

Sanctified Shadows

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. So maybe with this whole pandemic, we are being forced to **practice** what we **preach**, we say, “*church is not a building but the people of God. We don’t go to church we **are** the church.*” So maybe God’s saying, *prove it!* :)
1. Slide2 And so you have CM! Last Mon we found ourselves as **1 body, in 2 hours, w/just under 3 tons of love.** Yep CM, you brought 5478 lbs. of food to the Murr Comm Food Bank in 2 hours. Even in this unprecedented & unpredictable time, you pushed forward once again, showing your **generosity** (your *sacrificial sharing*). TY
 2. Slide3 And we’ll do another in May. [food drive Day in May]
- B. Slide4 New, Website Questions: We as a church recognize that many of you are not only watching these messages at home, **but also** trying to **grow spiritually w/your family and friends.** So we are providing some **discussion questions to help guide your conversations.**
1. You can make your own of course, **but** as many of you have realized **some guidance has helped with online school, so also** having some discussion questions can help with your learning from Gods word and these messages. **Have fun.**

II. Slide5 Intro: Sanctified Shadows

- A. I believe the greatest danger the Western church faces today is not so much *opposition from **without**, but **sin** from **within**.*
1. **And now** with the **sin** in the early church **dealt with** (Ananias & Saphira’s lying & hypocrisy). We start this morning (in vs.12) with the church now **unified, magnified & thus, it multiplied.** Wiersbe’s expository outlines on the NT.
 2. The early church needed a profound revelation of **the nature of sin and the holiness of God.** And so do we today!

III. Slide6a ME AND MY SHADOW (12-16)

- A. Remember their *prayer* in 4:29,30 (read). **Now** that prayer is answered.
- B. (12) **Signs & wonders** - that common marker throughout **Acts**, attesting to both **Christ's power** and **the apostles' authority** to carry the message of His kingdom.
- C. People were being *loved, saved, healed & delivered*.
- D. (13,14) **None of the rest dared join them** - this refers to people who were **intrigued** by the Christian message **or respected** the Christian community **but** were afraid to join, probably in light of the *deaths of Ananias and Sapphira*.
1. **Is this speaking to you?** This is good being **intrigued** & to **respect Christianity**...**but** it is also very **dangerous!** You must **step over the line Slide6b** (decide to become a follower) **or** else you might find yourselves **"for Christianity"** **but not in it**.
 2. So some **stood aloof**, **but on the other hand**...**read** vs.14...**great missionary success!!!**
- E. (15) **Shadow** - in Eastern thought, if there was an **evil** influence in a man, people would flee from his shadow; **yet** if they had an influence for **good**, they would try to come into his shadow. *G. Campbell Morgan*
1. In ancient times, the **shadow** was often seen as the *representation or even manifestation of the soul*.
 2. In our narrative, it does not confirm *the truth or falsity* of the people's **belief** (was it *superstition*, **or faith**, like the woman who just wanted to touch the hem of Jesus garment?). **But** we know *the belief itself* testifies to the reality of the apostles' **power** and **authority** demonstrated among them.
 3. I have a hard enough time being **sanctified** on the **inside**, let alone **my shadow** being **sanctified** for God to use, like Peter here :)
 - a) We know **healing's** are the work of **God** *not* men. **Thus**, there was really no virtue in *Peter's shadow*. *Divine power alone, through faith, brought healing*.
 4. **Slide6c** Paul said, 2 Cor.4:7 *msg* **If you only look at us, you might well miss the brightness. We carry this precious Message around in the**

unadorned clay pots of our ordinary lives. That's to prevent anyone from confusing God's incomparable power with us.

- F. **Healings.** In *the kingdom of God* (in *thy kingdom come*) **no one** will be sick.
1. **Sickness** entered the world because of **sin**. And occasionally *the kingdom of God breaks into this world* and **healing comes**, to reveal **Jesus** as *our great physician*.
- G. What a remarkable demonstration of **the power of God** to *both heal and free human beings*. Esp after the story of Ananias/Sapphira showing His power to **judge** them.

IV. Slide7 2ND WAVE (17-32)

- A. Now the opposition from **without**. The apostolic healing mission provoked the **2nd Wave** of Persecution.
1. **Angered** that 1st threat didn't work. **Appalled** they ignored the courts prohibition. **Jealous** of their power & authority.
- B. When I read vs.19 I think, *well this is God protecting His own*. But actually, adding vs.20 to it, what I see happening is that *God delivered them*, to **graciously give the nation another chance to hear the message of salvation**.
1. **Yep**, God sends them right to where they got in trouble, *Temple mount*.
 2. See, **deliverance** isn't always God's plan. He allowed **Peter** to be **delivered** but **James** to be **slain** (Acts 12), and each event worked out for **His glory**.
- C. (20) **Go and stand in the temple** - The apostles *must stand as public proof* that God's **purposes** cannot be **overturned**, and that Christ's **lordship** is the **true power** in this *spiritual struggle*.
- D. **All the words of this life** - Jesus' **resurrection** proves that He grants to believers **new life** that *cannot be overcome* by death.
- E. (21-26) The religious leaders of Jerusalem demonstrate their **inability** to **thwart the proclamation of the gospel**.

1. They also demonstrate their **inability** when the soldiers **cannot find the apostles**, adding **a note of comedy to the drama**.
 2. **Odd**, they *never even ask* about this **Houdini-esque** escape? [embarrassed?]
- F. (28) **We strictly charged you** - the leaders assert **their authority** once more, insisting the apostles should have been **loyal to them** instead of to **Jesus**.
- G. The leaders refused to pronounce **the name of Jesus** (*you teach in this name*).
1. **And you intend to bring this man's blood upon us**, reminds us of what the nation had said in Mt.27:25 **His blood be on us and on our children!**
- H.(29) **obey God rather than men** - once again Peter pits the council's motives and judgments **directly against the will of God**.
- I. (31) **Savior** - Jesus rescues **all** who **trust in Him** *from sin and its consequences*.
1. He was given this title at His birth (Luke 2:11) **Savior!**

V. Slide8a VOICE OF REASON? (33-42)

- A. He offers examples of **2 unsuccessful spiritual revolts** in past days:
1. **Theudas** (35,36) He pretended to be great, and 400 people followed him. After he was killed, his followers scattered.
 2. **Judas of Galilee** (37) Remember in Lk.2 when the **census** was taken, you had to **register** in your birth city & Joseph & Mary went to Bethlehem? Well, at another **census** in 6ad is when *this Judas of Galilee* led a revolt against this **registration & taxation**. He was killed, and his followers also scattered (**yet** developed into the **Zealot party** which became a major provocation leading to **the destruction of Jerusalem**).
- B. **Slide8b** The advice **Gamaliel** gave to the council, *stay neutral and find out whether God was in this movement or not*, may have saved the apostles here, **but what** appeared to be wise counsel, *actually was NOT*.
1. **Slide9** No one can be **neutral** about **Christ**. **To delay making a decision is to court disaster**. Wiersbe

2. **Gamaliel** was the great Jewish rabbi who taught the Apostle Paul (Acts 22:3). **But** his **pupil** made a better decision than he did.

C. **Slide10a** The apostles were **beaten, charged and released**. Last time they only got a warning, **but** this time, they had **violated** what the court had told them to do).

1. **But** they went away in **joy, not defeat!**

2. **Slide10b** They counted it a privilege to suffer for Christ. Paul said, Phil. 1:29 *For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him.*

D. What an unpopular cause, this cause of Christ. It costs you **everything**. *You might find yourself **jailed**. Experience **loss of all your goods**. Maybe even **die**.* They knew at any time they could just deny their faith, **but** they steadfastly refused to.

1. **Slide11a Adoniram Judson**, the renowned missionary to **Burma**, endured untold hardships trying to reach the lost for Christ. For 7 heartbreaking years he **suffered hunger and privation**. During this time he was thrown into **Ava Prison**, and for 17 months was subjected to almost incredible mistreatment. As a result, for the rest of his life he carried the ugly marks made by the chains and iron shackles which had cruelly bound him.

Undaunted, upon his release *he asked for permission to enter another province where he might resume preaching the Gospel*. The godless **Slide11b** ruler indignantly **denied** his request, saying *"My people are not fools enough to listen to anything a missionary might **SAY**, but I fear they might be impressed by your **SCARS** and turn to your religion."*

2. Adoniram understood, like the apostles, *those who share in cross-bearing will share in crown-wearing.*

E. End w/a few thoughts from **Max Lucado**. *Anvil* Research. And my own thoughts...

F. **Slide12a** Have you been introduced to **God's Anvil**? An anvil is *"a surface onto which another object is **struck or worked**". Have you been **on His anvil** lately? *Pound, pound, pound. Tink, tink, tink.**

1. **None of us enjoy *anvil time***. **Yet**, it is **not** to be **avoided** **but** **experienced**.

2. It reminds us *who we are* and *who God is*. *To escape it is to escape God.*
3. God has only **1 anvil**, but uses many hammers.
4. You might experience *the pounding, the striking, the blows* at age 20, so you can remain steel that is *hardened & tempered* at age 50.
5. **Slide12b** Be thankful when God places you on His anvil...*It means He thinks you're still worth reshaping.*