

**TITLE: GO, STAND, & SPEAK!**

**TEXT: ACTS 5:20**

**THESIS:** To encourage the church to evangelize by looking at the Holy Spirit's command to the apostles to go, stand, and speak.

**INTRO:** The church experienced great initial success because of their continued evangelistic efforts in the early days of the church. The book of Acts is titled "Acts of the Apostles" because of what the early church did, and the results of these acts. They preached and taught continuously, dedicating themselves to the mission, and the results followed ("3000" (2:41); "5000" (4:4); "multitude" (4:32); "and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes of men & women" (5:14); "the number of the disciples was multiplied" (6:1); "the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (6:7). This is because of the church's obedience to the great commission, and the command of **Acts 5:20**.

## **I. GO:**

- A. Their great commission (**Mt 28:18**) began with "Go ye...and teach all nations..." Christianity is proactive. We're to GO!
  - 1. He didn't say, "If you build it, they'll come!" Don't rely on the building; GO and find them.
  - 2. Leaven spreads! This principle is seen in **Mat 13:33** - "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."
  - 3. **Mt 16:18** - "The gates of Hades (death) shall not prevail against it." In this scenario, the church could be on the offensive or defensive. But considering its mission, it's clear that we're on the offensive, winning souls, and Hades (death) will not defeat the Cause. Whatever we do in this life, whatever endeavors we undertake or goals we pursue, death will end them! The only exception is the church. Its members keep **going!**
- B. In this case (Ac 5:20), this command to "go" meant to go back into the temple (v. 21), the most public place.
  - 1. For us, this "going" can be done literally, by going on mission trips into foreign countries.
  - 2. This "going" can be accomplished by going door-knocking, handing out tracts, inviting people to worship, etc.
  - 3. This "going" is accomplished by initiating a conversation about God, Christ, the Bible, or the church.

## **II. STAND:**

- A. "Stand"- "make firm, fix, establish; keep your place; uphold or sustain." **1 Pet 5:12**- "...the true grace of God wherein ye stand"
- B. Go to the world and stand firm in the truth; uphold and sustain *your* place in the truth. This is attractive to those who are truly searching. Wishy-washy Christianity (watering it down in order to reach those who really don't care) is unattractive!
- C. Context (**5:17-19**): The high priest & Sadducees put them in prison because of their success (v. 16), but an angel released them.
- D. Having already been in prison once before and threatened (ch. 4), they are told to go back and do it again!
- E. The message to us: Take a stand - regardless of the consequences. The end result will be worth it!

## **III. SPEAK:**

- A. "In the temple"
  - 1. The most **dangerous** place - location of their biggest enemies (Pharisees, Sanhedrin). They had already been threatened for preaching there (**4:3,21**). They would be beaten for it this time (**5:40**).
  - 2. The most **public** place - social, educational, political, religious center of Jerusalem.
  - 3. The most **opportune** place - they were to go public with their message. Paul taught publicly & house-to-house (**Ac 20:20**).
- B. "To the people" - this may seem obvious, but too often we do a great job of speaking to one another, but not to non-Christians! The gospel went to Jews first, then Gentiles (**Rom 1:16**). But today there is NO such distinction. "The people" is "all people!"
- C. "All the words of this life"
  - 1. "All," not some! Paul kept back nothing (**Ac 20:20**), declaring the whole counsel of God" (**20:27**).
  - 2. "Words"- we know our **example** in daily life is so important (**Mt 5:16; 1 Pet 2:12** - "having your conversation honest...").
    - a. But it is "words" that are life (**John 6:63** - "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.").
    - b. And we will be judged by these words (**John 12:48**).
    - c. So we must not stop at a good example, hoping that they'll ask us questions. We must Go, Stand, & Speak (initiate).
  - 3. "Of this life" -The Christian life, the spiritually-resurrected life. Speak everything they need for life & godliness (**2 Pet 1:3**).
- D. We as Christians need to use our voices! Too often we're silent when we need to be vocal!
  - 1. We need to go, stand, & speak for the truth when it is attacked regarding issues like homosexuality and abortion.
  - 2. We need to go, stand, & speak the truth about salvation to the lost while we have opportunities. The early church did, and they saw results!

**CONCLUSION:** The apostles did as they were told (v. 25), obeying God rather than men (v. 29). This command to go, stand, & speak is the same for us today. It's *our* responsibility to speak the message of God. What if they don't listen? What if they oppose us (**Act 5:40-41**)?

**Jer 20:9** "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."

Jeremiah had reached the "enough" point. Because of speaking for God, he got slandered, thrown in prison, thrown in the cistern, beaten, and worst of all, ignored. Why continue if nobody's listening? I won't speak anymore!

But Jeremiah couldn't keep quiet because he knew the message was true and that his people were going to be destroyed! He loved these people who were mistreating him, and regardless of how bad their actions were, they weren't too bad not to deserve another opportunity to hear the truth!