**FEBRUARY 4, 2018 SERMON & COMMMUNITY GROUP NOTES**

1. **Don’t be Surprised by Persecution (Acts 4:1–4)**

* Observation: Read and retell the story of Acts 4:1-4 in your own words
* Interpretation: Why should we expect to be persecuted as Christians?
* Interpretation: What is good about persecution?
* Application: Are you surprised when Christians are persecuted, or do you expect it?

* Application: Do you believe persecution is part of God’s perfect plan for His church? For your life?

1. **Be Bold for Jesus amidst Persecution (Acts 4:5-13)**

* Observation: Read and retell the story of Acts 4:5-13 in your own words
* Interpretation: How is Peter an example of boldness in the midst of persecution in this text?
* Interpretation: Where does Peter’s boldness come from? (Hint: Acts 4:13)
* Application: Are you boldly proclaiming that salvation is through Jesus Christ alone regardless of what society says?
* Application: Does your relationship with Jesus give you boldness to testify of Him? Why/why not?

1. **Don’t Allow Persecution to Silence You (Acts 4:14-22)**

* Observation: Read and retell the story of Acts 4:14-22 in your own words
* Interpretation: What do governments often do when they cannot deny the power of Jesus/Christianity?
* Interpretation: How is Peter’s response to government in persecution in v. 19-20 an example for us to follow?
* Application: Are you boldly proclaiming that salvation is through Jesus Christ alone regardless of what society says?
* Application: Have YOU allowed persecution or cultural opposition to silence you? If so, why?
* Application: Does your relationship with Jesus give you boldness to testify of Him? Why/why not?

1. **How to Pray amidst Persecution (Acts 4:23-31)**

* Observation: Read and retell the story of Acts 4:23-31 in your own words
* Interpretation: What can we learn from the early church’s prayer about how to pray when your faith is on trial?
* Interpretation: What does v. 31 teach us about the filling with the Holy Spirit and boldness?
* Application: How will you change the way you pray based on Acts 4:23-30?
* Application: Are you filled with the Holy Spirit, with boldness to speak God’s word? Why/Why not?