

VIRAL

HOW THE GOSPEL SPREAD THEN AND NOW

Pastor Lance Ainsworth
Acts 5:33-42, 6:1-7

MESSAGE NOTES

Thursday, Sep 25
Sunday, Sep 28

Introduction
Acts 5:33-42 ESV

notes

³³When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. ³⁴But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. ³⁵And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. ³⁶For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. ³⁷After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail; ³⁹but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!" So they took his advice, ⁴⁰and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. ⁴²And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

Persecution for the name of Jesus is an honor.

Acts 6:1-8 ESV

⁶Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.

Discipleship - a close relationship with Jesus leading to imitation.

notes

Healthy things grow, growing things change, and change can be hard.

²And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.

³Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." ⁵And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

The church grows through the service of faithful men and women with a good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, and full of faith.

⁷And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

The church grows when disciples make disciples.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Viral: How the Gospel Spread Then and Now.

GateWay Church of Visalia, Pastor Lance Ainsworth, Acts 5:33-42, 6:1-7

September 25th & 28th, 2025

Growing Pains.

Prayer Requests:

Group Discussion: What is your favorite thing about fall?

Read Aloud: Acts 5:33-42, 6:1-7

1. v. 1 “Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.” In the early church, there were Jews who spoke Greek as their native language and traditional Jews who spoke only Hebrew/Aramaic. How do we stay united as a diverse church? Is unity in the midst of diversity a witness to the world? How so?

2. v.3-5 “ 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit,” Why is it important to have “Stephen’s” in the church? Who has been a Stephen for you? (good reputation, full of Spirit and wisdom, full of faith) Who has God called you to be a “Stephen” to?

3. v. 7 “And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.” Do you think you are called to make disciples? What does that look like? What does it mean to be a learner or apprentice of Jesus?