

# Acts 5:12-16

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*The apostles continue to heal the Jewish people in the walkway of the temple, preaching that Jesus is the Christ. Crowds gather, even from the suburbs of Jerusalem. Sick and afflicted people pour in daily, experiencing healing. Many repent and believe, joining the growing church.*

Luke reports of the continuing ministry of the *apostles*. They worked miracles among the people of Jerusalem, directing hearts and minds to God and to the gospel message of repentance and belief in Jesus. Peter and John got the city's attention when they healed a lame man in *Solomon's portico* (Acts 3:6-9). *Solomon's portico* was a large exterior part of the temple grounds lined with great columns (In the side-bar you can see illustration of the Temple in the Maps and Charts section). It was a good place for people to gather: *At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico*. The people gathered on the Temple Mount were in complete harmony with one another, like a high-performing orchestra.

This area of the temple grounds became a strategic and successful place to attract audiences. The *signs and wonders* performed by the disciples drew people close, as the healing of the lame man had, so that the apostles could teach about Jesus's resurrection, to provide something better than a physical healing—spiritual rebirth through faith in the Christ (John 3:14-16; Acts 3:16-20).

During Jesus's ministry, His miracles served to show that He was the Messiah sent by God.

“But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, ‘When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?’”  
(John 7:31)

The Jewish people knew in general that miracles, *signs*, and *wonders* were only possible through God. Peter always attributes an act of healing to Jesus and the power of God (Acts 3:12-16). A blind man whom Jesus healed during His ministry made the same point to the Pharisees questioning him, because they were trying to coerce him to declare that Jesus was evil, but the man with restored sight argued very simply and rightly, “If this man were not from God, He could do nothing” (John 9:33). Even the Pharisee Nicodemus knew Jesus was of God because of His attesting miracles (John 3:2).

The point of these miracles was to reveal God's power and validate that those who performed them were from God, so that the people who saw the miracles would listen to what the miracle workers had to say (John 10:25).

There were some who kept away from the apostles' healing and teaching, fearing the priests and rabbis: *But none of the rest dared to associate with them*. That was a minority of the people *however*, as most of *the people* in Jerusalem *held them in high esteem*. There was a growing recognition of God's work from the majority of the Jewish people. Why wouldn't they hold the

*apostles in high esteem?* These men were healing the sick, which only God could do, so they were obviously from God. They preached the resurrection of the dead through Jesus Christ, which is called the gospel, or “good news,” and many of the Jewish people who heard this saw it for what it was, good news.

Peter and the apostles was probably preaching something like what Peter preached after healing the lame man, explaining that Jesus was God’s Messiah, and that He was alive, pointing to each new healing as having come from Him, “And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all” (Acts 3:16).

Many people believed: *And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number.* The early church was growing rapidly. 3000 believed after Peter’s sermon in the streets of Jerusalem (Acts 2:41), then that number grew to 5000 after Peter’s sermon in the temple (Acts 4:4). Now it grows even more, though Luke does not provide a number. Only that *multitudes of men and women*, crowds upon crowds, *were constantly added to the number of believers in the Lord.*

The popularity of the healings and sermons in *Solomon’s portico* grew to such an extent that people even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on any one of them. It seems that the general consensus was that Peter and the apostles were instruments of God, and people did not want to miss out on the blessing that was flowing from them. Word spread, and people from the surrounding area starting pouring into Jerusalem as well:

*Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed.*

The notoriety of these healings had spread beyond Jerusalem, to the cities in its vicinity, such as Bethany, Bethlehem, and Emmaus. Understandably, any *who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits* (demon-possessed) were brought to be healed by these miracle workers. By the power of Jesus Christ, *they were all being healed.* It is notable that this verse says *they were all being healed.* God was working on behalf of *all* who came to be healed.

Ironically, this was happening in one of the walkways that led into the temple, which was under the control of the Sadducees, who felt threatened by the apostles’ ministry. The Sadducees had already arrested Peter and John for healing and preaching not long ago, letting them off with a warning not to do any more teaching about Jesus. And now, Peter, John, and the other 10 apostles are daily visiting the same walkway, healing people, bringing in crowds from all over the city, from out of town, and healing every single one of them, all at the doorstep of those who have threatened them with punishment. The apostles are bold, which is an empowerment given them by the Holy Spirit. This boldness was given them by God, when they prayed for courage in the prior chapter (Acts 4:29-31).

## **Biblical Text**

**12 At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. 13 But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem. 14 And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number, 15 to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on any one of them. 16 Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed.**