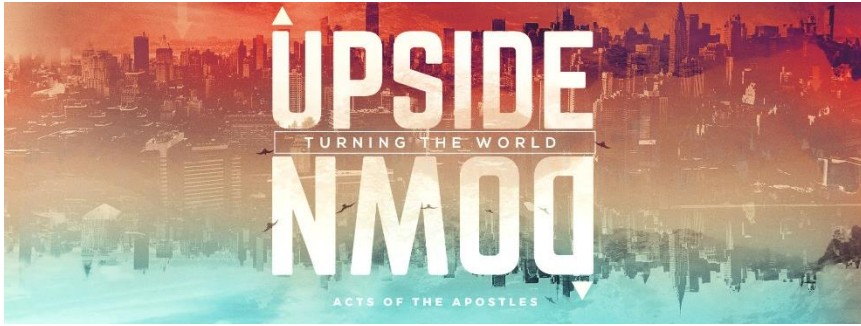




About Persecution

Life Group Study, Week of May 1, 2022

Engage.

Did you have a nemesis when you were growing up, who made life difficult for you? How did it play out?

If you had the opportunity to hear the message on Sunday, what stood out to you personally? Did you have any questions?

Look at the Book. Read Acts 7:54-8:4

What three-link chain of cause and effect is described in 8:1-4? What are the three links? What thoughts or feelings does this elicit in you?

Tertullian, one of the early church fathers, once observed that “*The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.*” What do you think he meant? In what specific ways have we seen its truth in history? Is it still true today? Why or why not?

What is persecution? How should we think of it?

Who or what is the source of persecution of Christians?

Are you personally experiencing persecution for your faith in Jesus at present? In what way?

Four responses to persecution for the sake of Christ in Sunday’s sermon. For each of the following, answer these questions: What does it mean? What value would there be in responding this way? What are some practical implications?

- Anticipate it.
1 Peter 4:12-14; 2 Timothy 3:12; John 15:18-21
- Embrace it.
Philippians 3:10; James 1:2-4; 1 Corinthians 12:24-26; Romans 1:18
- Celebrate it.
Matthew 5:10-12; Acts 5:40-41
- Leverage it.
Philippians 1:12-14; Matthew 5:43-45

Apply

Do you see any implications for the community life of the church as we anticipate the prospect of overt persecution on the horizon in the United States? How should we organize ourselves in anticipation? How will we support one another?