

Acts 16:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Analysis

And so were the churches established in the faith (αἱ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησίαι ἐστερεοῦντο τῇ πίστει)—The verb **established** (ἐστερεοῦντο, estereounto) means 'strengthened,' 'made firm,' or 'solidified,' from the root meaning 'solid' or 'hard.' Church health requires more than numerical growth—it demands doctrinal stability. **In the faith** (τῇ πίστει) refers to the body of apostolic teaching, not mere personal belief. This stability came through the Jerusalem Council's decree (Acts 15, delivered in vv. 4), which clarified gospel truth against legalistic distortion.

Increased in number daily (ἐπερίσσευον τῷ ἀριθμῷ καθ' ἡμέραν)—Growth follows establishment in truth. The imperfect tense (ἐπερίσσευον) indicates continuous, ongoing increase. Luke consistently notes numerical growth as evidence of God's blessing and the Spirit's power (Acts 2:47, 6:7, 9:31, 12:24). Healthy churches multiply—established believers reproduce spiritually.

Historical Context

Following the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), Paul and Silas revisited churches in Galatia, delivering the apostolic decree that freed Gentiles from ceremonial law while upholding moral standards. This doctrinal clarity produced both internal strength and external growth, demonstrating that theological precision and evangelistic fruitfulness are allies, not enemies.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does your church balance doctrinal depth with numerical growth—are they seen as competing or complementary?
2. What does it mean for a church to be 'established in the faith,' and how can believers contribute to this stability?

Interlinear Text

αἱ	μὲν	οὖν	ἐκκλησίαι	ἐστερεοῦντο	τῇ	πίστει	καὶ
G3588	And so	G3767	the churches	established	G3588	in the faith	and
	G3303		G1577	G4732		G4102	G2532
ἐπερίσσευον	τῷ	ἀριθμῷ	καθ'	ἡμέραν			
increased	G3588	in number	G2596	daily			
G4052		G706		G2250			

Additional Cross-References

Acts 9:31 (Parallel theme): Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

Acts 2:47 (Parallel theme): Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 6:7 (Faith): And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

1 Peter 5:10 (Parallel theme): But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Acts 15:41 (Parallel theme): And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

Acts 12:24 (Parallel theme): But the word of God grew and multiplied.