A Church That the Lord Will Use (Part 1)

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[0:00] Acts 5, verses 12-42.

Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles,! and they were all together in Solomon's portico.! None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem.
And more than ever, believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them.
The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him, that is the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy, they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.
But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.
[1:21] Now when the high priest came and those who were with him, they called together the council, all the senate of the people of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported, We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside.

Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priest heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to. And someone came and told them, Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and they are teaching the people.
Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council, and the high priest questioned them, saying, We strictly charge you not to teach in this name, yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intended to bring this man's blood upon us.
But Peter and the apostles answered, We must obey God rather than man. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
And we are witnesses to these things, and so in the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him. When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. But 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.
[2:54] And he said to them, Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men. For before these days, Theodos rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about 400, joined him.

He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. After 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. So 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.
But 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, and 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.
Then they left the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching

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and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.
[4:03] So tonight we're not going to get through all of these verses, but we'll get through verses 12 through 16.

And what I want us to see there is, for one, there's a major problem that plagues many churches today, and it's a lack of focus on what their mission should be.
A lot of churches lack focus on what the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ should be. Some churches believe that their mission is to provide social justice for the poor and for the underprivileged, and so they make that their focus.
Other churches believe that their mission is political, and so they'll spend all their time and their energy and their resources trying to change their culture through the use of politics.
Some churches treat their churches as a private club whose main purpose is just for socializing and for entertaining, and it's just really kind of like a country club to them.
[5:08] That's the focus. The Bible says that our focus should be on Christian development, on preaching and teaching the Word, on fellowship and discipleship, and meeting together for praise and worship of God.

All of these things are important, and every church should strive for them, but none of them is the church's primary goal. That's not the church's primary goal.
If you remember, Jesus told us clearly that the primary goal of the church is to what? Go, therefore, right? Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that He commanded of us.
So according to Jesus, the primary goal or the primary focus of the church is evangelism. Our mission is to carry on the mission that Jesus began, which was to seek and to save that which was lost.
And so our goal, our focus, is to continue on with what He was doing. In fact, evangelism, it's interesting, because the one thing that is not necessary in heaven that we can't really do in heaven is evangelism, right?
[6:24] Because everybody there has heard the gospel and believed it. So it's not necessary in heaven, but it certainly is necessary here on earth. And the early church we see took this mission very seriously, and thus far we've seen that their evangelistic work has resulted in tremendous growth.

Remember, it started with just a room of a couple hundred, and then it exploded to thousands, and then we'll see here that it just continues to be growing as a result of their focus on evangelism, on teaching, preaching, and sharing the gospel.
The early church took their mission seriously, so they didn't have ball pits for the kids to come to. You know, hey, you should come try our church.
We have a ball pit and slides for your kids. They didn't, you know, put a coffee shop in the place where they worshipped, nor did they have raffles for TVs. They didn't have TVs back then, but, you know, they didn't have raffles for scrolls or, yeah, yeah, camels, something of that nature.
They didn't do those things. And why is that? Well, because they understood that their mission was to witness for Christ, and all they needed to accomplish that mission was what? The gospel that they had to share.
[7:45] And they did that both by their words and by their deeds. They shared the gospel with their words, but they also shared it by their deeds, by the ways that they lived their lives, as we'll see here even more in a moment.

Impactful gospel ministry involves continuing the pattern of Jesus' ministry, which involved words and deeds. Not just talking it, but walking it.
Jesus, if you remember, he was what? He was always going. He was always going to people. He didn't just set up shop in one place and expect everybody to come to him. He was constantly on the move.
He was constantly reaching out to people. He was always sharing the gospel. He was always ministering to people as he was teaching them, as he was sharing this great news with them.
Ray Ortlund is a pastor that I admire. I like to listen to. I like to read whatever he writes. I encourage you to do the same. One book I'm reading that he wrote is called The Gospel, How the Church Portrays the Beauty of Christ.
[8:50] And I want to read to you a quote from him. He says, That is a gospel culture.

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So the early church experienced this kind of gospel culture, and their impact was widespread, and it resulted in tremendous growth, as we've seen. So the question that I want us to ask and figure out for ourselves is, how can we experience the same kind of gospel community today that they had back then?
And in this portion of scripture which we read, Acts 5, verses 12 through 42, it presents us with five features of gospel community, which we'll get through to tonight, and we should be able to hit on the third one.
The first feature is kind of two wrapped into one, is this. They were uncompromising in their beliefs and consistent in their ministry.
They were uncompromising in their beliefs, and they were consistent in their ministry. Look at verse 12, the end of verse 12 into verse 14.
[10:27] And again, it says, You remember what happened before this?

I know with Lee and I switching back and forth, it might be hard to remember where we were at before. Where we were at before is we were talking about Ananias and Sapphira, remember?
The sin that they had committed. They had promised that they were going to give. They made a big deal about how they were going to sell this piece of land, and they were going to give it all to the church. They withheld some of that, but they went with their plan, and they went before the church as if they were giving it all, which wasn't the case.
And so they were lying. They were grieving the Spirit. If you remember, it cost them their life. And so if you remember, it was Peter who confronted them in their sin.
And again, they died that day. The church that wants to experience a gospel culture we see and reach the lost must be uncompromising when it comes to sin, just as this church was.
[11:39] As again, we saw with Peter when he called them out and he confronted them for their sinful act. The importance of confronting sin in the church is expressed many times in the Bible.

Luke 17, 3, Jesus says, If your brother sins, rebuke him. Paul put Himenaeus and Alexander out of the Ephesian church because of their blasphemies.
He commanded the Corinthians, if you remember, to remove the fellowship of a man who was guilty of some gross sexual immorality. He instructed Titus to reprove believers severely if they were found to be out of the faith.
The most extensive teaching, though, on how to exercise church discipline comes from Jesus in Matthew 18. So if you want to turn in your Bible to Matthew 18, and beginning in verse 15, we'll read Jesus' instruction on how church discipline should be carried out.
Matthew 18, beginning in verse 15, says, If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.
[12:52] But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.

And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Unfortunately, for many churches today, they don't go through these steps.
Or they might do one and skip the others. Or they might skip the first step and go right to the last step. They're eager to just kick anybody out of their church. But most churches, it seems like they tend to just sweep things under the rug.
And so as I was reading this and thinking about this, it reminded me of a friend of mine who served as a youth pastor. And this was quite a while ago.
But one of the parents of one of his teens came to him after church one day with a vial. And my friend had no idea what he was being given.
[13:57] And so he asked me, I don't know what this is. And the guy had unfortunately knew what it was. And he's like, well, I think it's cocaine. And so this is in an area where they found it is where kids are running around and playing.

So my friend was not sure what to do. And so the one thing he thought to do, well, I'm going to take it to the pastor. And so he took it to the pastor. And he said that the pastor, you know, just kind of was like, well, flush it down the toilet and we'll talk about it later.
And so a week went by without them having any kind of conversation about it. So my friend went into his office and asked him, what do you want to do about what we found?

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And the pastor just played dumb. And he said, well, what are you talking about? And my friend said, well, you know what I'm talking about. The thing that I brought you, the thing that we discussed about it. And he's like, we're not going to do anything.
And so my friend was like, you know, hey, we might have somebody in our church with a serious drug problem. I mean, you know, one, this is illegal. Two, if it was found by one of our kids and they took it, they could die or something, you know, about as bad.
[15:09] Right. And so, and so he said, and also, you know, we've got an obligation, I think as his church to find out who would, who would bring something like this to church. But the pastor wanted nothing to do with it.

He said, we're not, we're not going to address it. I don't want to bring that up. I don't want to have cops in here. And I just don't, I don't want to deal with it. So unfortunately, I think that that's typically the attitude that most churches have when it comes to the sin of their members is it's just something that they'd rather not deal with.
And so they're more tempted to sweep it under the rug than to begin the process of church discipline, which is something that can't be allowed to happen in the church of Jesus Christ, because then we are sinning by not doing what we've been commanded to do.
The church pays a steep price when they disobey the Lord's clear teaching on matters such as this. They will not be an effective witness because of their compromising with sin.
And so when that gets out or when that's found out in the congregation, when that's found out in the community that, hey, this is a church who is compromising when it comes to sin. What does that say about us? That we're hypocrites.
[16:18] They don't practice what they preach because they claim to be, you know, these good and holy people. But whenever things like this happen, they don't talk about it or they turn a blind eye to it, but they're quick to point out all the other problems with other people.

And so it diminishes that church's ability to be able to reach their community because in the eyes of the community, they don't practice what they preach. They're not the real deal.
They're just a bunch of fakes. They're just a bunch of phonies. And unfortunately, many unbelievers, that's the way that they view Christians is they're fake, they're phony, they're hypocrites.
And so we've got to be careful that that never becomes the case for our church, that we make sure that we have a witness that is not diminished in our community so that the Holy Spirit will be able to work through us because we don't compromise when it comes to sin.
So now the question becomes, do we just kick people out of the church when they sin? Well, no, because we'd all be out of here, right? We wouldn't have a church.
[17:27] So no, we don't take that answer. We don't skip to the very last step. We've got to follow what Jesus instructed in Matthew 18. And it's our job to rebuke sin, to confront it, but we do it in the right way.

And this isn't an option, but it's an obligation. So what do you do? Well, first you go to that person one-on-one. Or if you don't feel comfortable going to that person one-on-one, you should just go to that person one-on-one.
Let's just say that. And then you go from there. And hopefully, and I think usually you'll find that you'll find you'll win your brother. There are cases where you go through all steps and you are left with the last and final decision, which is that person must be asked to leave the congregation.
But again, what purpose does that serve? That they'd be turned over, right? That the Holy Spirit would do what he needs to do with that person. So hopefully they repent of that sin and they're brought back into the fellowship of the church.
That's the goal. That's the objective is we don't want to just be mean and kick people out and act like they're not as good as we are. But we've done all that we can, all that we are required to do, all we're asked to do by Scripture for that individual.
[18:42] They do not want to receive our help. They don't want us to help them, disciple them through whatever they're going through. And so we're left with the only other option that we have, which is to turn them over to be worked over by the world and by the Holy Spirit.

And hopefully that they will come back to our fellowship. And if they do, we should rejoice, not whisper about, you know, hey, look, they're back. How much longer before they do something bad again?

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We got to kick them out of this place again. No, we rejoice and we're thankful and we welcome them back with open arms and are glad that our brother or sister is back with us.
And so it's important that we follow those steps. It's not easy. I don't think anybody enjoys church discipline. And if you do, I think there's something wrong with you. But it's necessary because we've got an obligation to one another to be used by the Lord to discipline one another, to rebuke sin for the purpose that we would grow in our Christ likeness and our church would be pure and holy as it's supposed to be so that we can be used as we would like to be, again, by God's spirit.
Once the sin of Ananias and Sapphira had been dealt with, the church was, right after this, it says, all together in Solomon's portico. There is always fear, again, within church leaders that discipline will lead to splits.
[20:13] And it can when it's not done properly. And so I think in the case of my friend with that pastor, that's probably what he was concerned about was that the church might be split over something like that.

But here we see that the opposite has happened. It says that they're all together and they were all together in the same place. They were continuing to worship. In fact, it didn't cause division amongst them because it was handled properly.
It created unity instead of division. Solomon's portico was a porch area that faced the court of the Gentiles. And it was the site, if you remember, in chapter 3 where Peter preaches his second sermon in the book of Acts.
This one was after the lame beggar had been healed. And it seems to be that this was a favorite gathering place for the believers, for Christians at this time where they would meet pretty frequently for prayer and for worship.
Luke then presents us with a paradoxical truth that reveals the impact that the early church's consistency had on the community. He writes, None of the rest, and that's speaking of unbelievers, dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem.
[21:27] So it's interesting here because the church's consistency in their beliefs, their uncompromising position against sin produced two reactions within the unbelieving community. The first was this, they dared not join them.

Why? Well, because they were consistent in their beliefs and they were uncompromising when it came to sin. So they knew that you couldn't join these Christians and be a phony, that you would be found out, that they were not desperate to draw a crowd, they would not overlook unrepented sin, they would not accept any, or proclaim any kind of easy believe-in-ism.
You had to be a true convert, convert, or you had to deal with what came from not being a true convert. You had to be the real deal.
And so these people knew that, and so they dared not join them. But, the second thing is that they held them in high esteem. Right?
They dared not join them, but they held them in high esteem. They were in awe of what God was doing through them, so they held them in high esteem, but when it came down to it, they loved their sin more than they loved God.
[22:44] So they weren't going to join them, but they held them in high esteem because these people practiced what they preached. John MacArthur, I want to read a quote to you from him on this passage.

He said, The church's consistency in their beliefs and their uncompromising position against sin produced a different reaction, though, in a different group of people.
So we have one group of people, the unbelievers. You know, I'm not going to join them, but I think what I see there is awesome because these people aren't hypocrites and God certainly is doing amazing things through them.
Then you had another group of people, right? And that was those who were being added by the Lord to the Christians and it says there that multitudes of both men and women were being added. The believers were characterized by their uncompromising and consistent holy living that reflected and testified to the transformative power of the gospel. And so people were seeing that these people are different.
[24:08] These people are much different from what I see and that was attractive to them and they were hearing the gospel, they were believing the gospel. So again, we have a group who to one, it was a fragrance from death to death to one, life to life.

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And so their numbers were growing and these Christians being committed to living to the high level that Christ called them to were being used by the Spirit to draw a lot of people in.
They were willing to follow and live the kind of life that Jesus prescribed that we should live. Turning your Bibles to Luke chapter 9, what's this life?
It's not easy and Jesus never said that it would be. Luke 9, 57 and we'll go through verse 62. As they were going along the road, someone said to him, I will follow you wherever you go.
And Jesus said to him, Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. To another he said, Follow me. But he said, Let me first go and bury my father.
[25:14] And Jesus said to him, Lead the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God. Yet another said, I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.

Jesus said to him, No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God. Another passage, Matthew 10, verse 34 through 39, where we see the high cost of following Christ.
Matthew 10, verse 34 through 39. Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace but a sword.
For I have come to set a man against his father and a daughter against her mother and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law and a person's enemies will be those of his household.
Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me and whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.
[26:21] Whoever finds his life will lose it and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. And so when we read these two passages of scripture, what is Jesus calling for?

Total commitment. Total commitment. Not half-hearted commitment. Total and complete commitment to him. And so a church made of people who are totally committed to Jesus who are uncompromising in regard to sin and who consistently live the Christian life will be a church that gives a powerful testimony to the world and they will be a church who God uses powerfully.
So the first feature of a church who experiences this kind of gospel community is uncompromising in their beliefs and they're consistent in their ministry, in their Christian lives.
What else is necessary to experience this kind of gospel community? Where we see the second thing is that the second feature of a church who experiences this kind of gospel community is that they are used mightily by the Holy Spirit.
So if you have a church like this filled with people like this, this is a church that God will use in powerful ways. Let's look at the beginning of verse 12 and then we'll look at verses 15 and 16 again.
[27:39] Beginning of verse 12, Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And then in verses 15 and 16, So that even, they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on them.

The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits and they were all healed. So verse 15 resumes the thought that was begun in verse 12 but the verses in between that we just covered are foundational to our understanding of this section of what is happening here.
The uncompromising and consistent position that the church held resulted in them being a pure channel by which the power of God could flow. God's not a hypocrite and he's not going to be using a church full of hypocrites and so these people were not.
They were the real deal. They were genuine believers and followers of Jesus Christ and so as a result of that the power of the Holy Spirit flowed through them in mighty ways.
If you remember the purpose of signs and wonders as we've discussed in previous studies was to confirm the apostles' claim to be messengers sent from God.
[29:04] So all of the signs and the wonders that they did testified that these were no ordinary men either that they were speaking the truth that Jesus Christ was in fact the Son of God that he did in fact raise from the dead and so all of those signs and wonders gave validity to the message that they were declaring.

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And if you recall we talked about there being two schools of thought today that exist in the church in regards to miraculous healings and speaking in tongues.
The first was cessationism or cessationists and continuationism. If you remember the difference between those two that basically the cessationists believed that those miracles served a purpose that was what I just told you and that now that's not necessary whereas a continuationist would say that we still can't experience the same kind of things today and if you remember my position was that I believe that with the passing of the apostles from the scene and the completion of scripture that the need of such miraculous signs and wonders and speaking in tongues ceased.
They're no longer necessary. They were a very unique ministry to the apostles. They were used as a sort of catalyst for that early church verifying again that the apostles message was true but all of them serving the purpose to point people back to Jesus Christ that he is the son of God right? That he died on the cross for our sins that he arose on the third day that he ascended into heaven where he waits at the right hand of the father and will be coming back soon. And so all of these things proved and validified that truth.
[30:58] The Bible does not say that Peter's shadow actually healed anyone merely that people believed it. That's kind of a confusing part because could it have? It could have. It doesn't say that that was the case just that these people knew that God was working powerfully through these men and so you know you could see how superstitions would begin and they were just hoping for the opportunity to be healed by these apostles.

While we won't see the Holy Spirit demonstrating his power through the same signs and wonders that the early church did, a church that is uncompromising and that is consistent today will also demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit through their being used as his instrument to reach lost people and to bring them to saving faith in Jesus Christ.
A church where the gospel is preached again uncompromisingly and consistently and where it is lived out uncompromisingly and consistently by the congregation will be a church that the Holy Spirit uses to bring transformation to a community and I believe that God wants to do that.
Why wouldn't he? Certainly in our times just like as in past times people need to hear the gospel and again God's not a hypocrite and God won't be mocked and so the people who are going to be used powerfully by him are going to be a people are going to have to be a people who are living pure and holy lives right and who are not compromising with sin who aren't sweeping things under the rug but they are discipling the people within their church helping them to grow in their Christ likeness maturing them nurturing them right and as a result of that God will do mighty things through a congregation who is like that and so we are in the midst of the NFL playoffs and it pains me to talk about them but I think this is a good illustration for tonight the New England Patriots and the question that I want us to go over real quickly and this does have to deal with the Bible study is who who gets most of the credit for their success
Tom Brady or Bill Belichick right the head coach and that's kind of the debate you know because Bill Belichick is seen as the genius who's put it together but he's been a head coach before not many people know that he was a head coach before New England with Cleveland and he didn't have nearly the amount of success so some people say well he wasn't really anything until Tom Brady came but if you remember Tom Brady was a late round draft pick he was a guy that nobody really wanted that nobody really believed in the Patriots drafted him late and in fact when he came to training camp he was competing to be the third string quarterback and after a series of events he became the starter none of them really had the kind of success that they've experienced apart from one another so who should get the credit who is who is most essential to the to the to the victories to the championships that the Patriots have accumulated well
[34:15] I don't think that we know maybe we will Tom Brady's getting old Bill Belichick is grouch he always seems unhappy he could retire anytime right and we look forward to the day when that evil empire is dismantled right amen but until that day until that day comes we don't know we don't know but but we do know that both are necessary right you got to have the guy who's calling in the plays who knows what he's talking about who can see the field and the guy on the on the field who can actually execute what he's being asked to do and so I bring that illustration before you because I want to say that it's essential for us as a church that not only do we have right doctrine right we believe what is true about the Bible we stand for that we're uncompromising when it comes to that we've also got to be living out the gospel in our churches and out in our community right it takes both it takes both if we're going to experience the kind of success that I know that we all want to see

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the Holy Spirit working through us is we've not only got to believe the right thing but we've got to do the right thing as well when a church is experiencing this kind of gospel culture they will be a church that God uses powerfully and then another thing I want to bring up is you remember in Revelations the seven churches and one of those churches is Ephesus and Ephesus was great when it came to their doctrine right and they're commended for that but what were they lacking they had left their first love they were grounded they were great when it came to their theology but they weren't living their they weren't living out that before their community right it seems like they were kind of huddled together and they were focused just on who was there and on having the right teaching but they were forgetting to take that teaching and share it with their community and loving that truth that God had given them then you had the church in Thyatira and they were kind of the opposite of Ephesus they were very loose when it came to their doctrine and their theology but they were a loving group of people and they had interaction with their community and so it's the vice versa you know where they were weak

Jesus calls them out and says that they needed to be strengthened in that way as well they couldn't be tolerant of sin they must be grounded in the truth where the Ephesians were so we've got to be a church that is both you know like Ephesus and its commitment to right teaching like Thyatira and its commitment to reaching out and loving the community and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ so I'm not suggesting that we rename our church to Ephetira or Thy Ephesus or anything like that Highland Park will suffice but you know what I'm saying and then the third feature we don't have time to get into this but I'll just say here that when a church is doing this and when the Holy Spirit is using them powerfully you can guarantee that they will be persecuted they will be persecuted and that's what we'll see next week is the persecution that they faced an uncompromising consistent powerful church will inevitably be provoked or provoke excuse me hostile reaction from the satanic world system but the good news is is that while it's not pleasant to be persecuted that ultimately persecution accomplishes the opposite of what Satan tries to do in persecuting us right to try to silence us but what actually happens is that it causes the church to grow and expand even more so we're in a win-win situation we shouldn't be afraid of persecution in fact we should rejoice when it comes let's pray
Lord God we thank you again for your word we thank you for the church God that we have been blessed by you to belong to a church such as this one God we are so thankful for the things that you have accomplished through this church Lord we're looking forward to the things that you will do through our church and Lord we pray that we would be the kind of church where we are grounded on the truth where we are uncompromising when it comes to sin but that we are reaching out and we are sharing this amazing truth that you've given us Lord that we aren't just teaching the gospel but that we're living it out everywhere that we go and that as a result of that people would would see us as being the genuine article and maybe they don't want to join us because they love their sin more but at least they know that we're the real deal and for others Lord that they would see that we have been transformed not because of anything that we've done to ourselves not because we've read some great self-help book or something like that but that you have transformed us
Lord that you have caused us to be born again you have given us new life and that new life we live is a result of who you are what you've accomplished and what you've done for us and so Father we pray that as we leave from this place tonight that you would challenge each of us to be living the kind of life that is necessary for the Holy Spirit to use our church in powerful powerful ways that give you glory and exalt the name of Jesus Christ in whose name we pray amen to to to to!
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