

## Sermon Discussion Questions

### Getting Started:

What was most challenging, helpful, or troubling in the sermon?

### Digging Deeper:

1. See John 4:48-50 and Acts 5:12-15. In your own faith, what's the relationship you see between seeing and then believing, and believing first and seeing second? Where is the struggle to believe first in God's attributes or a promise of scripture that you have yet to 'see'?
  - a. Where would there be a difference in obedience if there was clarity or greater confidence of God's goodness in your life? (Think specific: evangelism, relationship conflict, spiritual devotions, finances, parenting, marriage intentionality.)
2. "If God wants the witness of the church to thrive, why don't we see the miracles we see in Acts 5 happening around us more frequently?" How would you explain to this person the purpose of miracles in the OT and NT? For help, see Exo 14:1-9; 2 Kgs 1:10; Matt 12:28; Mark 16:17-20; John 3:2; Luke 7:22.
3. Reflect "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." See Acts 5:41 and James 1:2-4. "What makes Christian's joy in the midst of persecution and suffering different than other religions?" How would you answer?
  - a. Consider the distinct nature of suffering for Jesus' sake. See Matt 16:24, 27:32; Luke 14:27; Gal 5:11, 6:11. How does the historical context of the cross enrich Jesus' teaching of what it means to be His disciple? What causes for righteous living have you found the world despises? See Luke 6:27-36; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 1 Pet 2:1, 2:12-16.
4. See Phil 1:29. "This sounds like God wants me to suffer..." how would you help explain what Paul means?

### Empowered by the Holy Spirit:

5. Pray “their [apostles] suffering connects us with genuine believers cross the ages. It’s almost as if the apostles (dare I say it?) *relieved*” pray for boldness and courage for the day you will have to suffer for Jesu’s sake. Name and ask for grace for the fears that come to mind.