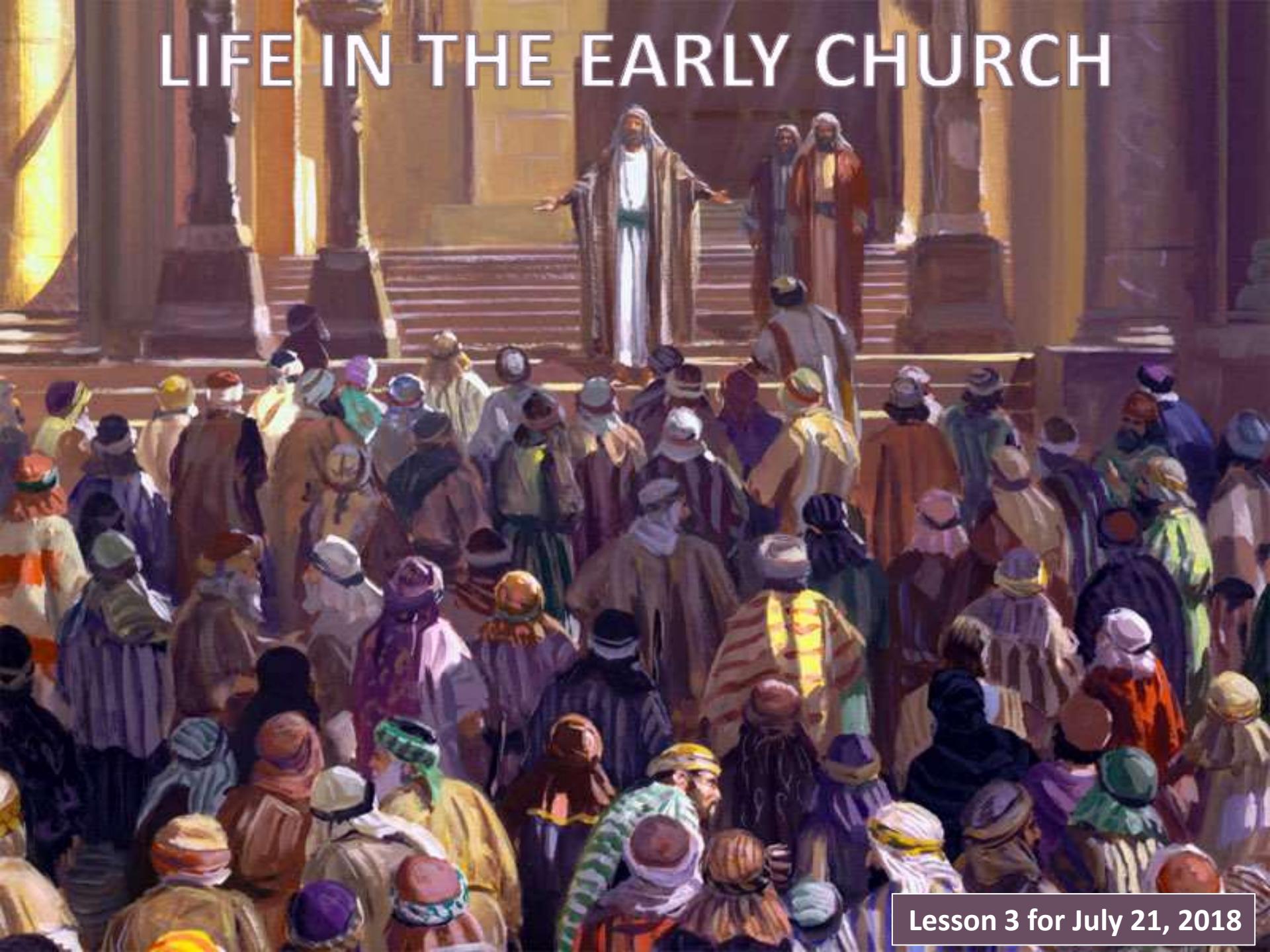


LIFE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

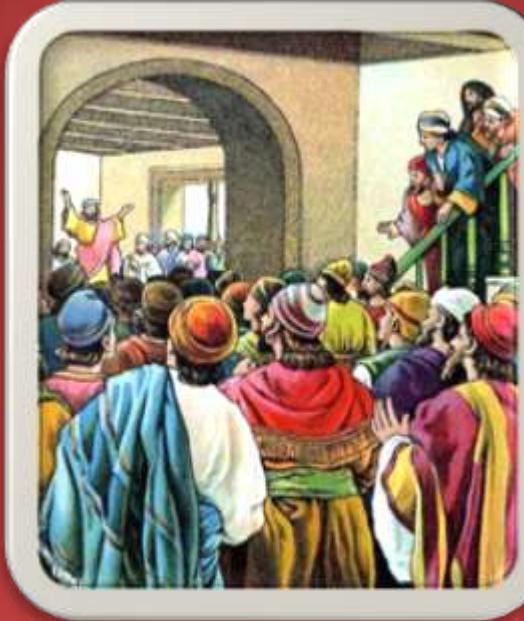
A painting depicting Jesus standing on a raised platform or pulpit, addressing a large crowd of people in a temple setting. He is dressed in a white robe and has his arms outstretched. The crowd consists of many people in traditional Jewish clothing, including tallitot and turbans. The setting is a large, ornate building with columns and steps.

Lesson 3 for July 21, 2018

The Church was driven by the Holy Spirit and began to fulfill the mission Jesus had commissioned.

Christians were preaching the Gospel and performing miracles, and as a result the Church was growing, especially among the Jews.

The Church faced opposition and overcame it. It also had to solve internal problems.



1. Life in the Church
⛪ Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37.
2. The Church teaches the Gospel
⛪ Acts 3.
3. The Church faces opposition
⛪ Acts 4:1-31.
4. Sins within the Church
⛪ Acts 5:1-11.
5. Defending the Church
⛪ Acts 5:12-42.

LIFE IN THE CHURCH

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers... Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common." (Acts 2:42, 44)

The Church activities took place in public (in the temple) and in private homes.



Doctrine. The apostles frequently taught in the temple (Acts 6:2-4). They gathered with all their Jewish brothers.



Fellowship. They were constantly together in private homes. This was a distinctive feature.



The breaking of the bread. They celebrated the Lord's Supper in homes.



Prayer. They prayed both in the temple and in homes (Acts 3:1)



Material unity. They shared their material resources.

THE CHURCH TEACHES THE GOSPEL

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19)

The Jews used to go to the temple to pray at 3 PM. That's when the afternoon sacrifice took place.

Peter and John healed a lame man at the entrance of the temple and went into the temple with him. The lame man caught everyone's attention, and Peter used the opportunity to preach and to call the people to salvation.

This sermon follows the characteristic points of the early Church preaching.



THE CHURCH TEACHES THE GOSPEL



**Jesus is the suffering Messiah
(v. 18)**



**God raised Him from the dead
(v. 15)**



**He was glorified in Heaven
(v. 13)**



He will come again (v. 20)



**Our sins are forgiven when we
repent (v. 19)**

**Times have changed, but the message
remains the same.**

**Jesus died for our sins. He was
resurrected from the dead and will
come again. When we repent, He
forgives our sins and give us eternal life.**

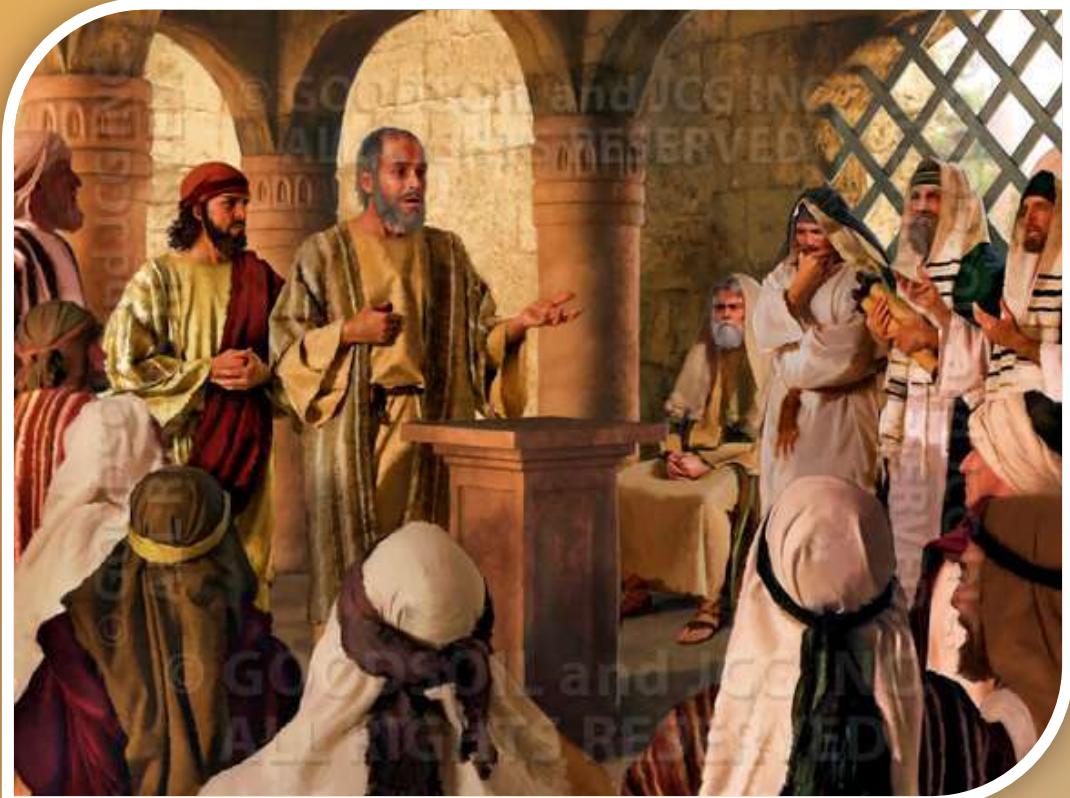


THE CHURCH FACES OPPPOSITION

"So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done." (Acts 4:21)

The Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection, so they urged the priests to stop Peter and John.

The Sanhedrin asked them about the healing of the lame man, and Peter used the opportunity to preach about Jesus Christ again. He proclaimed that Jesus is the only way to salvation (v. 12)



They couldn't contradict Peter or the miracle, so they threatened the apostles.

The apostles replied: "we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (v. 20)

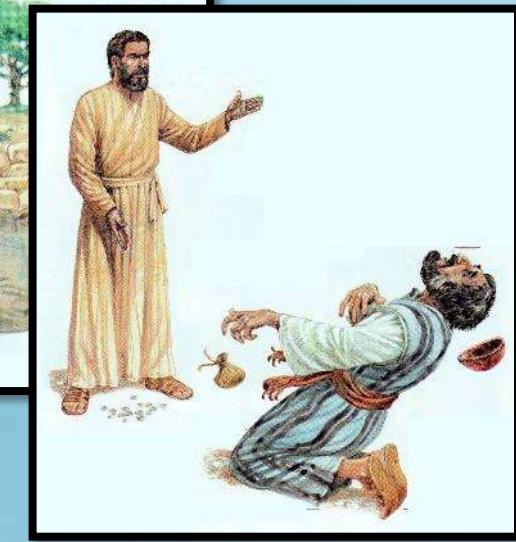
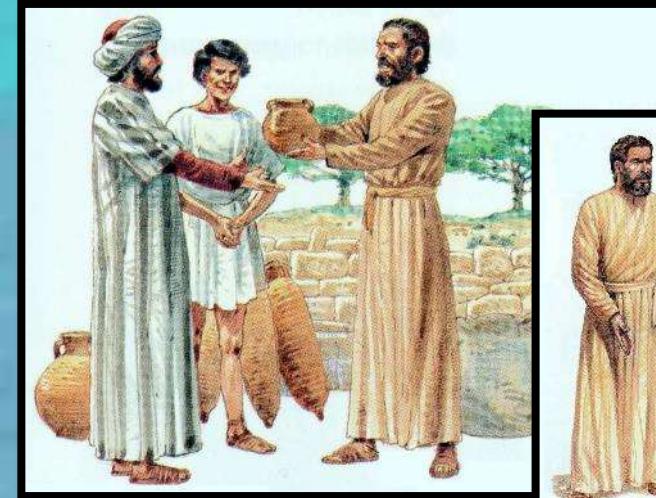


SINS WITHIN THE CHURCH

"Peter said to her, 'How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.'" (Acts 5:9 NIV)

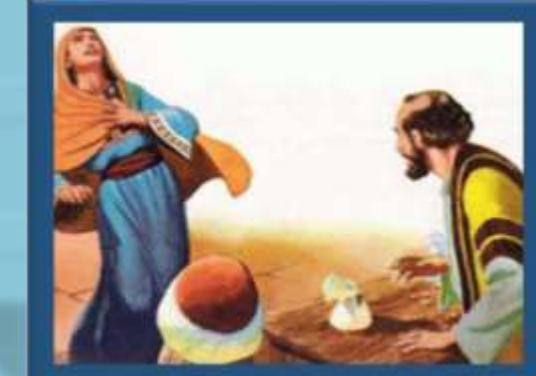
Barnabas sold a field he owned and brought the money to the Church. That act had an impact on the apostles.

Other people like Ananias and Sapphira wanted to be praised by the Church. Their hearts were not as pure and sincere as Barnabas'.



They lied about the money they gave. That lie could discredit the cause of God and pervert charity into a tool to gain ecclesiastical benefits.

God decided to categorically stop this cancer.



DEFENDING THE CHURCH

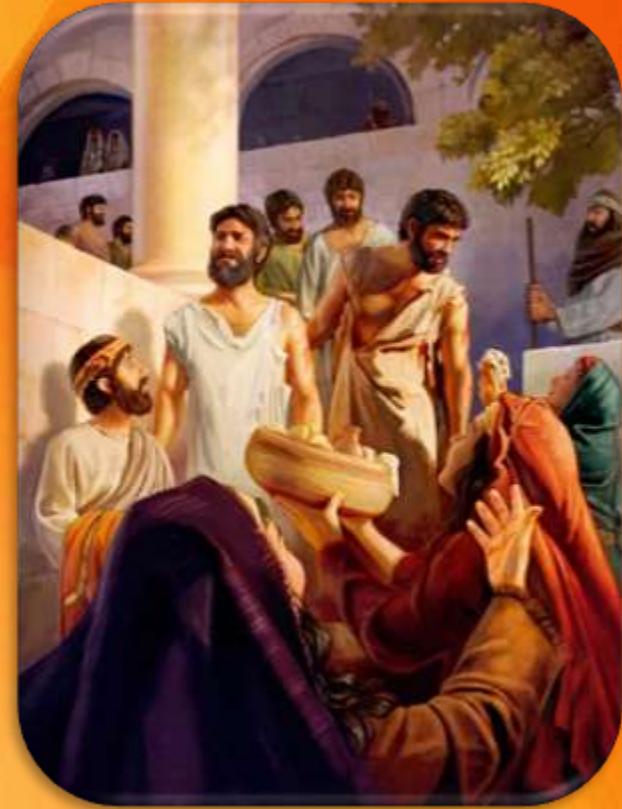
"And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found to fight against God." (Acts 5:38-39)

The preaching and miracles of the apostles moved many people to accept Jesus. This angered the Jewish leaders.



They arrested them, but the apostles miraculously escaped. They arrested them again and interrogated them. They didn't understand how an uncultured man like Peter could speak as he did.

The Holy Spirit touched Gamaliel's heart, and he accepted the supernatural things that were happening. He defended the apostles and they were set free.



“Many will have to stand in the legislative courts; some will have to stand before kings and before the learned of the earth to answer for their faith. Those who have only a superficial understanding of truth will not be able clearly to expound the Scriptures and give definite reasons for their faith. They will become confused and will not be workmen that need not to be ashamed. Let no one imagine that he has no need to study because he is not to preach in the sacred desk. You know not what God may require of you.”