

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FROM JANUARY 15/16 SERMON

If you missed the sermon, find it at biblechapel.org/sermons.

ICEBREAKER: If you had to delete all but three apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep? *(Courtesy of Mike Hershey)*

1. **Read Acts 8:1-3 and Acts 22:20; 1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13, 23; Phil. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:13.** Discuss how Paul expressed his regret about persecuting the church, and discuss God's great grace and forgiveness.
2. Okay—for some fun. Discuss whether or not you think Simon was a true believer. Be sure to explain why.

3. Talk about ways people try to earn their way to God.

Why do many people have a hard time understanding and accepting grace?

4. If you stood before God and he said, "Why should I let you into my heaven?" How would you answer?

BIBLE REFERENCES

Acts 8:1-3 ESV

Saul Ravages the Church

8 And Saul approved of his execution.

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. ³ But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

Acts 22:20 ESV

²⁰ And when the blood of Stephen your witness was being shed, I myself was standing by and approving and watching over the garments of those who killed him.'

1 Corinthians 15:9 ESV

⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

Galatians 1:13; 23 ESV

¹³ For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.

²³ They only were hearing it said, "He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."

Philippians 3:6 ESV

⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law,^[a] blameless.

1 Timothy 1:13 ESV

¹³ though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief,

Source: biblegateway.com