

**DAILY READINGS**

Sunday	Acts 5:17-32
Monday	Acts 5:33-6:7; Psalm 106:15-21; Proverbs 22:7-10
Tuesday	Acts 6:8-7:60; Psalm 106:22-29; Proverbs 22:11-13
Wednesday	Acts 8:1-40; Psalm 106:30-39; Proverbs 22:14-16
Thursday	Acts 9:1-43; Psalm 106:40-48; Proverbs 22:17-19
Friday	Acts 10:1-43; Psalm 107:1-6; Proverbs 22:20-22
Saturday	Acts 10:44-11:18; Psalm 107:7-13; Proverbs 22:23-25

**DEVOTIONAL: READ ACTS 5:17-32**

The earliest days of the Jerusalem church were tumultuous times. The excitement of seeing 3,000 people come to Christ (Acts 2:41) was quickly followed by the arrest of the church's leadership (Acts 5:18). The night they were imprisoned, an angel of the Lord released them and they were back in the temple courts proclaiming the name of Jesus the next morning. When the high priest rebuked them for returning to the activity that got them imprisoned, Peter gave the memorable reply, "We must obey God rather than human beings" (Acts 5:29).

Peter then gives a bold proclamation of the gospel. He tells them of the death of Christ, His exaltation to the right hand of the Father, and His rightful place as "Leader and Savior." The message that had caused this uproar was the same

message that Peter delivered to the people of Israel: Jesus died and was resurrected for the forgiveness of sins. The apostles were bearing witness just as Jesus had commissioned them (Acts 1:8). Along with their witness was the witness of the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32).

Today, followers of Jesus have that same Holy Spirit. We have that same commitment to tell people what Jesus has done. We are called to obey God rather than men as we boldly share the good news that Jesus Christ died to set us free from our sins. Later in the passage, the apostles rejoiced because "they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name [of Jesus]" (Acts 5:41). May we value Jesus and His message of grace more than we value our own comfort, safety, and freedom.

## REFLECTION

Where do you see yourself having to choose between obeying God and obeying people? Why is that sometimes a difficult decision to make?

What fears do you have of proclaiming the gospel boldly? Is it worth overcoming those fears for others to know about Jesus? What can you do now to overcome those fears? (Consider taking a class with Fellowship this semester. You can visit [register.fellowshipnwa.org](http://register.fellowshipnwa.org) to sign up.)

Is the gospel controversial today? Why or why not? Who tries to silence the message of Jesus in your world?

## DISCUSSION

How do you see Christianity as unique in the world today?

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Your will is perfect. There is nothing that could be added or taken away to improve upon Your plan. In the name of King Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, may Your kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. I surrender my will to Yours. Make my desires like Your desires. I want to love what You love and hate what You hate.

O God Almighty, Who sees and knows all, help me to discern where my true allegiance lies! Any side apart from You is doomed to fail, no matter how strong the opposition seems and how oppressed Your people feel at times. Don't let me choose the ways of the world over Your way. I want to please You above anyone else.

Seeking You is worth far more than anything this world can offer. Give me the strength and grace to endure suffering, mockery, or ridicule because of following You. My identity is secure in being a child of God, redeemed from sin through the work of Jesus Christ. Help me to live in that identity every day, knowing that is where true and lasting joy, peace, love, and fulfillment can be found. Amen.