



From Belief to Conviction

September 5, 2026

Acts 5:12-42

Introduction:

Belief is the acceptance that a statement is true or that something exists.

Conviction is to be thoroughly convinced.....

Apostles Arrested/Freed - Acts 5:17-21

17But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy 18they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. 19But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 20“Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.” 21And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.

- The religious ruling council is upset and jealous of the response of the crowds towards the miracles and teachings of the Apostles’.
- An angel of the Lord intervenes, freeing them from prison to continue teaching in Jesus name.

Brought Before the Council (v27-32)

27And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, 28saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” 29But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. 30The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. 31God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

- The high priest questions the Apostles, reminding that they were charged to not preach or teach in Jesus’ name.
- The Apostles’ response is boldness resulting from a deep conviction of who God is and His mission and purpose for them. **Praise God for His Holy Spirit!**
- Peter proclaims the gospel with simplicity and clarity.



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Council Responds (v33-37)

33When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. 34But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. 35And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men.38So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; 39but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!”

- The ruling council responds not with any further questioning, curiosity or openness but with seething anger that wants to kill. (Mt 5:21-26)
- Gamaliel’s, the teacher of Paul, response demonstrates some wisdom **but lacks conviction. He’s a fencesitter, and doesn’t want to choose sides.**

Rejoicing.... to be counted worthy (v39-42)

So they took his advice, 40and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. 42And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

- The apostles are beaten - not a slap on the wrist but likely a severe lashing on the back. Yet, it’s treated almost as an afterthought.
- Their own suffering wasn’t the focus - Jesus was. They were convinced of who Jesus was, of the mission he gave them and the reality that he was with them.

From belief to Conviction

How do you understand the difference between belief and conviction? Is there a difference?

How do we move from belief to conviction?

- The Holy Spirit’s role/Scripture
- When lived out in our lives....
- Through adversity and testing...

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