

**Church - All Nations and All Generations:
Scattered to Multiply
Acts 5:17-8:4**

Why does God allow challenging circumstances that threaten the testimony of growing disciples in the local church?

God allows challenging circumstances to refine the unconditional obedience of his witnesses...

- I. In his victories over the pride of oppressive powers: courageous proclamation (Acts 5:12-42, Eph. 3:8-13).
 - a. Problem: Oppressive pride that seeks to censor the gospel message: cancel culture?
 - b. Solution: Courageous proclamation of his people - Christ is Lord in our victories.AP: Obedience means telling boldly and clearly – refining our message.

- II. In his sufficiency to meet our daily needs: faithful servant leadership (Acts 6:1-7).
 - a. Problem: The daily grind of our growing needs.
 - b. Solution: Raise a new generation of servant leaders - Christ is Lord in our ministries.AP: Obedience means serving regularly and faithfully – refining our character.

- III. In his carefully calibrated redemptive plan that allows our suffering to reach those beyond our comfort zone. Christ is Lord in our suffering (Acts 6:8-8:4).
AP: Obedience means choosing to be a life-giver for the sake of Jesus Christ.

**Conditional obedience believes a convenient, complacent, and comfortable “IF” gospel;
Unconditional obedience believes a courageous, committed, and cruciform “SINCE”
gospel.**

Which faith resembles yours the most?

1. Is there any “off limits” area of your life to God? If there are any areas where you have not yielded to the Lordship of Christ, chances are he will allow trials to grow your obedience. What will it take for you to say “your will be done?”
2. Are you currently sharing the gospel and serving others the way Christ did? If you are not, would that be a sign of disobedience?
3. God oftentimes makes us uncomfortable to reach the unreachable both inside us and outside of us. What has he been trying to reach in your life lately?