



Acts: Kingdom Invitation

Date: Sunday 15th November

Speaker: Aaron Smith

Key Verses: Acts 5: 17-42

Talk Summary:

- The apostles have already been arrested twice before this encounter. An angel had released them previously and told them they must continue to preach of this new life
- Persecution is to be expected:
 - a. Persecution is something each follower of Jesus should expect in some shape or form
 - b. We are to pursue obedience to God rather than the world then persecution will follow
- Persecution is a reality:
 - a. The Christian life is one where we come across pain, sufferings and hardships. This includes persecution – it should be a reality for each of us!
 - b. All of the apostles were either martyred or suffered heavy persecution because of Jesus – they suffered because they HAD seen the reality of Jesus, the cross and the resurrection. They knew it was true and was something to die for.
 - c. Peter declares '*We must obey God rather than human beings*' (Acts 5:29) and accuses the Sanhedrin of killing Jesus
- Persecution is an opportunity:
 - a. Persecution isn't a game of 'one upping' others. It's a reality and is an opportunity to stand for God and his ways.
 - b. This involved boldness but allows Christians to share in a unique fellowship with Jesus, builds our faith and character, allows us to bless in the face of evil and enables us to better value the support of other followers.
 - c. Around the world the places where we are seeing more people come to follow Jesus are the places where persecution is at its highest!!

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- Where have you suffered persecution for your faith? Did you expect it? Is this still a reality and how did you use it as an opportunity to declare the gospel?
- How much would it take to silence you? What discomforts are you willing to suffer for your faith? Are you willing to forgo everything for the sake of the gospel?
- How can we support people who are being persecuted-whether here or abroad?
- What kind of mole are you?

Witness

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus.

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?
 - Who in your world would appreciate an invitation to Alpha/Christmas? Begin praying for them.

Note to Small Group Leaders: Please note that if you'd like to review the sermon, or have a hard time following the video, you can use subtitles on YouTube. On the YouTube video, click the "closed captioning" button (bottom left of YouTube video screen, first button). Google "how to show subtitles on YouTube videos" if you need help with this.