



## Sermon: Sunday, April 27, 2025

### “What God Did Through Jesus”

**SCRIPTURE: Acts 5: 27-32** <sup>27</sup> When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup> saying, “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you are determined to bring this man’s blood on us.” <sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than any human authority. <sup>30</sup> The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. <sup>31</sup> God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. <sup>32</sup> And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.”

#### Introduction: The Disciples on Trial

In today’s Bible story, Jesus’ disciples are brought in front of the Sanhedrin, which was like the top religious court for the Jewish people. This happened after Jesus had already died, and His followers were now going around teaching people about Him.

At first, Jewish people and the early Christians didn’t have major issues. But after the Romans destroyed the temple in Jerusalem around the year 70 AD, things got tense. The Jewish leaders focused more on their laws, and they expected Christians to follow them too. When Christians didn’t, they started getting persecuted. That’s the background for why the disciples were being questioned by the religious leaders.

In verse 28, the high priest says to them, **“Didn’t we tell you not to teach in Jesus’ name? But you’ve filled the whole city with this message, and now you’re blaming us for His death!”** They were upset because the disciples were basically saying, “You killed Jesus.” The religious leaders didn’t like that, especially since Jesus was executed by the Romans, not through Jewish law. So they warned the disciples to stop spreading this message.

But Peter speaks up and boldly replies: 1) We must listen to God more than to people. 2) Yes, you had Jesus killed. 3) But God raised Him from the dead and honored Him. 4) We are witnesses to all of this.

The leaders got angry and wanted to kill them, but thankfully, they just had the disciples beaten and then let them go. What stands out here is how confident the disciples were. In verse 32, they say, **“We are witnesses to all of this—and so is the Holy Spirit, given by God to those who obey Him.”**

#### Body: What It Means to Be a Witness

The word **“witness”** in the Bible is a serious one. It was a legal term back then—if someone was a witness in court, their words really mattered. In Greek, the word for witness is **martus**, which is where we get the word **martyr**. So a witness was someone who told the truth, even if it meant suffering for it.

Today, some Christians feel like this kind of faith is too extreme, like it only applied to the disciples. A lot of people want a faith that feels more comfortable or polite. But if we only treat Christianity as something “nice,” we miss out on the real purpose of following Jesus.

Peter didn’t hold back when he spoke in front of the religious leaders. He was confident because he knew what he had seen. He had experienced Jesus firsthand—His death, His resurrection, His love.



Peter said that God raised Jesus from the dead and made Him our Savior, so that we could repent (turn from our sins) and be forgiven. That's the message of salvation.

Now, let's talk about sin for a minute. The Bible teaches that sin is the root of all the hurt and problems in the world—fighting, violence, pride, selfishness. And honestly, if you look around, it's hard to argue with that. Sin is basically us putting ourselves first, thinking the world revolves around us.

People like St. Augustine called sin “**pride,**” and Thomas Aquinas called it “**self-love.**” No matter what you call it, it's the same thing, we're all a little too focused on ourselves. And we can't fix that on our own. Even when we try to be better, we fall back into selfishness.

That's why the Bible says we need something more. We need God to step in. And He did through Jesus.

The amazing thing is that even though we can't fix ourselves, God offers us forgiveness. If we believe in Jesus—who died and rose again—we are made right with God. That's called justification. That means even though we aren't perfect, God treats us as if we are. Why? Because of what Jesus did for us.

So believing in Jesus isn't just about agreeing with some ideas. It's about trusting that He really did rise from the dead, that He really is the way to God, and that He really will come again. When we accept that, we're not just forgiven for bad things we've done, we're given a new kind of life. We're no longer trapped in self-centeredness. We're set free.

But here's the thing—why do we work so hard in life? Why do we chase after success, money, houses, and recognition? Isn't it because we think those things will bring us peace?

And yet, many people have all those things and still feel empty. That's because true peace doesn't come from stuff—it comes from being forgiven, loved, and set free in Christ.

Peter was able to live boldly as a witness of Jesus because he had experienced that kind of freedom and peace. And we can too.

## **Conclusion: Be a Witness**

So how can we live like Peter, as people who truly witness to what Jesus has done?

We need to keep the resurrection of Jesus close to our hearts. Remember it every day. Let it guide how we think, how we act, and how we love others.

If we do that, little by little, the peace and freedom that come from Jesus will grow in our lives. And we'll live—not as people who just believe in Jesus—but as people who know Him, who walk with Him, and who share Him with others. Just like Peter. Just like the early disciples.

May we live as true witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. **Amen.**

