

# Acts Chapter 8:1-40 - Four Kinds of People

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## Message to Conversation Guide

1. The first type of person in this story is Saul, and Saul represents an “angry individual.” Read the verses below and analyze the intensity of Saul’s anger.

### Acts 8:1-3

8 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death.

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison. NIV

2. Saul represents someone that had a certain vision of the world. He dreamed of a world where everyone respected the Torah and the Jewish religion. Discuss how we can have an ideal picture in our mind of what the world should look like and react negatively when that ideal isn’t realized.
3. Some anger that people have is directed at God. They have an ideal picture of what this world is supposed to look like and when the world is filled with suffering and pain they get angry at God. How do the scriptures below give insight on why the world has pain and suffering in it?

### Rom 8:18-21

18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. NIV (also see Ge.2:16-17)

4. Philip represents the “compassionate and embracing individual” because he reached out and love people that others would not love or care for. The Samaritans were highly controversial in the Apostle’s day. Read the historical account below and discuss why the Samaritans would have been controversial to Jewish believers as well as what type of people we may be prejudiced against today.

### Acts 8:5-6

5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. 6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. NIV

**2 Kings 17:24** (see also **2 Kings 17:25-31, 32 - 41**)

24 The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim and settled them in the towns of Samaria to replace the Israelites. They took over Samaria and lived in its towns.

5. Simon was the “ambitious egotistical individual.” What traits did he have that confirms he was egotistical and ambitious?

**Acts 8:9-13**

9 Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, 10 and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." 11 They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. 12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. NIV

**Acts 8:18-23**

18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money 19 and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." 20 Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! 21 You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. 22 Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. 23 For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin." NIV

6. Ethiopian Eunuch was a “spiritually hungry individual.” What phrases in the passages below point to his spiritual hunger?

**Acts 8:26-29**

26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road — the desert road — that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." 27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." NIV (see also Acts 8:34-39)

