Square Peg, Round Hole
Acts 5:12-42
The Problem

There is great opposition to the preaching of the Apostles
Acts 5:12-15

“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. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 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 ...”
Acts 5:15-20

“fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ‘Go and stand in the temple and ...’”
“”speak to the people all the words of this Life.’ And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach. Now when the high priest came, and those who were with him, they called together the council, all the senate of the people of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported, ‘We found the prison securely locked and the ...’”
“‘guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them we found no one inside.’ Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to. And someone came and told them, ‘Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.’ Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.” (ESV)
Jealousy (zēlos)

• **Literally**—to boil.

• In a good sense: to be deeply concerned about. Show zeal, ardor.

• In a bad sense: to be filled with outrage, jealousy, or envy.
Puzzled (diaporeō)

- Perplexed, at a loss.
- A word only Luke uses in the NT.
The Trial

“And the high priest questioned them ...” (27)
Acts 5:27-31

“And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, ‘We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.’ But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at ...’"
Acts 5:30-32

“‘his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.’”

(ESV)
Acts 5:28

“‘We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.’” (ESV)
Matthew 27:20, 24-25

“Now the chief priests & the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas & destroy Jesus ... So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying ‘I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.’ And all the people answered, ‘His blood be on us and on our children!’”

(ESV)
Acts 5:30

“The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by *hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance ... and forgiveness of sins.” (ESV)

*Referencing the OT law (Deut 21:23)*
Acts 5:33

“When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them.”

- Enraged (*diapriō*)
  - Be infuriated, be cut to the quick.
  - Literally, to be sawn in two.
    - Used only here and Acts 7:54.
The Intervention

“But a Pharisee ... named Gamaliel ... stood up” (34)
Acts 5:34-36

“But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. And he said to them, ‘Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing ...’”
“After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered. So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!’ So they took his advice.”

(ESV)
The Release

“So they took his advice” (39)
“So they took his advice, and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 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.”

(ESV)
Acts 5:41

“Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.” (ESV)
Matthew 23:29-39

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ... You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? ... I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town ... blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” (ESV)
“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”

(ESV)
Acts 5:29

“We must obey God rather than man.”
Application

• Expect persecution
Daniel 3:17-18

“If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

(ESV)
Application

• Expect persecution
• Obey God’s commands
Application

• Expect persecution
• Obey God’s commands
• Rejoice in God’s approval
  • “This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering.”

(2 Thes 1:5, ESV)
Application

• Expect persecution
• Obey God’s commands
• Rejoice in God’s approval
• Pray for faithfulness through your suffering
“First, every man ought to obey Christ without hesitation or reserve ... Second, whether anybody else does or not, I will, so help me God.” —Jonathan Edwards