**MARCH 11, 2018 SERMON & COMMMUNITY GROUP NOTES**

1. **Stephen’s Death and the Church on Mission (Acts 7:54-8:4)**

* Read Acts 7:54-8:4 and summarize the story of Stephen’s death and its effects on the early church.
* What does Stephen’s death teach us about suffering persecution for Christ (Acts 7:54-60)?
* How does God use persecution for good in Acts 8:1-4? What does this teach us about our role as Jesus’ followers? (hint: quote from Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*)
* **Application**: Are you living on mission with Jesus? Are you an “informal/amateur missionary”, “gossiping” the gospel freely, informally, enthusiastically?

1. **Philip in Samaria: The Holy Spirit and Confronting Counterfeit Faith (Acts 8:5-25)**

* Read Acts 8:5-25 and summarize what happened under Philip’s ministry in Samaria.
* Acts 8:14-17 is hard to interpret. How would you interpret it? What does this passage teach us about the Holy Spirit?
* **Application**: Are YOU filled with the Spirit? Do you have divine power for service and holy living? If Yes, what is the evidence in your life? If No, will you ask God for more of His Holy Spirit?
* Why did Peter confront Simon (Acts 8:18-25)? How is Simon an example of counterfeit faith? What is the difference between genuine and counterfeit faith? (hint: James 2:19; Matthew 7:21-23; Ephesians 2:8-10)
* **Application**: Do you have a genuine or a counterfeit faith? If genuine, what is the fruit of true faith in your life? If not, are you willing to change? Would you begin a new relationship with God rooted in His grace?