


THREATS FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS


ACTS 4:23-5

OPENING UP: One of the interesting things about Acts is that early on, no one knew what to call the new movement of Jesus-followers. Not until Acts 11 will they be called “Christians.” At times their called “the Way” and here in (Acts 5:20) the movement is referred to as “this Life.”

 Why is “this life an appropriate designation for faith in Jesus? How has salvation in Christ been life for you?

1 **The end of Acts 4 describes acts of significant generosity within the early church.** What qualities defined the early church’s practice of benevolence?

 Is what Luke describes in Acts 4:32-37 normative for all believers in every age? Why or why not?

 What timeless principles can we glean from first century Christian generosity?

 In what ways have you seen others practice generosity in our church? What was the impact of such giving?


 How does a passage like this challenge you in your financial stewardship?

2 **There is a thread of unity and disunity in Acts 4-5.** Discuss the differences between Christian unity and other forms of unity.

 How does the text demonstrate the high value God places on truth and unity in the body of Christ?

 What could someone in your age and stage of life do to erode or contribute to the unity of the church?

- 3 **Take some time to talk through the story of Ananias and Saphira.** What do you think motivated them to act as they did? What was inappropriate about the way they handled their finances? Do you think they were regenerate followers of Christ or unregenerate sympathizers to the new movement? What evidence would you provide to support your answer?

 Read Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18, Psalm 15:1-2, Galatians 6:7-8, 1 John 1:6-7, Psalm 51:6. How does the story of Ananias and Sapphira challenge you? Specifically, what does the account teach you about hypocrisy and what can you do to guard against it in your own life?

- 4 **In Acts 5, the Apostles face opposition for proclaiming the gospel message.** How do some people try to intimidate Christians today? Can you share a time when you were in a situation that didn't welcome gospel truth?

 How can the verse, "We must obey God rather than men" shape your actions this week?

 What does this passage teach about civil disobedience?

- 5 **The apostles rejoiced that they were found worthy to suffer for Jesus' name.** What does it mean to identify with Jesus so closely that you get treated like him?

 How could it be an honor for us to be dishonored?