



Ever Widening Circles | Acts 5-8 | April 8, 2018

Warm Up: Through spiritual, physical, emotional, and governmental opposition, the Enemy would love to thwart the work of Jesus in this world. Describe a time when you experienced opposition because of your faith. How were you shaped through this trial?

- ❖ In **Acts 5-8**, we witness the expansion of the church. Acts 5:14 says, **“Yet more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord - crowds of both men and women.”** And Acts 6:7 reports, **“So God’s message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased...”**
 - What factors contributed to this dynamic growth?

- ❖ One of the factors that led to the church’s dramatic expansion was their uncompromising faith. Pastor George shared four areas they displayed this faith:
 1. **They were uncompromising in their allegiance to God.** Read **Acts 5:27-32.**
 - A. What does *allegiance* mean to you?
 - B. What are some things in our culture that compete for our allegiance?
 - C. Why do you find it challenging to be allegiant to Christ above all things?
 2. **They were unfazed by hardship and persecution.** Read **Acts 5:40-41.**
 - A. What was their reaction to the persecution they experienced? Why do you think their reaction was one of joy and not discouragement?
 - B. As modern day Christians, what sort of persecution or hardships do we experience?
 3. **They were unafraid of death itself.** Read **Acts 7:54-60.**
 - A. If Jesus were to return today, or you were to die today, would you be willing to leave your life on earth behind?
 - B. What about “death” is so intimidating to us? Why should we not be intimidated by death?
 4. **They were unbiased in outreach and discipleship.** Read **Acts 8:9-13.**
 - A. What can contribute to our bias in outreach and discipleship?
 - B. Are there people outside your comfort zone that God has put on your heart to reach out to?

WRAP UP: When we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, hard times will inevitably strengthen our faith. Share one, or more, ways you will choose to be more disciplined this week in order to produce a stronger faith in Jesus (even if it’s hard!)