

A *rise* Ω

transforming our city

LIFE
GROUPS

WEEK 13 • APR 6

NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT

Hope changes everything.

ICE BREAKER

What is something about life that will always perplex you?

BACKGROUND

In the previous passage, Peter rebuked Ananias and Sapphira for their blatant lie against the Holy Spirit. They wanted to look righteous, but were instead revealed as hypocrites, appearing like they were living holy lives while living for material gain. God brought immediate judgment on them, reminding everyone to *not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell* (Matthew 10:28).

After this event, the apostles continued to face opposition in the form of imprisonment, intimidation, and beatings. Jesus had warned His disciples of this, saying *[b]eware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues* (Matthew 10:17). But Jesus also provided this encouraging promise: *[w]hen they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you* (Matthew 10:19-20). It is with this promise that the Apostles stood against the threats of the religious leaders and trusted that God would give them what they needed at the right time.

By the providence of God and the advice of Gamaliel, the Apostles were spared from the Sanhedrin's desire to kill them. (Gamaliel was a well known rabbi on the Jewish council, grandson of the even more famous rabbi, Hillel, who helped shape Jewish theology for generations. He even taught the most well known Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus.) However, the Apostles did not go unpunished for preaching in the name of Jesus. But their response in verse Acts 5:41 fulfilled Jesus' teaching: *[b]lessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you"* (Matthew 5:11-12).

REVIEW

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



KEY VERSES: Acts 5:42

And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

READ: Acts 5:12-42



HEAD LEVEL: *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. How did the Apostles respond to the religious leaders' threats?
2. What components of the Gospel did the Apostles present to the religious leaders in verses 29-32?
3. How did Gamaliel convince the Sanhedrin to free the Apostles?
4. What reaction did the Apostles have after being flogged?

DEEPER DISCOVERY

How should we biblically understand and respond to persecution?

- 1 Peter 4:12-19
- John 16:33
- Philippians 1:27-29



HEART LEVEL: *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God's word.*

1. Why were the people afraid to join the Apostles (v. 13)?
2. Why did God free the apostles from prison?
3. How did the Apostles gain such confidence and boldness to oppose the same people who murdered Jesus?

 **HANDS LEVEL:** *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

1. What kind of opposition do you face from the world? Example: pressure to compromise your ethics or morals, etc.
2. How can we practice rejoicing when facing persecution?
3. Is there anything you are afraid of while living out your faith? How can you practically follow the example of Jesus and His apostles? What promises of God can you meditate on and believe to conquer your fear?

 **MEMORY VERSE:** Acts 5:29b
We must obey God rather than men.

PRAYER REQUESTS

(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)