

# Acts 5:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

## Analysis

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The second arrest - 'laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison' - escalated beyond the first (Acts 4:3). Plural 'apostles' suggests multiple arrests, not just Peter and John. 'Common prison' (Greek 'tērēsis dēmosia,' public holding) was likely more harsh than previous 'hold,' signaling increased severity. This pattern - escalating persecution meeting steadfast witness - characterizes church history. The authorities' inability to stop gospel despite imprisonment demonstrates Word's power transcending human restriction.

## Historical Context

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Roman-era prisons were primarily holding facilities before trial, not punishment sites. Conditions were harsh - dark, unsanitary, sometimes below ground. The public prison's use made apostolic arrest widely known, increasing confrontation's stakes. Jewish authorities lacked execution power (requiring Roman approval) but wielded arrest authority.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does escalating persecution test and refine genuine faith?
2. What does imprisonment's failure to stop gospel teach about God's sovereignty?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ ἐπέβαλον τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀποστόλους  
And laid hands on the apostles

καὶ ἔθεντο αὐτοὺς ἐν τηρόσει δημοσίᾳ  
And put them in prison the common

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 4:3** (Parallel theme): And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

**2 Corinthians 11:23** (Parallel theme): Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

**Luke 21:12** (Parallel theme): But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.