

This Mission Brings Persecution and Suffering

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[0:00] Father, we thank you that you've shown mercy to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. All our sins are forgiven.

The debt has been paid. We're reckoned, credited, we're seen as righteous in your sight. So you can have a people who are holy and blameless, who reflect your righteous character to the world. Proclaiming this good news that they can have forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ alone. And that you can show that you are a merciful and loving God.

Who is slow to anger. Who is abounding in steadfast love. Thank you for your transforming grace. And we pray.

We lift up our petitions to you. We thank you for Travis and Karen. May they show themselves to be submissive to those in authority over them.

[1:13] Knowing that you have called them to suffer just as the Lord Jesus suffered. Entrusting himself to you is what he did. May they entrust themselves to you. Encourage them.

Encourage them. Encourage them that Jesus bore their sins. So they would die to sin and live to righteousness. They've returned.

By the power of your spirit. They've returned to you, Jesus. As shepherd and guardian of their souls. Shepherd them. Guard them. Guard their marriage.

That may honor Christ. That it may reflect the relationship that Jesus has with his church. We pray for their three.

Well. A man. One becoming a man. And a young boy soon to become a man. They would be men of the word and of prayer. Committed to your truth.

[2:20] Ready to suffer the cost of the gospel. We specifically pray for Tyler. Give him direction. Give him guidance. May his trust in you be strong.

This time we pray for Beaver Creek Baptist Church. And Rimrock. As you protect them from false teachers. Or those that could or would. Try to bring turmoil to your church.

And they stay true to the faith. And they stay true to the truth. Without compromise. To remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word. We pray for the elders. At Beaver Creek Baptist. They need your wisdom. To shepherd with grace.

And love. Mercy and compassion. And compassion. To be men of integrity and holiness. And we pray specifically for Ken.

[3:27] For Ken Miller. Thank you for him. Give him grace. As he. He's doing a series on the gifts. May he be gracious. May he have wisdom.

May he preach without compromise. Your word. Verse by verse. Book by book. For the glory of Jesus Christ. God we want a heart for the world.

And you've given that to us. We have a heart for the people of Tanzania. We thank you for them. We praise you for them. We praise you. It's an island of peace. There's growth of evangelicals there.

We thank you for the work of Southern Baptists. The work of the International Mission Board. The missionaries that we support. Southern Baptist missionaries. Thank you for the work that they do. And yet we pray. And you stay true and pure. To the gospel. The true pure gospel needs to be proclaimed. People claim to know Christ.

[4:34] But just in name only are they Christians. There's no change. Protect your church from the prosperity gospel. From emotionalism.

In Tanzania. They need more biblical knowledge. There's such a lack of teaching. There's a lack of leadership. Bring about leadership development. Revive your church.

That true believers will be bold. And courageous. With their faith. Among the Muslims. Amongst those who practice witchcraft. We pray for our brethren.
May they reach out. To the many in poverty. To the many dealing with AIDS. May they care for them. Minister to them. And bring them.
What will save them. The gospel. The good news of Jesus. May they reach out. To the unreached. 40,000 villages and towns. With no church at all.
[5 : 37] And give us a heart to go. Send some of us to go. So you would continue to use us. And our brethren. To open the hearts of those.

Our students. For converting out of Islam. Praise the Lord. And the different areas and people groups. To send us. Send them to these places.
Zanzibar. Amongst the Digo people. The Zigula. The Somali. Mufiji.
Saramo. The Tuga. These different people groups. Makande. Makua. Makua. Makua. People groups that don't have any.
Gospel truth. Not any church at all. They live. They die. They go to hell. Send us. Send more of us. And use the work amongst us.
[6 : 36] The Southern Baptists. To reach out to these people groups. And I will see. More and more people of Tanzania. To be saved. And for us who are here this morning.

Let's be ready. Let's be ready to rejoice when we suffer. To face the persecution. When we proclaim the goodness of Jesus.
And it's by his authority and his name that we pray together. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Let's take our Bibles. Let's go to Acts chapter 5. Please. Acts 5.
If you're visiting with us. You can pull that black Bible out in the chair in front of you. And go to page 95. Page 95.

[7 : 48] And you'll find Acts 5. We're going to study 12 through 42. So we're going to go through the rest of the chapter. It just all goes together. That's why I wanted to do the whole thing in one shot.

5. 12 through 42. Page 95 in that black Bible. I'll read the passage.
Then we'll do our study. And at the hands of the apostles. Many signs and wonders were taking place among the people.
And they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. But none of the rest dared to associate with them. However. The people held them in high esteem. And all the more believers in the Lord. Multitudes of men and women. Were constantly added to their number. To such an extent. That they even carried the sick out into the streets. And laid them on cots and pallets. So that when Peter came by.
[8 : 46] At least his shadow. Might fall on any one of them. And also the people from the cities. And the vicinity of Jerusalem. Were coming together. Bringing people who were sick.

Or afflicted with unclean spirits. And they were all being healed. But the high priest rose up. Along with all his associates. That is the sect of the Sadducees.
And they were filled with jealousy. And they laid hands on the apostles. And put them in a public jail. But an angel of the Lord during the night. Opened the gates of the prison.
And taking them out. He said. Go your way. Stand and speak to the people in the temple. The whole message of this life. And upon hearing this. They entered into the temple about daybreak. And began to teach. Now when the high priest and associates had come. They called the council together. Even all the senate of the sons of Israel.
[9 : 40] And sent orders to the prison house. For them to be brought. But the officers who came. Did not find them in the prison. And they returned. And reported back saying. We found the prison house locked quite securely.

And the guards standing at the doors. But when we had opened up. We found no one inside. Now when the captain of the temple. And the chief priest heard these words. They were greatly perplexed about them.
As to what would come of this. But someone came and reported to them. Behold the men whom you put in prison. Are standing in the temple. And teaching the people. Then the captain went along with the officers.

And proceeded to bring them back. Without violence. For they were afraid of the people. Lest they should be stoned. When they had brought them. They stood them before the council. And the high priest questioned them.

Saying. We gave you strict orders. Not to continue teaching in this name. And behold. You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. And intend to bring this man's blood upon us. But Peter and the apostles answered and said.

[10 : 40] We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus. Whom you had put to death by hanging him on a tree. He is the one whom God exalted to his right hand.

As a leader. And a savior. And a savior. To grant repentance to Israel. And forgiveness of sins. And we ourselves are witnesses of these things. And the Holy Spirit.

Whom God has given to those who obey him. Verse 33. But when they heard this. They were cut to the quick. And were intending to slay them. But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel.

A teacher of the law. Respected by all the people. Stood up in the council. And gave orders to put the men outside for a short time. And he said to the men of Israel. Take care what you propose to do with these men.

For some time ago. Thutis. Rose up claiming to be somebody. And a group of about 400 men joined up with him. And he was slain. And all who followed him were dispersed. And came to nothing. After this man Judas of Galilee.

[11 : 37] Rose up in the days of the census. And drew away people after him. He too perished. And all those who followed him were scattered. And so in the present case. I say to you.

Stay away from these men. And let them alone. For if this plan or action should be of men. It will be overthrown. But if it is of God. You will not be able to overthrow them. Or else.

You may even be found fighting against God. And they took his advice. After calling the apostles in. They flogged them. And ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus.

And release them. So they went on their way. From the presence of the council. Rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer for the name. Every day in the temple.

And from house to house. They kept right on teaching. And proclaiming Jesus. The Christ. Eight years ago.

[12 : 35] After his conversion to Christ. Mohammed Hagazi. Made history. In Egypt. As the first person. To apply.

To change his religious preference. From Muslim. To Christian. On his government issued ID card. The designation.

Would determine what churches. And schools. His daughters. Could attend. In that country. Hagazi. Who now goes by his Christian name. Bushoi Bulu. If I'm saying that right.

Has faced repeated arrests. Trials. Torture. And imprisonment. For becoming an outspoken Christian. In that Muslim. Islamic.

Country. All those citizens. Of other religions. Who convert to Islam. Are routinely issued. Egyptian ID cards. With Muslim. As their religious affiliation.

[13 : 29] Christian converts. Are discriminated against. And not given the same treatment. Bulu has already been detained. In prison for a year. For quote.

Disturbing public security. And peace. End quote. December 29th of 2014. An Egyptian court. Sentenced Bulu.

To an additional year in prison. Found that on Frontline Missions. On their website. Dated January 2015. Just. Six months ago.

This is one of many stories. Throughout the world. You hear things about that. In different countries. Now. Here in the US.

We're not persecuted to this degree. At least I don't think so. But maybe we're ridiculed. Mocked. Ignored.

[14 : 27] Or as one person told me. They gave the gospel to a family member. And the family member said. Uh. Uh. No. It's not easy.

It's hard. To be a Christian. When you're going to be persecuted. Or possibly. Face suffering for it. But here in the book of Acts. Just do it.

Be who you are. Let God use you. To fulfill his mission. And. And we're going to see today. In our passage. And this mission brings. Persecution and suffering. This mission brings.

Persecution and suffering. The mission that God calls us to fulfill. It will bring persecution. It will bring suffering of some kind.

Must be ready for it. Or here's a statement for you. This mission brings persecution and suffering. When persecution comes.

[15 : 30] We must have strong faith. A desire to obey God. And the courage to keep proclaiming. The Lord Jesus Christ. That's what you see here in our passage. See this is what entails.

To be his disciple. Jesus disciple. A Jesus proclaimer. No matter what. Even if it means you suffer in his name. You suffer for his name. Even if it means that.

The Jewish leadership didn't like all the attention the apostles were giving. They were going to put a stop to it. A futile move. They attempted to suppress the influence of this new movement.

Of God's new community. The teaching. Teaching of these apostles. Their teaching. Maybe we can give them a little beating. Maybe that would shut them up. Not even 39 lashes would do it.

To keep them quiet. They proclaimed Christ. Even more. These apostles showed in an exemplary manner. What it really means to be a disciple of Jesus.

[16 : 37] A Jesus proclaimer. No matter what. Even if it means you suffer for his name. As we fulfill. God's mission.

We will face persecution and suffering. But God commands us to keep proclaiming his. Keep proclaiming him. Realizing that. He triumphs in our persecution. Since it's part of his plan.

So rejoice in suffering. Because you suffer for Jesus sake. And keep on proclaiming the good news of Jesus. That kind of sums up. That statement sums up. What we're going to look at today.

I got eight bullet points for you. For you. From this passage. Eight different bullet points. And those eight bullet points are in this sentence here. So start with number one.

First of all. What we're going to see is. God commands us to fulfill his mission. He commands us to fulfill his mission. 12 through 16. Starting in verse 12.

[17 : 36] The hands of the apostles. They're doing many wonders and signs. It's taking place.

Among the people by their hands. They're all together in Solomon's portico. This is a way for God to show.

Or to underscore. That he was speaking through the apostles. New revelation was coming through them. And God authenticated that.

Or God verified that. Or God validated that. That kind of put his stamp of approval. By having these guys do all these signs and wonders. The apostles. All the apostles together were doing this.

There in Solomon's portico. These signs accredited them as God's representatives. Those to whom God was speaking direct revelation.

So listen to them. Listen to what they're telling you. Look at verse 13. But none of the rest dared to associate with them. Who are these people?

[18 : 35] Seems like these are actually believers. Who saw the tense environment around the apostles. In other words. They held the apostles in high regard. Because two people just dropped dead in front of Peter.

The Christians didn't take them flippantly. I mean I wouldn't take Peter flippantly. Would you? So it seems that there was actually.

Four groups in our passage. You have the apostles here. Then the rest of the believers. Then notice the next part of verse 13. However the people held them in high esteem. The people respected the apostles. And then you have new converts.

You see that in verse 14. So there was a hesitation. Because maybe the hostility from the Jewish leaders is going to come. They're proclaiming Jesus. So people are just like.

Wow. They're standing in awe of. They don't want to hang around the different believers. They don't want to hang around the apostles. But then the different people. They're standing in awe. They respected the apostles for what they were doing.

[19 : 33] I mean these guys. Wow. These guys are amazing. You're going to see how amazing they were. Starting in verse 15. There's a healthy fear of the apostles. God was using them.

And yet. Even though people were a bit standoffish. Notice verse 14. All the. And all the more believers in the Lord. Multitudes of men and women. Were constantly added to their number.

Even though some were a bit standoffish. Many more were coming to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Both men and women. There's a major response to the gospel. People were taking the gospel seriously.

I mean it's interesting. On the one hand. People were awestruck. On the other hand. Disciple success. People were becoming Christians. So then looking back.

On verses 12 through 14. This is how. The people. They were so in awe. And they had such respect. For the apostles. Notice verse 15. To such an extent.

[20 : 35] That they even carried the sick. Out into the streets. They laid them. On the cots and the pallets. So even Peter's shadow. Would fall on one of them.

Now the text doesn't say they were healed. But why were they doing this? Because they were being healed. Can you imagine. If you would just go across. Peter's shadow.

You would instantaneously be healed. I mean just can you imagine that. As he's walking. Bam.

Bam. Bam. These people being healed. Just by his shadow. I mean truly.

They were doing greater things. Than Jesus. These apostles were. They made an impression on those. Not just in Jerusalem. Notice verse 16. And all the people from the cities.

In the vicinity of Jerusalem. So the surrounding regions. They're coming together. They're bringing people. Who were sick. Or afflicted. With unclean spirits. They're being demonized. And they were also having sicknesses.

[21 : 34] And they were being healed. All of them. So here's the apostles. They're preaching. They're healing. Outsiders were impressed.

People were coming to Christ. As the apostles. They're preaching the word. And the emphasis is the word. Notice. You'll see this later on. As they're interacting with the council.

The council. The Sadducees. There's no talk about the signs and wonders. There's no talk about the healings. There's talk about the teaching. People are getting saved.

Friends. God simply commands us. To fulfill his mission. By being Jesus' proclaimers to the whole world. This is the purpose of the church.

Why do we exist as a church? Why do we exist as a local church? What is our purpose as a church? To be Jesus' proclaimers. To fulfill God's mission.

[22 : 32] But beware. Number two. His mission brings persecution. His mission brings persecution.

Persecution. 17. The high priest rose up. Along with all his associates. Of the sect of the Sadducees. And they were filled with jealousy. The Sadducees.

Remember they didn't believe in a resurrection. No angels. No demons. Genesis. Through Deuteronomy. Good. Everything else. No way. Did not believe God would intervene in any sovereign way.

What was it that got their guilt? The signs from you. Disobedience to their prohibition. Oh yeah. And more so their popularity.

Primarily. They were jealous. They wanted the people to love them. They wanted the people to follow them. They wanted the people to listen to their teaching. They wanted their authority to be taken.

[23 : 41] And for people to look at them. And respect for them. So what did they do? They used their authority. To come against the apostles. And to challenge them. No way. You're going to challenge us? No way.

Verse 18. They laid hands on the apostles. And put them in a public jail. They were trying to make a public statement. Don't mess with us.

So a public jail. Did the people see them in the jail? Maybe. Did the people see that they were in this place? So that everybody could see that all the different apostles were in that jail?

Maybe that's what it means by public jail. But these sect of the Sadducees. They did all they could to stop this message from spreading.

Their hope was that. Oh no. We're going to silent them. We're going to keep shutting them up now. Friends. As we are obedient to God's command to proclaim the good news to all.

[24 : 45] We must realize. We will face persecution. You will face persecution. That's why I want us to read 2 Timothy chapter 3.

All those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus. You will be persecuted. See if you're not challenging people with the gospel. You're going to be their buddies.

You start challenging people with the gospel. Not going to get so close to you. Will they? Will they? God calls us to fulfill his mission.

His mission brings persecution. But what's God's command number three? Keep proclaiming the message. 19 through 20. But an angel of the Lord during the night opened the gates of the prison.

Taking them out. He said go your way. Keep speaking the message. This message of life. The whole message of this life. Put them in jail.

[25 : 45] Ha. Angel opened up the gates. Keep right on preaching this message of life. The sovereign Lord acted by releasing them and calling them to keep on preaching.

This shows the leadership was powerless. People were powerless before God. And we're going to see in verse 21.

They entered the temple and they kept going. They kept speaking to the people in the temple. This message of repentance unto forgiveness. You know what this tells us?

It tells us that God seeks wayward sinners. God seeks out sinners. And though we face persecution. God still calls us to proclaim this message to them.

God still calls us to call them to repentance. God still commands us. The message of life is God's unique life that He gives unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

[26 : 45] Instead of giving them judgment, He gives them grace. Instead of giving them what they justly deserve, He receives life and grace through the resurrected Lord Jesus.

He gives life because He's alive. Jesus gives life because He is alive. If you're here today, you don't know the Lord Jesus Christ.

You're not a follower of Jesus. This is for you. Jesus can give you life. You do deserve judgment. If you would count everything that I've done wrong, who could stand?

That's what we sing, right? But there's forgiveness with you, God. God can have mercy on you. He will save you. He will give you grace in Jesus. If you turn away from your sin and put all your hope, all your trust in Jesus alone.

That's the gospel. And this gospel, God commands. You keep proclaiming it. God wants us to fulfill His mission. He calls us to do that. You're going to face persecution.

[27 : 48] God says, keep doing it. Number four. God's command. Obey Him rather than men. He commands us to keep proclaiming.

And He says, obey me rather than obeying people. This takes us from verse 21 all the way to verse 32. Because notice, this is exactly what the apostles did.

And you know what? They didn't say, oh man, you know, okay. You probably should get something to eat. Let's hit Starbucks. After we get Starbucks, you know, I got to go shopping.

Okay, we'll go shopping. So maybe we can hit the temple around 10, 11 o'clock. That's it. Notice what the text says, verse 21. They enter the temple. When? Daybreak.

It's like now the sun is like coming up, I think at 3.30. I think that's sunrise now. It feels like it. It's like 4 o'clock in the morning. It's like already dried outside. Isn't that weird how that happens? That's just weird.

[28 : 50] But they're there at daybreak. So you're talking like 6 o'clock in the morning. And they're already at the temple. And they began to teach. Instant obedience.

Interesting. Did the crowd notice the apostles were arrested? And did they notice that God had delivered them? I don't know. It's just kind of weird. But get this.

They were commanded to keep proclaiming in the midst of severe opposition. Obeying God to keep proclaiming was vitally important to them. Is it important to you?

Is obeying God vitally important to you? You're going to face persecution. But does that matter to you? Didn't matter to them.

Honestly, I'm not sure if I would do this. And then notice what takes place. What's that? In the middle of verse 21.

[29 : 56] It's almost comical. High priests and associates, they came together. They called the council together. Even all the senate of the sons of Israel. They sent orders to the prison house for them to be brought.

22. The officers, they didn't find them. They returned. They said, Ah, we found the prison house. Locked quite securely.

And the guards standing at the front doors. Kind of funny. Maybe the angels re-locked all the doors. Just to kind of mess with their heads. You know, it kind of makes you wonder if they did that. The guards are in place.

They're seeing nothing unusual. Everything seems fine. There's no one there. Now, were there other prisoners? We don't know. But the apostles were gone.

24. The captain of the temple. The chief priests. Greatly perplexed. Baffled. Confused. They couldn't figure out what happened. What could this mean? What's the end of this?

[30 : 55] They were thinking. 25. Someone came in. They're teaching in the temple. The guys that you just directed. They're in the temple. I mean, it's comical what we see happening.

Well, they're all. Okay, we've got to assemble this assembly. Okay, go get the apostles. We don't know where they're at. Sorry. And they, oh, by the way, those guys are arrested. They're in the temple teaching again.

What? You know. The very thing they tried to hinder was still happening. What they tried to silence was still making noise.

There's direct disobedience to their orders. But there's direct obedience to God. So are you ready to obey God rather than men? Are you ready to fulfill God's mission?

Even though there's going to be persecution. God commands you to keep proclaiming. Will you do it? The leaders were helpless. To stop the proclamation of God's message.

[31 : 55] You can't stop us. As the apostles followed God's call to teach the way of life, He'll make it happen. We can't. We won't. We don't stop. 26.

Captain with the officers, he went back. And this time they gently said, Hey, let's arrest them. But let's do it very gently. Because the people were ready to stone them, it says.

The people backed up the apostles. Remember, the people respected the apostles. That's such awe and wonderful, the apostles. That's what they thought.

That's what they felt about the apostles. So they're like, what are you doing? They're picking up stones. Hey, you know, we're just going to talk with them. You know, I don't know what they were doing. But they arrested them without violence.

They feared the popularity that they had with the people. The people saw them as true prophets. The people respected them. Not seeing them as criminals.

[32 : 59] And yet, even though, they did not believe their message. Interesting. You might have people on your side, Christian.

Though they will not believe the gospel. They may try to help you. Though they may not believe it themselves. Interesting. Look, nothing will stop the events of the gospel.

God's leading and protection. He'll be on our side. You can trust that. And even if it means we give our lives, that's the major triumph for us, right?

What are they going to do? Kill us? That's just triumph for us. They may persecute us, but they will never crush us. That's why we can obey God. We have everything to our benefits.

They have everything to their demise. 27. They brought them. They stood them before the council. And the high priest questioned them.

[34 : 03] We gave you strict orders. Keep your mouth shut. Stop teaching in this name. And threaten the apostles. You filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Notice what's happening here. When persecution comes, we must have strong faith. We must have a desire to obey God and the courage to keep proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ. Because they're going to do this.

And this is what they did. We told you to keep your mouth shut. You blatantly disobeyed us as the council. Notice the word, You filled Jerusalem with your teaching.

You see that? And notice the name. Notice they don't say Jesus. That name. That guy. Your teaching.

Plus, You want to hold us responsible for this guy's death? That's what that means. Blood upon us denotes being responsible for Jesus' death.

[35 : 09] They were guilty. They were guilty before God having slain His chosen one. His Messiah. This man's blood. Notice they don't even say Jesus. Here again.

Interesting though, wasn't that the very thing that they cried for? I don't think it's in the Gospel of Luke. It might be in Mark. But I know it's in Matthew. Where they said to Pilate, Let His blood be upon us and our children.

Remember they said that? Oh, now we want to take it back. You know what I mean? Come on. You're undercutting our authority. We don't authorize you to teach these things.

They said to the apostles. The apostles portrayed the leadership as fighting against God. You're telling us we're fighting against God. We're fighting against His message and His followers.

Yeah, you are. And it just so happens that you guys are in serious error. Look at what Peter says, 29. Peter, speaking for the apostles altogether, they answered and said, we must obey God rather than men.

[36 : 21] Peter replied, on behalf of all, telling them that they would obey God rather than men. Actually, in the Greek, it's like this. It is necessary that we obey God rather than men.

It is necessary. It must happen. There's that Greek word again, Dei. D-E-I, Delta Epsilon Yoda. It must happen. It is necessary. We have to obey God.

There's not an option for us. We're compelled by the truth of the gospel. Does the truth of the gospel compel you? Does the truth of the gospel compel you?

And it's not so much, this is what you're supposed to do as a Christian. You've just got to preach the gospel. That's what you're supposed to do as a Christian. No, the gospel should compel you.

I have to do this. I must do this. Christians should obey the governing authorities. Yes, we should.

[37 : 26] Whether we agree with them politically or not. We should show proper respect for the authority that's over us and our government. And not praying for their assassination.

Come on. It's kind of creepy. Like some people pray, we pray that Obama will be assassinated. You know what? You're like psycho. What are you even praying that for? Government has been established by God.

But we disobey when they tell us to directly disobey Scripture. You cannot preach the gospel. Sorry, Jack. That ain't gonna happen. Yet, if we will not keep silent about God and His gospel, we may face scorn, ridicule, mockery, imprisonment, and even death.

Notice how Peter continues. Peter actually gives them the gospel here. He gives them the gospel. The God of our fathers.

Stop there. Notice. The God of our fathers. What's He saying? The God of our fathers. I am, what I'm about to say to you is the fulfillment of Judaism.

[38 : 42] This is the fulfillment of Judaism. Christianity fulfills Judaism. That's what He's saying. The God of our fathers. The God of our people, the Jews.

The God of promise. He fulfilled His promise. This God raised up Jesus. Now, He could either mean He raised Him up on the scene of history or raised Him up from the dead.

Either way, He's proclaiming the gospel. Jesus is the one. Because Jesus, He's the one whom you killed.

Notice, you killed them. Yes, you did. It's you. How? By hanging them on a tree, literally. I did that for you. Literally, wood or tree. Yes, fellas, you're totally responsible for His death.

His death came about by being put to death on a tree, denoting that He died a cursed death. Jesus became the curse for sinners so that sinners can be blessed.

[39 : 48] Galatians chapter 3 says that. He became a curse for us. Curses anyone who is hung on a tree. Christ became our curse so we can be blessed. Or what does Paul say?

God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us so we might be the righteousness of God. In the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter's proclaiming the basics of the gospel here.

The life of Jesus. His death. And he's going to talk about His resurrection and ascension. Now He is the one in whom there's salvation. That's what He's doing. Yet notice, in verse 31, yet even though you guys killed Him, 31, He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a leader if you translate leader, that's probably a better translation, and a Savior to grant repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

He's raised to a place of prominence. He's the prince or leader who share God's authority that's seen in His exaltation.

So He has the same authority as God. So in other words, Jesus is God. And He's the Savior who grants repentance and forgiveness. The fact that He was exalted shows that He is God's chosen one for His people even for you leaders who killed Him.

[41 : 11] The leader, deliverer, the author of salvation, He can grant them grace. He can grant them forgiveness of sins.

Jesus is not a threat to the nation. He's her Savior. He's the only way the nation can experience God's blessing.

He's the only way you can experience God's blessing. And though the leaders were culpable for His death, they can be forgiven. I mean, look here, the offer of salvation was extended even to them.

Amen. We call everyone to trust in Jesus. We call all people to come to Christ. We call everyone to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

One writer says this, quote, God continues to appeal to this obstinate people, end quote. Religious leaders, guess what?

[42 : 15] You guys need to obey God like we did. Trust Jesus. Trust in Christ. The rejected and crucified Jesus is God's chosen Messiah who was raised to grant repentance and forgiveness to Israel.

To you. That's what Peter's saying. He's giving them the gospel and calling them to repentance. And this is the message that we proclaim to a lost, perishing world.

They need to hear the message of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. They need to hear this message of hope. And the thing is, the very thing that compels us to do this is because God has been so gracious to us. That's why it's not a thing that you're just supposed to do as a Christian.

What compels us is God's grace. What compels us is His compassion toward us. And that's the message we need to constantly remind ourselves every day.

Many times throughout the day, don't we? God's mercy in Christ. Actually, we're going to celebrate it in just a moment with the bread and the juice. Reminding ourselves of the gospel. Reminding ourselves of God's grace to us in Jesus.

[43 : 28] Notice verse 32 of what Peter says here. And we're witnesses of these things. And the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him. We testify to this. We've seen this.

We are, as he says, we're God's voice and message to the nation. And really to the world. They along with the Holy Spirit who's given to those who obey Him.

And He's saying here that the Holy Spirit is the one who's the revealer of Jesus. And they're given power in the Spirit to actually speak. So when you're trying to speak and proclaim, I gotta obey God rather than men.

No, it's I'm compelled to obey God rather than men because of the grace that God has shown me and the power comes to you from the Spirit of God. That's what Peter's saying. Interesting.

You actually see the Trinity here. The Father raised Jesus to whom the Spirit testifies. Interesting. Peter's saying, we're not making this stuff up, man. We testify to all these things.

[44 : 29] So respond to the witness of the Spirit in this new community. Respond to the gospel He's telling them. I mean, the fact that the Holy Spirit is working in individuals and in God's new community.

Or we should say working in individuals that make up God's new community. It shows that God endorses the message that I'm speaking to you says Peter. So here we have, as we're talking about fulfilling God's mission, realizing there's gonna be persecution.

And yet we come to a place where God commands us, keep proclaiming. and He says, obey me rather than men. Notice how God, number five, He triumphs over our persecution.

God always triumphs over our persecution, verses 33 to 39. Though we face persecution, God will triumph over it.

He will intervene on behalf of His people in His providential care. So get the scene.

[45 : 39] Here's Peter and the apostles. They're proclaiming the gospel to the council. The, you know, the, the well-to-do guys. The big wigs.

You know, the big guys in charge of everything there in Israel. Oh, and then when they heard this, they said, oh yes, we will.

That's not my version. They got ticked off. They were cut to the quick and were intending to slay them.

They were so mad, they were furious, they wanted to kill them. That's what it means, cut to the heart or split open in rage. Instead of listening, they went their own way.

They rejected what they said. No way we're going to listen to this. They probably got so mad because they knew they were guilty. Friends, unfortunately, though the offer of the gospel goes out to all, not all will respond because God needs to soften our hard hearts and our nasty wills to have wills and hearts that serve love and serve him.

[46 : 56] God changes hearts. God changes our nasty wills and he had to do that with them. That's why there's persecution because God needs to change wills and he did not change their will.

So they're about ready to kill him. Notice what happens, verse 34. A certain Pharisee named Gamaliel, teacher of the law, respected by all the people, stood up in the council and gave orders to

put the men outside for a short time.

He was respected by the people, the teacher of the law. He stepped in. This is God's providence, this is God's sovereignty. God sovereignly kept the council from killing the apostles.

Now, mind you, he's a Pharisee, so he believed in oral tradition, he believed in resurrection, he believed in demons and angels, he believed in the sovereignty of God, in contrast to Sadducees. Actually, you see the Pharisees, they're much more positively looked at in the book of Acts.

He was the only one who had some sense of reason and wisdom. So he ordered out the apostles and he spoke to the council, we'll look at that in a second. And as a whole, what he says is okay.

[48:08] But notice, he didn't examine the apostles' claims, did he? He screwed around the issue, didn't he? He gave fatalistic, Gamaliel gave fatalistic advice that was flawed because he himself did not take the challenges from Peter.

He didn't take them seriously. He blew Peter off. I mean, think about it, to wait and see, which we'll look at that in a second, he had a wait and see approach to things.

That's really not good advice on how to resolve conflict, is it? Let's wait and see what happens.

Now, maybe he was saying this because he was privately open to what the apostles were saying.

Maybe he was confident God was not truly working through them. Maybe he believed this thing would just kind of blow over. Who knows? Whatever it was, it was worldly advice not really dealing with the real issues.

And yet, God still used him in his sovereignty to bring about him triumphing over their persecution.

So notice, look at 35, this is what he does.

[49:21] Take care of what you propose to do with these men. Think before you act. Don't just act in your emotions. And then 36, Thutis rose up, he claimed to be somebody, 400 men followed him, but then he died, he was killed, and then his it kind of scurried everywhere.

37, Judas Galilee rose up, he perished, and then his little band of guys scattered. Now, by the way, Thutis, he's a different person from what Josephus talks about, happened about 10 years after the book of Acts was written.

So then, it comes here in verse 38, and so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown, but if it's of God, you will not be able to overthrow them, else you'll even be found fighting against God.

So look, if this movement is of men, it's not going to last. There's no need to radically oppose it, but if it's from God, you're going to be wrong to oppose them.

You won't even be able to fight against them, because you'll be fighting against God himself. So what he says is true. Keep away from them. Look, if they're from God, opposition that was going to be futile, dangerous for you.

[50:47] Now, it was great advice for the sake of the apostles, yes, but it was still foolish because Peter wasn't calling them to wait and see what's going to happen, was he? No, Peter called them to repent and trust in Jesus right then and there.

But notice, God and his providence will triumph over our persecution. God rescued the apostles here. They were not killed. And his providence, he does that.

Praise God. Realize this though, number six. God's purpose is that we suffer for the gospel. It's true God triumphs over our persecution.

Yes, it's true that does happen. But friends, God's purpose is that we suffer for the gospel. Just because I said that God triumphs over our persecution, that doesn't mean you're not going to suffer. Just because it says, just because we see here that God triumphs in our persecution, we're not saying that you're not going to suffer. Verse 40, they took his advice.

[51:59] And after calling the apostles in, they let him go. Ah, what did they do first? Flogged them. They flogged them, and they told them to keep their mouths shut, and then they released them.

Flogging, it happens on the back and the chest with a three-stranded strap of calf hide. You can leave one close to death just by blood loss, because they give you 39 lashes.

And they actually give you 40, but they do minus one just in case they miscount. The hope was to intensify punishment to deter them from speaking.

Friends, listen, just because God triumphs over a persecution, it doesn't necessarily mean we won't suffer. And besides, what's the worst thing they can do?

Kill us. But isn't that our ultimate triumph? Isn't that how God ultimately triumphs over our persecution? He just brings us home.

[53:17] Right? So, as we're called to fulfill His mission, and yet we're going to face persecution, but God says, keep proclaiming the gospel, obey me rather than men, I'm going to triumph over persecution, and you're going to suffer for the gospel.

This is the crazy one. Persecuting or suffering is a reason to rejoice. In verse 41, they went on their way from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy that were to what?

Rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer for the name, actually. There's no deterrent. It didn't change their attitude one bit. They rejoice for being considered worthy to suffer on behalf of Jesus.

And notice, there's such an irony here, because when someone's flogged, that's to bring shame upon them, right? It just brings some shame, you're just a loser, you're just, blah.

They're like, great. We're not shamed, this is great. We're worthy, we're honored, thanks for doing this. What?

[54:43] It's crazy. They were honored to suffer for Jesus' name. What an exemplary attitude for us as the church. church. These men were willing to proclaim the gospel and suffer for the honor of the Lord Jesus.

This is nuts, but this is true. This should be the attitude of every Christian under persecution. Would you do this?

Would you have this attitude in suffering? It's hard. It's hard to be ridiculed when you're in Jerome. You say nothing.

All you do is sit there. And the guy said, now there's those Christians again. It's already Friday. Right?

Right? Three of us are saying it's all he said. Mocked, ridiculed, made fun of. And yet what happens, I told you there's eight points.

[55:51] We actually end where we started because the last point is God commands us to fulfill his mission.

Because notice what they do. Wow, workers are worthy to suffer for his name. And so what they do, every day in the temple and from house to house they kept running on teaching.

evangelism. And euangelion or euangelizo. That's the Greek word where we get the word evangelism.

They just kept on evangelizing that Jesus is the Christ. What they do, they went right back to what they were doing before.

Daily in the temple. And then we went from house to house right back to teaching and gospeling. Make up a new word, right? Gospeling that Jesus was the Christ.

[56:50] They continued to proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ. See, the leaders, they're struggling with their new movement. They couldn't handle it. The apostles continued to proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ.

They served God before they served them. God was behind the apostles. He's behind their courage to boldly face persecution, boldly face beating for the sake of the gospel.

Friends, God is behind you. He's in front of you. He's there with you. And as you preach, as you proclaim and teach Jesus no matter what, may God remind you, remind us that our sins are forgiven in the Lord Jesus Christ.

May this spur us on to mission. May that be the thing that compels you to proclaim the gospel because God's been so gracious to you. Realizing it may bring you persecution, realizing it may bring you suffering, but you don't care.

May God give us that boldness, that courage that we see in our text. I'll let you take a few moments to think and ponder what we've seen here in Acts chapter 5.

[58:04] Think and ponder what we've seen in His Word. And then we'll do our time of giving. We'll sing one song, preparing our hearts to partake of the Lord's Supper.

We'll give some instructions for the Lord's Supper like I normally do for you. And then we'll celebrate the Lord's Supper together. Let's take a moment, sit and ponder what we've seen in God's Word this time.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.