



# COURAGEOUS FAITH

THE BOOK OF ACTS

Bible study for the week starting September 25, 2022

## SHARE

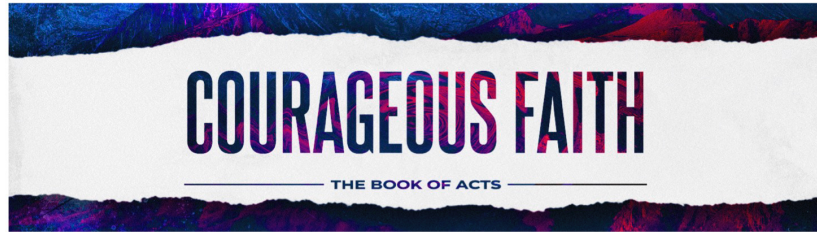
1. Can you think of a time when you passionately argued for something and ended up being wrong? What was it like when you had to “eat crow” (or did you never admit it)?

## READ/STUDY/DISCUSS

2. Read **Acts 8:1-4**. Saul was passionate for his cause, and likely thought he was doing the Lord’s work. Stephen had been passionate for his cause and clearly thought he was doing the Lord’s work. What would you say Saul’s motivation and goal were? What would you say Stephen’s motivation and goal were?
3. Read **Galatians 1:11-14** (read also **1 Cor. 15:9**, **Philippians 3:5-6**, and **Acts 26:9-11**). How does Paul talk about his former life as he communicates later on in life? How does this acknowledgement color some of the other ways he communicated and operated later in life?
4. Read **Luke 16:19-31**. Jesus tells the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; what’s His lesson? Why is it so hard to convince anyone of pretty much anything? How does this translate to conversion to the Christian faith?
5. Paul’s persecution of the Church ended up being a catalyst for mission, as what Jesus had promised was fulfilled: they became His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. Why does God sometimes have to make people uncomfortable to accomplish His mission?

## PRAY

6. Pray that God would give you properly-placed courage, and for all other requests that come up.



## Courageous Faith: Enter Saul

Acts 8:1-4

September 25, 2022 – Pastor Eric Van Scharrel

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It matters about WHO and WHAT you're courageous.

With the BEST of intentions, Saul tried with all his heart, soul, strength, and mind to wipe the Christian Church off the face of the earth.

The stoning of Stephen opened the floodgates of PERSECUTION.

Saul RAVAGES the church, going from house to house.

Saul, enemy #1 for the church, was a MISSION CATALYST.

“Now those who were SCATTERED went about preaching the Word” – out of their LAMENTATION of their loss of Stephen came PROCLAMATION of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

DANGER + PAIN + God's HOLY SPIRIT = COURAGE

The Church GROWS when it is CENTERED on the Gospel, when believers are UNIFIED, and when the Church is PERSECUTED.

- There are less ATHEISTS worldwide than there were in 1970, even though the world population has more than doubled.
- The Christian Church is growing fastest in AFRICA and ASIA, especially in countries that are not majority Christian.
- The fastest-growing evangelical church in the world can be found in IRAN, the only Islamic theocracy in the world.

People are watching how you LIVE and how you DIE.

*For next week, read Acts 8:5-25.*