

The Life of the Apostle Peter

Study # 33

Divine Confirmation

(Acts 5:12-16)

BEING COMMITTED

The early church was blessed by the very presence of God. Undeniable miracles were taking place. The apostles were teaching eternal, life-changing truths. But a large number of people hung back. They refused to join the fellowship, opting instead to watch from a distance. Beware of this reluctance to commit, a natural human tendency. Being part of what God is doing in this world may mean hard work, heavy responsibility, harsh criticism, and possibly even danger. Those who refuse to jump in, however, miss out on untold blessings. They miss the fulfillment they were created to enjoy and settle instead for a mediocre, mundane existence on the spiritual sidelines. When it comes to church, don't be a distant observer. Dive in! Commit! Be a part of something eternal. — *Life Application Bible Commentary*

I. The Characteristics of the Early Church (5:12B-14)

A. The Peace (12B; Ps. 133:1)

B. The Place (12C)

C. The Purity

(13A; Lk 8:10; Ro 11:7; Eph 2:3; 1Th 4:13; 1Th 5:6; 2 Tim. 2:19-21)

D. The Praise (13B)

E. The Progress (14)

1. They DEALT with sin.
2. They DEFIED the views of society.
3. They DISCOURAGED casual attendance.

II. The Confirmation of the Early Church (5:12A, 15-16)

A. The Signs (12A)

1. The Agents (Mt. 10:5-8)
2. The Activity (Acts 4:29-31)
3. The Aim

B. The Shadow (15B)

C. The Sick (15A, 16)

1. Their Coming
 - a. From the City (15A)
 - b. From the Countryside (16A)
2. Their Condition (16B)
 - a. The Sick
 - b. The Vexed
3. Their Cure

CONCLUSION:

- Where there has been the PREACHING of the Word
- Where there has been the PRAYING of the People.
- Where there has been the PROPAGATION of the gospel.
- Where there has been the PURITY of the Church.
- Where there has been a serious PURGING of sin.
- There has always been the POWER from God's Spirit!

ΑΩ

5:12 **signs** (Gk. *semeion*) From a root meaning "an indication." NT miracles were not for the primary purpose of alleviating suffering. They were divine indicators vindicating the truth of the gospel message.

5:13 **durst** (Gk., *tolmao*) The primary meaning of this word is boldness expressed in a venture. The meaning in this text is that the fear of the Lord was so great that those not willing to make a genuine commitment to Christ did not dare to assemble with the Church!

5:13 **join** (Gk., *kollao*) The root of this verb comes from the noun *kolla* which means "glue." The AV also translates it as "cleave," and "keep company." Joining a church implies sticking together with its members. The modern notion of a name on a roll without a person in the pew would have been preposterous to these early Christians. The NT concept of Church membership is expressed in verse 14, "Believers were ... added to the Lord."

5:13 **magnified** (Gk., *megaluno*) To make (or declare) great, to extol, to increase the reputation of.

5:15 **sick** (Gk., *asthenes*) The negative particle *a* is attached to the word *sthenes* which means "strength, vigor." Our word *calisthenics* comes from *sthenes* and is defined as "exercises used to develop or maintain vigor." These were so sick, or had been sick for so long, that they had lost the vigor and strength necessary for daily life.

5:15 **beds** (Gk., *kline*) A couch used for sleep, sickness, sitting or eating.

5:15 **couches** (Gk., *krabbatos*) Normally translated (11 times) in the AV as "bed" (Cf. Jn. 5:8) Only here translated "couches." The word refers to a mat or a mattress.

5:16 **vexed** (Gk., *ochleo*) From a word meaning "to mob," here it means "to harass." These were greatly troubled by the unclean spirits.