “progress reports” that summarize the advance and growth of the church to that point. Although commentators disagree as to their exact number, Acts 5:12-16 likely contains the *third* such report – the first two occurring in 2:42-47 and 4:32-35 (see Polhill, 162; cf. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, BECNT, 229).

This third report documents the ministry of the apostles, particularly Peter, in Jerusalem and its results, and in doing so it explains why the high priest and his officials, all Sadducees, arrested them and put them in jail (vv. 17, 18). According to Luke, all of the apostles were performing “miraculous signs and wonders” in Solomon’s Colonnade, but when crowds from the towns around Jerusalem later gathered with their sick and demon possessed, it was Peter they were looking for (vv. 15, 16). He was the apostles’ spokesman and leader from the beginning and the one who had recently healed a crippled beggar in Solomon’s Colonnade (3:6-10). Even if he didn’t touch the people, they hoped his shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by and heal them. Luke doesn’t say whether people were healed this way or not. However, “Acts 19:12 has Paul working with handkerchiefs, healing from a distance, like Jesus in Luke 7:1-10. There also is healing by touching Jesus’s garment in Luke 8:43-44” (Bock, 232).

Apparently, the apostles met in the outer court of the temple regularly to tell people that according to their own prophets, Christ had to die and be raised from the dead, and to tell them that Jesus whom they killed was alive (vv. 11-26). The very fact that they were doing the same signs and wonders he had done during his earthly ministry (cf., Mk 3:7-12; 6:53-56) proved as much – for Jesus was actually the one performing miracles through them. Luke suggested this in the opening words of Acts. “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote

about all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach” (1:1) implying that Jesus’ work continued in Acts through his own personal interventions and the ministry of the apostles. That being the case, he must be the Christ. Perhaps, contrary to the NIV’s translation (cf. ESV), none of the other believers joined the apostles, given that “great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about” the incident involving Ananias and Sapphira (v. 11). In any case, the apostles were highly regarded by the Jewish people and many of them, both men and women, believed in the Lord.

One commentator observes: “At this point the apostles were still confined to Jerusalem. The people came to them from the outlying villages. Only later would they go forth from Jerusalem and take their gospel and their healing ministry into the villages of Judea (cf. 9:32-43)” (Polhill, 164).

In a nutshell, “This summary gives a glimpse of the divine power working through the apostles. People are being healed. Outsiders are impressed. People believe. Apparently, the prospect of arrest also keeps some believers from joining the apostles. Nevertheless, the bold apostles engage publicly in their ministry of service to those in need and gain respect and response as a result. They do not cloister themselves away or hide. They continue to serve and reach out in ministry that testifies to their message and God’s call for all. The growth of attention demands a renewed response from the Jewish leadership” (233). Luke continues to document the advance and growth of the church to further assure Theophilus and other readers of Luke/Acts, that the things they had been taught were certainly true (Lk 1:4).

Practically speaking, Luke tells two stories in his report. The *upper story* is about Jesus, who following his resurrection continues to work miracles among as he had during his earthly ministry. The fact that the apostles are doing signs and wonders “in his name” indicates that he is alive and proves that he is the Christ for he died and was resurrected as the Old Testament indicated the Christ would be. The *lower story* is about the apostles who continue to witness to the resurrection in spite of persecution from the Jews. They were ordered “not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus” (Ac 4:18); nevertheless, they remained faithful to their mission (1:8) and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 12 *apostles* I.e., the eleven and newly elected Matthias (Ac 1:26). Peter is clearly the spokesman for the apostles and the leader of the early church (cf., 1:15-22; 2:14-41; 3:1-26; 4:1-21; 5:3-11).

v. 12 *signs and wonders* God authenticated Jesus by the signs and wonders done by him (4:22). God continues to authenticate Jesus by the signs and wonders done now by the apostles in Jesus' name (4:30; cf., 14:3; 15:12). Put differently, Jesus continues to do through his apostles what he did during his earthly ministry, thereby confirming that God raised him from the dead (2:24). "The phrase *many signs and wonders* is a repetition of 2:43, where in summary form Luke mentions the work done by the apostles. With the word *people* the writer has in mind the people of Israel. The residents of Jerusalem observed the healing power demonstrated in the wonders the apostles performed" (Simon J. Kistemaker, *Acts*, NTC, 191). "These miracles signified who Jesus really was (signs), and they filled the people with awe (wonders)" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Acts," 2024 ed., 140, planbiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/acts.pdf).

v. 12 *the people* I.e., the Jewish people. "This term is especially frequent in Acts 2:47-6:12 and plays a role in a significant development. In 2:47 we are told that the Jerusalem Christians were viewed favorably by 'all the people.' This favor continues. When the temple authorities begin to oppose the apostles, they are unable to act effectively because the apostles enjoy the people's support (4:21; 5:13, 26). The situation mirrors the passion story, where the people support Jesus as he teaches in the temple and prevent the authorities from taking action against him (Luke 19:47-48; 20:19, 26; 21:38; 22:2). In Acts the people are a fertile field for the Christian mission, yet, just as in the passion story they are fickle and easily swayed by false charges. A first indication of change is found in the Stephen story. Opponents are finally able to arouse the people by false charges against Stephen (6:11-14)" (Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 2:59, 60).

v. 12 *all the believers* Lit., "they . . . all;" cf., "they were all together in Solomon's portico" (ESV; cf., NET, NRSV, NKJV, NEB, NJB). Commentators are divided regarding who is meant. "Although the reference to 'all' in the verse might be to Christians, given the reference to 'together' (*homothymadon*; 1:14; 2:46, 4:24) and verse 13, where 'the rest' and 'them' are in contrast (Barrett 1994: 274; Polhill 1992: 163), it is more natural to read it as reference to the apostles, whose ministry is the passage's focus of description and reaction (Johnson 1992: 95; Fitzmyer 1998: 328)" (Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, NECNT, 230). "This has the advantage of solving the seeming contradiction between vv. 13-14, where no one dared join the Christians, yet many new converts were added. It, however, raises the rather serious question of why the other Christians wouldn't join the apostles in Solomon's Colonnade. Were they afraid of their power after what happened to Ananias and Sapphira? Were they afraid of being arrested by the temple authorities? Such timidity is scarcely likely

for the community that prayed so boldly in 4:23-31. It is probably best, and the most likely reading, to follow the NIV" (John B. Polhill, *Acts*, NAC, 163).

v. 12 *Solomon's Colonnade* Cf., Jn 10:23; Ac 3:11. The outer court of Herod's temple, the court of the Gentiles, was surrounded by a high wall. Along the inside of the wall on all four sides were porticoes, covered walkways with roofs of cedar supported on marble columns. Solomon's Colonnade or Porch ran along the east side of the outer court and rested on a massive wall rising up from the floor of the Kidron Valley (see *Wikipedia*, s.v. "Second Temple"). On the height of the wall one author writes: "The height of the wall varied, but on the exterior to the south it extended more than thirty meters above ground level (Sanders, *Judaism*, 68). In some places, the actual height of the wall is fifty meters, because the foundation is twenty meters below street level (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 77, 92). (Josephus says that the actual height of the wall in some places was as high as 300 [= c. 150 meters], but this seems to be in error; he is correct, however, in noting in general that, 'The whole depth of the foundations was not apparent; for they filled up a considerable part of the ravines, wishing to level the narrow alleys of the town' [*War*, 5.188].) On the top of the outer wall, there was probably a parapet on either side, in order to allow people safe access to the top of the wall.

v. 13 *no one else* If verse 12b refers to the apostles, then "no one else" means "none of the other Christians." Perhaps "these believers hesitate to join with them in this temple ministry given the hostile view and actions of the Jewish leadership, as well as the fear the apostles' access to judgment generated" (Bock, 231); "them" and "they" refer to the apostles. If verse 12b refers to "all the believers," then "no one else" means "the people" who were awed by the power of the apostles and who heard about Ananias and Sapphira. "They did not run up and join the Christian band in the colonnade but kept a healthy distance. Nevertheless, they held the Christians in the highest regard" (Polhill, 163); "them" and "they" refer to the apostles and the other Christians. "The 'rest' (Gr. *hoi loipoi*) were probably the unbelieving Jews. Other possibilities are that they were the apostles, other Christians, or other Jerusalemites. They steered clear of the Christians because of the Jewish leaders' opposition (4:18) and the apostles' power (vv. 1-10). The 'people' (Gr. *ho laos*), the responsive Jews, honored the believers" (Constable, 140; cf., Kistemaker, 191, 92).

v. 15 *Peter's shadow* Cf., Lk 8:44. "In the ancient world a person's shadow was the subject of much superstition and was believed to represent his or her power and personality, to literally be an extension of their person. Whether or not they were healed by Peter's shadow Luke did not explicitly say, but the note underlines the strength of the apostle's healing reputation" (Polhill, 164; Bock, 232).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Jesus continues to do signs and wonders in Jerusalem through the apostles, who share the gospel in spite of growing opposition, thereby confirming their witness to his resurrection and drawing many more people to believe that he is the Christ.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

I know some parents that hand out Band-Aids to their kids for any reason. Scratch? Here's a Band-Aid. Bellyache? Stick a Band-Aid on it. Mosquito bite? Seems like a Band-Aid will make that better. Unfortunately for my kids, we had a rule — no Band-Aids unless you're dripping blood. Honestly this seemed reasonable to me because cute Tinkerbell or Thomas the Tank Engine Band-Aids were expensive, and I had a lot of kids that were very active with constant bumps and scrapes. Despite the lack of Band-Aids, our kids still ran to mom and dad with every little injury. What is it about moms that make everyone feel better and cure all the injuries and illnesses? And dads, you have a special way of turning tears into laughter with your funny stories and goofy distractions. We do everything we can to make sure our kids don't experience physical or emotional suffering. Do we have the same sense of urgency when it comes to the spiritual health of our kids? Do your kids know that Jesus' spiritual healing is far greater than the healing of any physical impairment? Are you burdened for your child's spiritual health? Do you seize every opportunity to share the love of Christ with your kids? My kids joke with me now and say when they were injured or sick my response was always, "You're fine. Get up." Looking back, I may have missed an opportunity to be a tiny bit more compassionate when it came to simple scrapes. What I didn't miss at every opportunity was to share the Gospel. We're praying for opportunities for your family, too!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Acts 5:12-16

1. What did the disciples perform?
2. What was the result of more people joining the disciples as believers in Jesus?
3. What happened to the sick people brought to the disciples?

What Do You Think?

What did these people need more — physical healing or spiritual healing?

What Do You Do?

Make a list of first aid items that heal people. How does Jesus heal people? How are these different?

CORE COMPETENCY: Evangelism

I share Jesus with other with my words and actions.

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 5:3-4

"Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)
I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)
I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)
I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)
I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)
I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)
I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)
I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)
I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)
I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)
I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)
I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)
I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)
I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)
I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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**CENTRAL
BIBLE CHURCH**

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OUR MISSION
Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.