

# We Must Obey God

**Sermon in a Sentence:** We have each been commanded to be empowered by the Spirit to witnesses to the lost.

**Sermon Purpose:** That believers will commit themselves to winning the lost and then be filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Text:** Acts 5:32

## Introduction:

1. Our text records the bold proclamation of Peter and John to the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem.
  - a. Briefly tell their exciting story found in Acts 5:17-32
2. This story reveals three basic understandings of Peter and the early church concerning their God-given mission:
  - a. Their primary responsibility: witness (“...we are witnesses of these things...”).
  - b. Their central message: Christ (vv. 30-32a “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 to Israel and forgiveness of sins. We are witnesses of these things...”).
  - c. Their principle partner: the Holy Spirit (v. 32 “...and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him”).
3. These same principles apply to us today.
  - a. We have been given the same job as they were given.
  - b. Let’s apply these three powerful, missional truths to ourselves and our God-given mission:

## I. AS CHRIST’S FOLLOWERS, OUR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY IS WITNESS.

- A. We are called to be Christ’s witnesses to a lost and dying world (v. 32; ref. Lk 24:46-48).
- B. Note how Peter’s words reveal what he believes to be believers’ primary responsibility—*obedient witness*.
  1. v. 29 “We must obey God rather than men.”
  2. v. 32 “We are witnesses to these things...”
- C. Throughout Acts witness is a major theme:
  1. For example, see Ac 1:8, 22; 2:32, 40; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 6:13; 7:44, 58; 10:39, 41-43; 13:31; 14:3, 17;

15:8; 18:5; 20:21, 24, 26 ; 22:5, 15, 18, 20; 23:11 26:5, 16, 22-23.

2. These texts reveal that our primary task is obedient witness.
- D. As Christians, whatever else we feel called to do, we cannot substitute any other Christian activity for this most important of all responsibilities—*witness!*
1. Our agenda for ministry is not set by man, but by God: “We must obey God *rather than man.*”
  2. Our primary “Great Commission responsibility” is to preach Christ to the lost (ref. Mk 16:15; Lk 24:46-48).
  3. Illustration: Paul exhorted Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist” (2Tim 4:5).

## II. AS CHRIST’S WITNESSES, OUR CENTRAL MESSAGE IS THE GOSPEL.

- A. When Peter and John were commanded to no longer preach in Jesus’ name, defiantly, they immediately began to preach about Jesus (vv. 28-31).
1. They had already filled Jerusalem with teaching about Christ (v. 28)
    - a. Now they continued to boldly preach Christ.
    - b. This is because they knew that Jesus is the only way to salvation (Ac 4:12; ref. 1Tim 2:5).
  2. This is the pattern throughout Acts—disciples always preached Christ (Acts 2:22–24; 8:5; 9:20; 18:28).
  3. The Bible calls this message of Jesus the gospel (the good news)!
- B. Peter’s message reveals four central truths of the gospel:
1. Jesus died on the cross for our sins (v. 30)
  2. He was victoriously raised from the dead (v.30).
  3. He has been exalted to the right hand of God (v. 31). (Another insight: From this exalted position Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit—Acts 2:32-33.)
  4. Everyone must now repent and receive forgiveness of sins (v. 31; ref., Acts 2:38).
- C. This is the message we must preach at home and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

## III. AS PROCLAIMERS OF THE GOSPEL, OUR PRINCIPLE ALLY IS THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- A. “We are witnesses of these things, *and so is the Holy*

*Spirit* whom God has given to those who obey him.”

1. The Holy Spirit empowers us as Christ’s witnesses (Acts 1:8).
  2. This is what happened to the disciples in Acts 2.
  3. Jesus called this experience baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5).
- B. Peter’s words in v. 32 reveal three truths about this powerful work of the Spirit:
1. It is a gift from God (...the Spirit *whom God has given*)”
  2. It is given to enable us to witness (...we are witnesses ... and so is the Holy Spirit ...) (Ref. Acts 1:8; 4:31).
  3. It is given to those who will commit themselves to God’s mission. (“... whom God gives to those who obey him.”)
- C. Like Peter, and the early disciples, we too must be empowered by the Spirit to reach the lost.

### **Conclusion**

1. We have been commanded by Christ to be His witnesses.
2. We have been given the Holy Spirit to empower us as His witnesses.
3. Come now to be filled with the Spirit:
  - a. Ask in faith (Lk. 11:9, 13)
  - b. Receive by faith (Lk 11:19; Mk 11:24)
  - c. Speak in faith (Ac 2:4, 14)

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