

## **“Good News”: A Series in the Gospels (Part 7)**

The Gospel of Luke tells the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The companion to the Gospel account Luke wrote was Acts, which retells the work of Jesus' Spirit after His ascension, and the story of the movement of people He inspired.

**Chapters 1-7:** Jesus renews the people of Israel by His Spirit and prepares them to announce the Good News to the nations

### **Summary of Acts 8-12:**

Our final message on Acts Ch. 8-12 explores how God's Spirit transformed Jesus' followers from a small collective of messianic Jews in Jerusalem, into a multi-ethnic movement that quickly spread throughout the nations.

The good news message spread out from Jerusalem after the persecution the disciples encountered at the stoning of Stephen.

Phillip- (8:4-40) Samaria (Simon the Sorcerer) and The Road from Jerusalem to Gaza (Ethiopian government official)

Peter- (9:32-43) Lydda (Aeneas), Joppa (Tabitha), (10:1-48) Caesarea (Cornelius and family- first Gentile convert), and back to (11:1-18 esp 15-18) Jerusalem (explains his actions)

Barnabas- (11:19-30) Antioch (first multi-ethnic church; first time they were called Christians- “Christ one's”)

Saul/Paul- (before- 8:1-3; 9:1-2) persecuting Christians in Jerusalem (overseeing the execution of Stephen), sets off to Damascus to continue his persecution (encounters Jesus on his way), his heart is instantly changed (after- 9:3-31) and his ways begin to change as well (the scales have to fall off our heart before they will fall off our eyes) and Saul, who now becomes Paul (God will change our name from doubt, discouragement, fear, failure, etc. to His Beloved as He calls us to great and mighty things for Him) immediately begins to share His Salvation Story with others and eventually travels all over the known-world preaching the Gospel (good news of Jesus) and winds up writing approx half of the New Testament.

Think about how God can truly turn a life around for His glory.

God takes what has been labeled “unclean” by the spirit of the world and declares it/us “clean” in Jesus' name!

-Simon the Sorcerer- I've never met a witch/Wiccan I didn't love

-Ethiopian Government Official- I've never met a politician I didn't love

-Cornelius (Gentile)- I've never met someone of a different race, culture or ethnicity that I didn't love

We so often want to choose *between* TRUTH and LOVE when we must ALWAYS choose *both*. We must speak the truth in love. We must live in the tension between the two, asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Jesus always spoke the truth in love. He never spoke the truth to anyone He didn't love. Lord, help us to be the same.