

king's chapel

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week December 29, 2013

This Week's Focus: Stephen's death leads to persecution, which scatters the Church on mission.

This Week's Text: Acts 7:54-8:4

The Christian mission is thus to act out in the whole life of the whole world the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. —Lesslie Newbigin

*Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. **Colossians 4:2-6***

Related Texts: Romans 10:1-3, Matt. 5:11-12, John 12:24, 2 Corinthians 4:8-12, Acts 1:8, 8:12, 11:19-21, Mark 8:34-37, 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

Observations and Questions for Discussion:

- How has God spoken to you regarding the sermon and/or text?
- What are the results of the murder of Stephen? What did the persecution do to the church?
- Have you seen God work good things through persecution and trouble?
- What kind of persecution do you see in your own life? In the culture?
- Discuss some appropriate ways we can respond to persecution? What ways have you responded in the past? How do we not "lose" heart?
- The word "scattered" in vs. 4 is the word for scattering seed for the purpose of planting.
 - What are the implications?
- What is the role of a missionary?

- Have you ever considered yourself to be a missionary? If not, why not?
- What are some of the hindrances of living with gospel intentionality?
- In what ways can you better understand the people in your sphere of influence?

- In what ways has fear or pride stopped you from living on mission with God?
- Who are you serving and loving in the gospel? Avoiding?
- What aspect of being a missionary in your culture is the most difficult?
 - Declaring the gospel
 - Demonstrating the gospel
 - Understanding how to connect the gospel with others?
- Discuss what it means to be "Kingdom" minded. Ref. Phil 3:20, Rev. 11:15. How does that effect how you handle and perceive persecution?
- It is good and right to honor and love our nation (kingdom). God's will is for us to be good citizens. When does our patriotism and freedoms become an idol?
- What is the significance of Stephen seeing Jesus "standing" at the right hand of God? Ref. Acts. 7:55 Heb.10: 11-12 & 1 John 2:1-2. How does that effect how you handle and perceive persecution?
- Discuss how being on mission with God will ultimately bring Him glory? Ref. Acts. 7:55, Psalm 97:1, Psalm 67:3-4.

Gospel Celebration:

- Jesus is the righteous advocate, the propitiation for our sins.
- The gospel is not what I have accomplished but what Christ has accomplished.
- We celebrate the gospel by sharing with others the joy of knowing Christ.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for opportunities to witness to others concerning the person and work of Jesus with boldness and compassion.

Next Week's Text: Acts 8:4-13