



The Acts of the Spirit

GATHERING THE CHURCH

ACTS 5:12-42

"THE RESCUE"

AUGUST 27, 2023

AT A GLANCE

Are you prepared to be shamed for the sake of honoring the name of Jesus?

CONTEXT

The Book of Acts is the theological history of the church. In the previous weeks, we explored how God's people (the church) have become the place where heaven and earth meet. At this point, many are receiving the Gospel, and many are opposing it. The Jewish religious leaders are jealous for the purity of teaching in the temple, and envious of the popularity of the apostles, which leads to a confrontation.

SERMON SUMMARY

Pastor Joey challenged us to consider if we are willing to be shamed for the sake of the name of Jesus and the message of the gospel.

Because we've lived in a culture that has, in the past, considered Christianity honorable, it's easy for us to assume that we shouldn't have to risk being shamed, dishonored, or ostracized because we insist that Jesus is the only way to eternal life.

Luke gives us a picture of the kind of dishonor and opposition the early church faced. That's the same church of which we are a part, and we could face the same kind of opposition. Are we ready?

Read Acts 5:12-42



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This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.

Group facilitator: you do not need to ask every question but can select the best ones for your group dynamic.

DISCUSSION

Expand your Awareness

When we get ourselves into a certain mode of thinking, it can be virtually impossible to see things in a different way. This can be especially true in regards to behaviors that we think of as “shameful” or “honorable.” Though we in the West don’t live in an honor-and-shame culture like in many parts of Asia, we still unconsciously consider the social implications of things we do or say.

- Where have you experienced social pressure in your life?
- How has that pressure changed your behaviors?

Explore the Self

We all face pressure to conform to social pressures, which can be both good and bad. Shame can be bad if we are feeling shame for actions that are not wrong in themselves; shame can be good if we feel guilt for actions that are in fact wrong or sinful.

- Do you operate as if all social pressure is bad? Can some of it be good?
- How do you feel when you are pressured to act in a certain way?

Throughout Acts 5:12-42 the theme of “esteem,” or social capital, comes through. Different characters are held in higher honor than others, and a key driver in the actions of the Sanhedrin is the shame they feel the apostles are putting on them. The council reacts in good and bad ways. They react well when they recognize that they are being told they did something wrong, namely, reject and crucify the Messiah Jesus; they react poorly by not admitting they were wrong and coming to faith in Jesus.

- How does the esteem of others factor in to the way you live as a Christian?
- Have you felt pressure to keep your relationship with Jesus quiet?
- How have you seen yourself desiring to receive honor from others, rather than receive honor from God for honoring Jesus?



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Experience Transformation

Knowing how we are tempted to avoid making our allegiance to Jesus known can help us prepare for those situations.

- Do you need to ask Jesus for forgiveness for desiring the esteem of others more than his honor?
- What truth from Scripture do you need to spend time thinking about this week to help you find honor in honoring Jesus, rather than finding honor in being honored by others?
- Is there something small you can change this week to practice receiving honor from God rather than from others?

Pray

Pray that you and those you love and are in community with would have the same mind as Jesus (Phil 2:5-11), not counting our own honor as worth pursuing, but honoring God through Jesus.

PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK:



Read Acts 6:1-7