

THEY CAN'T STOP  
WHAT GOD STARTED!  
ACTS 5:28-29; 38-42

WHAT GOD HAS FOR ME IS FOR ME!

DR. DARRYL T. CANADY

RODMAN STREET CHURCH | 6.14.26

# **THEY CAN'T STOP WHAT GOD STARTED!**

**ACTS 5:28-29, 38-42**

**DR. DARRYL T. CANADY**

**6.14.26**

Title: They Can't Stop What God Started

Sermon Summary: This powerful message takes us into the heart of Acts chapter 5, where we encounter Peter and the apostles standing before the Sanhedrin, facing threats, beatings, and the very real possibility of death. Yet their response rings through the centuries: 'We must obey God rather than men.' What unfolds is a masterclass in understanding divine purpose versus human opposition. This sermon emphasizes that when God initiates something in our lives, no opposition, criticism, or challenge can prevent its fulfillment.

We see this illustrated through four profound movements: the obedience of the disciples, the opposition they faced, God's sovereign override through an unlikely voice named Gamaliel, and finally, their overcoming spirit that led them to rejoice even after being beaten. The message challenges us to recognize that opposition is often not a sign we're doing something wrong, but confirmation we're doing something right. When we step into obedience, we threaten the kingdom of darkness, and resistance becomes inevitable. Yet here's the liberating truth: God has a way of working in rooms we've never entered, speaking to people we've never met, and arranging outcomes beyond our control. The disciples left that council chamber beaten but not broken, threatened but not silenced, and they continued 'day after day' proclaiming the good news. This persistence in the face of adversity becomes our template for faithfulness.

The sermon celebrates 141 years of Rodman Church's history as evidence that God's work cannot be stopped by human interference. It teaches that opposition is often confirmation of divine purpose, that God can use unexpected people to accomplish His will, and that victory isn't the absence of struggle but continuing despite it. The central theological truth is that God's sovereignty overrides all human plans, and those who remain obedient to His calling will ultimately overcome through His power.

## **Chapters**

### **Chapter 1: The Power of Obedience Over Opposition**

We learn that when God starts something in our lives, opposition will come, but our obedience to God must take priority over pleasing people.

### **Chapter 2: Opposition as Proof of Progress**

We discover that opposition is often confirmation that we are advancing God's Kingdom and making a real difference, not a sign of failure.

### **Chapter 3: God's Divine Override**

We see how God works behind the scenes through unexpected people and circumstances to override the enemy's plans and protect His purposes.

### **Chapter 4: Overcoming Through Continued Faithfulness**

We learn that victory is not the absence of struggle but continuing faithfully despite it, day after day, empowered by God's presence.

## **Key Points:**

- Obedience to God must come before obedience to human authority
- Opposition often indicates you're moving in the right direction and threatening darkness

- When God starts something, He provides divine override of enemy plans
- God can use unexpected people, even those who oppose you, to accomplish His purposes
- Victory is not the absence of struggle but continuing faithfully despite challenges
- Day-after-day faithfulness is required, not just one-time commitment
- Breaking cycles requires sustained obedience, not just momentary deliverance
- The enemy attacks what is effective and advancing, not what is stagnant
- God works behind the scenes in rooms you've never entered
- Overcoming is about internal transformation, not external circumstances

### **Scripture Reference:**

- Acts 5:28-29, 38-42 (primary passage)
- Isaiah 54:17 ("No weapon formed against you shall prosper")
- Romans 8:37 ("We are more than conquerors")

### **Stories:**

- The Morehouse College football game story where students chanted "nothing can stop the House" despite sleet, snow, and hail
- Personal testimony about LIFE Male STEAM Academy's charter renewal vote (5-4 victory) and school board members who later visited and regretted voting against it

- The New York Knicks' 29-point comeback in Game 4, illustrating that being down doesn't mean being defeated
- Peter's transformation from denying Christ three times to boldly proclaiming "we must obey God rather than men"
- Personal story about the Pastor's Son, Major, providing scholarships for students as result of seeing his parents helping others.
- Account of a man giving the pastor money for dinner after being prompted by God
- Biblical references to Noah building the ark before rain, Abraham leaving home before knowing his destination, Moses stretching his rod before the sea opened, and Joshua marching around Jericho

## **Scripture References from the Sermon**

### **Explicitly Referenced Scripture**

1. **Acts 5:28-29** - Main text: "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name... We must obey God rather than men"
2. **Acts 5:38** - "Leave these men alone. Let them go for their purpose or activities of human origin it will fail"
3. **Acts 5:33** - "When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death"
4. **Acts 5:34** - Reference to Gamaliel standing up in the Sanhedrin
5. **Acts 5:39** - "But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men"
6. **Acts 5:40** - The apostles were flogged and ordered not to speak in Jesus' name

7. **Acts 5:41** - The apostles left rejoicing, counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the name

8. **Isaiah 54:17** - "No weapon formed against you shall prosper"

### **Alluded to or Referenced Scripture**

9. **Genesis 6-9** - Noah building the ark (referenced when discussing obedience before understanding)

10. **Exodus 7-14** - Moses and Pharaoh's resistance

11. **Exodus 14:21** - Moses stretching out his rod before the sea opened

12. **1 Samuel 16-31** - David rising to throne and Saul's jealousy

13. **Nehemiah 2-6** - Nehemiah rebuilding the wall, Sanballat and Tobias opposing

14. **Joshua 6** - Marching around Jericho for six days before walls fell on the seventh

15. **Genesis 12** - Abraham leaving his home country before knowing where he was going

16. **John 3:19** - "Men love darkness rather than light"

17. **Romans 8:37** - "We are more than conquerors through him"

18. **Psalms 121** (implied) - "If it had not been for the Lord on my side, where would I be?"

19. **Romans 8:31** - "If God be for you, who can be against you?"

20. **John 10:28-29** - "Nobody can snatch you out of God's hand"

## **Hymns and Songs Referenced (with Biblical Themes)**

21. **Psalm 84:11 / Philippians 4:19** - Theme of God's provision ("Great is Thy Faithfulness")
22. **Matthew 10:29-31** - "His Eye is on the Sparrow"
23. **Hebrews 13:5** - "Never to leave me nor to forsake me"
24. **Philippians 2:9-11** - "There's power in the name of Jesus"

## **Suggested Related Verses for Main Themes**

### **Theme: Obedience Over Human Authority**

- **Daniel 3:16-18** - Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refusing to bow
- **Daniel 6:10** - Daniel continuing to pray despite the decree

### **Theme: Opposition as Confirmation**

- **2 Timothy 3:12** - "All who desire to live godly will suffer persecution"
- **Matthew 5:10-12** - Blessed are those persecuted for righteousness

### **Theme: God's Override**

- **Proverbs 19:21** - "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails"
- **Proverbs 21:30** - "There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord"

### **Theme: Day After Day Faithfulness**

- **Lamentations 3:22-23** - "His mercies are new every morning"
- **Luke 9:23** - "Take up your cross daily and follow me"

## **Theme: God Fighting Battles**

- **2 Chronicles 20:15** - "The battle is not yours, but God's"
- **Exodus 14:14** - "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still"

### **QUOTES:**

Whenever God starts something, somebody always tries to stop it. Opposition is often the announcement to the world that God is up to something.

The devil rarely fights what isn't a threat. If Satan is not hitting you, you must have on the same color uniform that he has.

When God breaks a cycle in your life, your obedience begins to look different. You pray differently, you walk differently, you think differently, you respond differently.

Sometimes opposition is not a sign that you are doing something wrong. Sometimes opposition is a sign that you are doing something right.

Just because you are down doesn't mean that you are defeated. Just because you were behind don't mean that you lost. Just because people counted you out doesn't mean that God has counted you out.

Never assume that because you are not speaking that God isn't speaking. Never assume that because you are not moving that God is not moving.

God is so sovereign that He can use people who don't even realize that they are being used. God can bless you through people who want the worst for you.

Victory is not the absence of your struggle. Victory is continuing despite the struggle. Overcoming is not what happens around you, overcoming is what happens inside of you.

# **THEY CAN'T STOP WHAT GOD STARTED!**

**ACTS 5:28-29, 38-42**

**DR. DARRYL T. CANADY**

**6.14.26**

**5-Day Bible Reading Plan: They Can't Stop What God Started**

**Day 1: The Power of Obedience Over Fear**

**Reading:** Acts 5:27-32

**Devotional:** Peter's declaration, "We must obey God rather than men," represents a watershed moment in spiritual courage. When God settles something in your spirit, you no longer need human approval. The disciples stood before the very authorities who could imprison or kill them, yet their conviction outweighed their fear. True obedience often costs us something—reputation, comfort, relationships—but it proves that God has broken the cycles that once bound us. Like Peter, who once denied Christ but now boldly proclaimed Him, transformation makes obedience stronger than fear. Today, ask yourself: What is God calling me to obey that requires courage? Remember, obedience is not an elective course in the Kingdom—it's required. When God says do it, just do it, trusting that understanding will follow.

**Day 2: Opposition as Confirmation**

**Reading:** Acts 5:33-40; 2 Timothy 3:12

**Devotional:** Opposition is rarely a sign you're doing something wrong—often it confirms you're doing something right. The disciples filled Jerusalem with their teaching, and the religious leaders became furious. Why? Because effectiveness attracts opposition. The devil doesn't waste

ammunition on what isn't moving or making impact. When you face resistance, criticism, or attack, consider this: darkness only gets uncomfortable when light shines. Your obedience may expose someone else's disobedience; your faith may highlight another's fear. During the 141 years of Rodman, every generation faces opposition, yet God's work continues. The enemy thought the attack would stop you, but if you're still standing, still praying, still believing, it's because what God starts, hell cannot stop. Today, reframe your opposition—it's proof you're threatening darkness and advancing God's Kingdom.

### **Day 3: God's Override in Unexpected Places**

**Reading:** Acts 5:34-39; Isaiah 54:17

**Devotional:** Just when the disciples faced certain death, God raised up Gamaliel—a Pharisee, a member of the opposing group—to speak wisdom that saved their lives. God has a voice in every room, even where you have no influence. Never assume that because you're not speaking, God isn't speaking. He works behind scenes you never enter, uses people you'd never expect, and opens doors you've never touched. Gamaliel's profound insight remains true: if something is of human origin, it will fail; if it's from God, you cannot stop it without fighting God Himself. Your future is never truly in someone else's hands—it's always in God's hands. The doctor doesn't have the final word. The employer doesn't have the final word. The opposition doesn't have the final word. God has veto power over every weapon formed against you. Today, pray: "Lord, send help from unexpected sources."

### **Day 4: Victory in the Middle of Battle**

**Reading:** Acts 5:40-42; 2 Corinthians 4:8-9

**Devotional:** The disciples were flogged, threatened, and ordered to stop preaching—yet they left rejoicing. God's override didn't remove their

suffering; it empowered them through it. This teaches a crucial truth: victory is not the absence of struggle but continuing despite the struggle. Overcoming isn't what happens around you; it's what happens inside you. They walked in as prisoners and walked out as conquerors. Nothing changed externally, but everything changed internally. You can beat God's people, but you cannot stop God's purpose. The enemy's entire strategy—arrest, threats, beatings, intimidation—failed because when God starts something in you, the devil cannot stop it. You may be down, but you're not defeated. The scoreboard may say you're behind, but God specializes in fourth-quarter miracles. As long as there's time on your clock, it's not over. Today, choose to rejoice not because your battle is finished, but because God is working.

### **Day 5: Day After Day Faithfulness**

**Reading:** Acts 5:42; Lamentations 3:22-23

**Devotional:** "Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ." Not one day. Not when they felt good. Not just on Sunday. Day after day—when discouraged, when opposed, when tired, when people listened and when they refused. This is the rhythm of overcoming: faithful consistency regardless of circumstances. Great is His faithfulness; morning by morning, new mercies we see. God was there yesterday, God is here today, and God will be here tomorrow. His eye is on the sparrow, and He watches over you. Through it all, you've learned to trust in Jesus. Hold on to God's unchanging hand. There is power in the name of Jesus—power to heal, power to make a way, power to sustain you day after day. What God has for you is for you. They can't stop what God started. Today, commit to day-after-day faithfulness, knowing that your obedience, empowered by God's presence, will outlast every opposition.

# **THEY CAN'T STOP WHAT GOD STARTED!**

**ACTS 5:28-29, 38-42**

**DR. DARRYL T. CANADY**

**6.14.26**

**Small Group Guide: "They Can't Stop What God Started"**

**Based on Acts 5:28-29, 38-42**

---

## **Opening Prayer**

Begin your time together by asking God to open hearts and minds to receive His Word and apply it to your lives.

---

## **Ice Breaker (5-10 minutes)**

Share a time when you faced opposition or resistance while trying to do the right thing. How did you respond?

---

## **Key Takeaways from the Sermon**

1. **Obedience precedes understanding** - We must obey God even when we don't fully understand His plan
2. **Opposition often signals God is moving** - The devil doesn't fight what isn't advancing
3. **God overrides human authority** - When God starts something, He has the final word

4. **Victory is continuing despite struggle** - Overcoming isn't the absence of struggle but perseverance through it
- 

### **Scripture Reading**

Have someone read Acts 5:28-29, 38-42 aloud. Then read it again from a different translation.

---

### **Discussion Questions**

#### **Section 1: The Obedience of the Disciples (15-20 minutes)**

1. **Peter declared, "We must obey God rather than men."** When have you had to choose between obeying God and pleasing people? What was the outcome?
  2. **The sermon stated: "Obedience often comes before understanding."** What area of your life is God calling you to obey Him without fully understanding why?
  3. **The disciples obeyed despite threats and danger.** What costs have you experienced (or might you experience) for obeying God? What makes obedience difficult for you?
  4. **Reflection:** How is your obedience different now compared to earlier in your faith journey? What has transformed?
- 

#### **Section 2: The Opposition Against the Disciples (15-20 minutes)**

5. **The sermon said: "Opposition is often proof you're moving in the right direction."** How does this perspective change the way you view current challenges in your life?

6. **"The devil doesn't fight people who are standing still."** What opposition are you currently facing? Could this be a sign that God is doing something significant through you?
  7. **The council was angry because the disciples were effective.** Have you ever experienced criticism or resistance because you were making an impact for God? How did you respond?
  8. **Discussion:** Why do we often interpret resistance as God's rejection rather than confirmation we're on the right path?
- 

### **Section 3: The Override of God (15-20 minutes)**

9. **God used Gamaliel, a Pharisee, to defend the disciples.** When has God sent help from an unexpected source in your life?
  10. **"Your future is never really in somebody else's hands. It's always in God's hands."** What situation do you need to surrender to God's hands today?
  11. **Gamaliel said: "If it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men."** How does this truth give you confidence about what God has started in your life?
  12. **The sermon mentioned: "God is working in rooms you've never entered."** How does this encourage you regarding situations where you feel powerless?
- 

### **Section 4: The Overcoming of the Disciples (15-20 minutes)**

13. **Despite being beaten, the disciples left "rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name."** How can we develop this kind of perspective on suffering?

14. **"Day after day... they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news."** What does consistency in your faith look like, especially on difficult days?
  15. **"Victory is not the absence of struggle. Victory is continuing despite the struggle."** What struggle do you need to continue through rather than waiting for it to disappear?
  16. **The enemy tried to silence them, but they kept preaching.** What is trying to silence your witness or testimony? How will you respond?
- 

### **Personal Reflection (10 minutes)**

Take a few minutes of silence for each person to consider:

- What is God starting in my life right now?
  - What opposition am I facing that might actually be confirmation I'm on the right path?
  - Where do I need to obey God rather than seeking human approval?
  - How can I develop "day after day" consistency in my faith?
- 

### **Practical Applications**

#### **This Week's Challenge**

Choose one of the following to put into practice:

**Option 1: Obedience Over Understanding** Identify one area where God is calling you to obey Him without fully understanding. Take one concrete step of obedience this week.

**Option 2: Reframe Opposition** When you face resistance or criticism this week, pause and ask: "Could this be confirmation that God is doing something through me?" Journal your observations.

**Option 3: Day After Day Consistency** Choose one spiritual discipline (prayer, Bible reading, witnessing, serving) and commit to doing it "day after day" this week, regardless of how you feel.

**Option 4: Declare God's Sovereignty** When faced with a situation that seems out of your control, speak this truth aloud: "My future is in God's hands, not human hands. They can't stop what God started."

---

### **Group Prayer Time (10-15 minutes)**

#### **Prayer Focus Areas:**

1. **Obedience** - Pray for courage to obey God rather than men, especially in difficult situations
2. **Opposition** - Pray for those facing resistance, criticism, or attacks because of their faith or God's calling
3. **God's Override** - Thank God for His sovereignty and ask Him to work in "rooms you've never entered" on behalf of group members
4. **Perseverance** - Pray for "day after day" consistency and the strength to continue despite struggles

#### **Prayer Requests:**

- Share specific areas where group members need to see God's override
- Pray for situations where obedience is costly
- Lift up any current opposition members are facing

---

## Closing Reflection

**Quote to Remember:** "When God starts something, hell doesn't have enough demons to stop it. The government doesn't have enough power. Critics don't have enough words. And opposition does not have enough strength to stop what God has ordained."

**Memory Verse:** "Peter and the other apostles replied: 'We must obey God rather than human beings!'" - Acts 5:29 (NIV)

---

## Before Next Week

- Memorize Acts 5:29
  - Complete your chosen practical application
  - Journal about one way you saw God override opposition this week
  - Be ready to share testimonies of God's faithfulness
- 

## Leader Notes

- **Timing:** This guide is designed for a 90-minute session but can be adapted
- **Flexibility:** Choose questions most relevant to your group; you don't need to cover all of them
- **Sensitivity:** Some members may be facing real persecution or serious opposition. Create a safe space for honest sharing
- **Follow-up:** Check in with group members during the week about their practical applications

- **Resources:** Consider having journals or notecards available for personal reflection time
- 

**Remember:** The goal isn't to get through all the questions but to facilitate meaningful conversation and life application. Let the Holy Spirit guide your discussion!

### **ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Peter transformed from denying Christ three times to boldly declaring 'we must obey God rather than men.' What cycles in your own life has God broken that have allowed you to stand boldly for Him where you once would have retreated?
2. The sermon suggests that opposition is often proof you are moving in the right direction and threatening the kingdom of darkness. How can you discern whether resistance in your life is spiritual opposition or a sign that you need to change course?
3. Gamaliel advised the council that if the disciples' work was from God, fighting it would mean fighting against God Himself. When have you witnessed God working through unexpected people or sources to accomplish His purposes?
4. The disciples were beaten and threatened yet left rejoicing because they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's name. What does it mean in your own life to consider suffering for the gospel as an honor rather than a setback?
5. The sermon emphasizes that obedience often comes before understanding, citing examples like Noah building the ark before it rained. What step of obedience is God calling you to take right now, even without full understanding of the outcome?

6. The text states that the disciples continued 'day after day' in the temple courts and from house to house, regardless of circumstances. How does consistency in your spiritual life during difficult seasons demonstrate that God has truly started something in you?
7. The pastor mentions that sometimes your obedience exposes someone else's disobedience, which can trigger opposition. How should we respond when our faithfulness makes others uncomfortable or defensive?
8. God's override of the enemy's plan did not remove all suffering for the disciples, but it empowered them through it. How does this truth reshape your expectations of what victory and deliverance look like in your own battles?
9. The sermon declares that God treats us on a 'need to know basis' and requires obedience before explanation. How comfortable are you with following God's direction without having all the details, and what helps you trust Him in those moments?
10. The Knicks' 29-point comeback is used to illustrate that being down does not mean being defeated. What situation in your life currently looks like a losing scoreboard, and how does this message encourage you that God still has time on the clock?

**FAITH  
OVER  
FEAR**