

“The Gospel Goes to the Gentiles”
Acts 8:1-40, Part 1. vv. 1-4
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**Introduction: “Saul, Samaritans, Sorcerers and
 Southerners”**

975 Sent. ‘So send I you.’

*So send I you to labour unrewarded,
 To serve unpaid, unsought, unloved, unknown,
 To bear reproach, to suffer scorn and scoffing,
 So send I you to toil for Me alone.*

*So send I you, to bind, the bruised and broken,
 O'er wand'ring souls to work, to weep, to wake,
 To bear the burdens of a world weary:
 So send I you to suffer for my sake.*

*So send I you to loneliness and longing,
 With heart a-hung'ring for the loved and known
 Forsaking home and kindred, friend and dear one,
 So send I you to know my love alone.*

*So send I you to leave your life's ambition,
 To die to dear desire, self-will resign,
 To labour long, and love where men revile you,
 So send I us to lose your life in mine.*

I'm not certain that I can live the admonitions of this great poem. It's one of my favorites, and it is deeply convicting. This poem tells us exactly what God expects of us. I've chosen to place it here because I believe that the life of Stephen exemplified the high calling of this poetry. An unexpected murderer and legalist will also come face to face with the living Lord Jesus. His life will be

changed and then he will change the world. Saul will become Paul and he will be one of the greatest Christians that's ever walked this sod.

John 8:1-11

The woman caught in adultery was a pitiful, bruised, and broken soul. Jesus poses a challenge to all the self-righteous— *“If you have not sinned, cast the first stone.”*

Jesus has sent us to the down and outs. We are called to take the Gospel to the wrong side of the tracks.

Some great Christians have come from the wrong side of the tracks (Paul). Many who have done some pretty despicable things have found the love and grace of God. His Grace even reaches me.

To think that every salvation experience is anything short of a miracle. We should never misunderstand the devastating nature of sin. It takes as much blood to save a moral person as a heathen. We are all sinners. We need Jesus not because of what we do, but because of who we are.

5707 How Heavy is Sin?

A flippant young man asked a preacher. “You say that unsaved people carry a weight of sin. I feel nothing. *How heavy is sin?* Is it ten pounds? Eighty pounds?”

The preacher replied by asking the youth. “If you laid a 400-pound weight on a corpse, would it fill the load?” The youth replied, “It would feel nothing because it is dead.” The preacher concluded, “The spirit of the sinner is also dead, which feels no load of sin or is indifferent to its burden and flippant about its presence.” The young man was silenced!

Can God save anyone? Is there a place too dark for Christ? Is there a person God cannot reach? Is there a realm God cannot overcome?

Isaiah 59:1-2

¹*“Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save,
nor his ear too dull to hear.*

²*But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear.”*

Saul thought the Gentile “dogs” were unredeemable. He persecuted the church, which was congruent with persecuting Jesus. Jesus actually asks Saul during his conversion experience why he was persecuting the Lord. How amazing is our God? Jesus saved the high priest of persecution and taught him to love the people that he was murdering. That is redemption. That is salvation. That is a change only God can bring about. The man who consented to the persecution of the church would one day write this...

Eph 2:13-14

*13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are
made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

*14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken
down the middle wall of partition between us;*

KJV

*So send I you, to bind, the bruised and broken,
O'er wand'ring souls to work, to weep, to wake,
To bear the burdens of a world aweary:
So send I you to suffer for my sake.*

I. Saul is Associated with Persecution: vv. 1-4

What greater way to introduce us to the migration of the gospel to the Gentiles than to have the apostle to the Gentiles leading the way. Saul is not an apostle at this point; he's not even a Christian. We will see in Chapter 9 that the Lord Jesus deals with his heart and humbles him down. At first, Saul was devastating to the church. He believed his cause was just and empowered by the state and religious councils; Saul was deadly. Then God paid him a visit.

Acts 7:57-58

57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

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Acts 9:1-6

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. 3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "**Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?**" 5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. 6 "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

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By the way, If you are not on team Jesus, you are a persecutor of the church. You never want to harm the church, intentionally or unintentionally.

Gotquestions.com: There is much we can learn from the life of the apostle Paul. Far from ordinary, Paul was given the opportunity to do extraordinary things for the kingdom of God. The story of Paul is a story of redemption in Jesus Christ and a testimony that no one is beyond the saving grace of the Lord. However, to gain the full measure of the man, we must examine his dark side and what he symbolized before becoming “the Apostle of Grace.” Paul’s early life was marked by religious zeal, brutal violence, and the relentless persecution of the early church. Fortunately, the later years of Paul’s life show a marked difference as he lived his life for Christ and for the advancement of His kingdom.

Paul was actually born as Saul. He was born in Tarsus in Cilicia, a province in the southeastern corner of modern-day Turkey, in the first decade AD. He was of Benjamite lineage and Hebrew ancestry ([Philippians 3:5-6](#)). His parents were Pharisees—fervent Jewish nationalists who adhered strictly to the Law of Moses—who sought to protect their children from “contamination” from the Gentiles. Anything Greek would have been despised in Saul’s household, yet he could speak Greek and passable Latin. His household would have spoken Aramaic, which was the official language of Judea. Saul’s family were Roman citizens but viewed Jerusalem as a truly sacred and holy city ([Acts 22:22-29](#)).

At age thirteen Saul was sent to Judea to learn from a rabbi named Gamaliel, under whom Saul mastered Jewish history, the Psalms, and the works of the prophets. His education

would continue for five or six years as Saul learned such things as dissecting Scripture ([Acts 22:3](#)). It was during this time that he developed a question-and-answer style of teaching known in ancient times as “diatribe.” This method of articulation helped rabbis debate the finer points of Jewish law to either defend or prosecute those who broke the law. Saul went on to become a lawyer, and all signs pointed to his becoming a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court of 71 men who ruled over Jewish life and religion. Saul was zealous for his faith, and this faith did not allow for compromise. It is this zeal that led Saul down the path of religious extremism.

In [Acts 5:27–42](#), Peter delivered his defense of the gospel and of Jesus in front of the Sanhedrin, **[which Saul would have heard](#)**. Gamaliel was also present and delivered a message to calm the council and prevent them from stoning Peter. Saul might also have been present at the trial of Stephen. He was present for his stoning and death; he held the garments of those who did the stoning ([Acts 7:58](#)). After Stephen’s death, “a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem” ([Acts 8:1](#)). Saul became determined to eradicate Christians, ruthless in his pursuit as he believed he was acting in the name of God. Arguably, there is no one more frightening or more vicious than a religious terrorist, especially when he believes he is doing the will of the Lord by killing innocent people. This is exactly what Saul of Tarsus was: a religious terrorist. [Acts 8:3](#) states, “He began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.”

The pivotal passage in Paul's story is [Acts 9:1-22](#), which recounts Paul's meeting with Jesus Christ on the road from Jerusalem to Damascus, a journey of about 150 miles. Saul was angered by what he had seen and filled with murderous rage against the Christians. Before departing on his journey, he had asked the high priest for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for permission to bring any Christians (followers of "the Way," as they were known) back to Jerusalem to imprison them. On the road Saul was caught in a bright light from heaven that caused him to fall face down on the ground. He heard the words, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" He replied, "Who are you Lord?" Jesus answered directly and clearly, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (verses 4-5). As an aside, this might not have been Saul's first encounter with Jesus, as some scholars suggest that young Saul might have known of Jesus and that he might have actually witnessed His death.

From that moment on, Saul's life was turned upside down. The light of the Lord blinded him, and as he traveled on he had to rely on his companions. As instructed by Jesus, Saul continued to Damascus to make contact with a man named [Ananias](#), who was hesitant at first to meet Saul because he knew Saul's reputation as an evil man. But the Lord told Ananias that Saul was a "chosen instrument" to carry His name before the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel ([Acts 9:15](#)) and would suffer for doing so ([Acts 9:16](#)). Ananias followed the Lord's instructions and found Saul, on whom he laid hands, and told him of his vision of Jesus

Christ. Through prayer, Saul received the Holy Spirit ([Acts 9:17](#)), regained his sight, and was baptized ([Acts 9:18](#)). Saul immediately went into the synagogues and proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God ([Acts 9:20](#)). The people were amazed and skeptical, as Saul's reputation was well known. The Jews thought he had come to take away the Christians ([Acts 9:21](#)), but he had in fact joined them. Saul's boldness increased as the Jews living in Damascus were confounded by Saul's arguments proving that Jesus was the Christ ([Acts 9:22](#)).

Saul spent time in [Arabia](#), Damascus, Jerusalem, Syria, and his native Cilicia, and Barnabas enlisted his help to teach those in the church in Antioch ([Acts 11:25](#)). Interestingly, the Christians driven out of Judea by the persecution that arose after Stephen's death founded this multiracial church ([Acts 11:19-21](#)).

Saul took his first of three missionary journeys in the late AD 40s. As he spent more time in Gentile areas, Saul began to go by his Roman name Paul ([Acts 13:9](#)). Paul wrote many of the New Testament books. Most theologians are in agreement that he wrote Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus. These thirteen "letters" (epistles) make up the "Pauline Authorship" and are the primary source of his theology. As previously noted, the book of Acts gives us a historical look at Paul's life and times. The apostle Paul spent his life proclaiming the risen Christ Jesus throughout the Roman world, often at great personal peril ([2 Corinthians 11:24-27](#)). It is assumed that Paul died a

martyr's death in the mid-to-late AD 60s in Rome.

So, what can we learn from the life of the apostle Paul? **First**, we learn that God can save anyone. The remarkable story of Paul repeats itself every day as sinful, broken people all over the world are transformed by God's saving grace in Jesus Christ. Some of these people have done despicable things to other human beings, while some just try to live a moral life thinking that God will smile upon them on the day of judgment. When we read the story of Paul, we are amazed that God would allow into heaven a religious extremist who murdered innocent women and children. Today, we might see terrorists or other criminals as unworthy of redemption because their crimes against humanity are just too great. The story of Paul is a story that can be told today—he isn't worthy in our eyes of a second chance, yet God granted him mercy. The truth is that every person matters to God, from the "good, decent," average person to the "wicked, evil," degenerate one. Only God can save a soul from hell.

Second, we learn from the life of Paul that anyone can be a humble, powerful witness for Jesus Christ. Arguably, no other human figure in the Bible demonstrated more humility while sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ as Paul. [Acts 20:19](#) tells us that he "served the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to [him] through the plots of the Jews." In [Acts 28:31](#), Paul shares the good news of Jesus Christ: "Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ." Paul was not afraid to tell others what the Lord

had done for him. Paul spent all his days, from conversion to martyrdom, working tirelessly for the kingdom of God.

Finally, we learn that anyone can surrender completely to God. Paul was fully committed to God. In [Philippians 1:12–14](#), Paul wrote from prison, “I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.” Despite his circumstances, Paul praised God and continually shared the good news (see also [Acts 16:22–25](#) and [Philippians 4:11–13](#)). Through his hardships and suffering, Paul knew the outcome of a life well lived for Christ. He had surrendered his life fully, trusting God for everything. He wrote, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” ([Philippians 1:21](#)). Can we make the same claim?

Acts 8:1-3

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.

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The shock to the NT church must have been inordinate after the death of the churches’ most prominent deacon (Stephen). The

blood of the first Christian martyr was spilled, and what happened after that? The church began to spread and grow, rapidly. The church started and has grown out of the blood of the martyrs.

The seeds of persecution that we saw planted in Acts 3 after the healing of a man who was crippled and Peter's first sermon that followed are here displayed in full bloom. Never forget the first words in Acts 4:1.

Acts 4:1-4 (The Seeds of Persecution)

1 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. 2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3 They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 4 But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

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The persecution was first directed at the apostles, and in the latter part of 7, and the beginning of 8, the persecution moved to the lay people. Until our present day, it has not changed. Every Christian is now persecuted for the gospel's sake.

We are told that the persecution (**diogmos**) in Jerusalem was great or severe. The most important word in these few verses is the word **scattered**. The persecution accomplished the will of God. It was time for Christians to move away from Jerusalem and into Gentile territories. Remember that persecution always grows the church and provides opportunities for spiritual growth. Also note how long the church grew before God had Saul ready to be Paul and lead the church. The timing of all this shows us the sovereign hand of God working. The church had started, and God

was grooming Saul to be Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. Time, and timing, are in the hands of the Father.

Scatters- diaspiros. The English word **diaspora** comes from this word. This word refers to sowing seeds. This means to scatter. To distribute in foreign lands. Abroad. This verb is a passive verb. The scattering was caused by an outside source... God. We are called to scatter the seed of the gospel separately and in different places.

Notice the fulfilled words of Jesus...Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all **Judea and Samaria**, and to the ends of the earth." This is the fulfillment of the plan, scattering seeds in another region. May we conclude that a church that does not scatter gospel seeds cannot claim to be a church?

In verse 2, we see the difference between the hearts of godly people and infidels. Saul agreed with the murder of Stephen. Devout men deeply mourned (**Kopetos**) to beat the breast) God's man and buried him with dignity. The unbelievers (Saul) were ravaging the church.

Ravaging- lumainomai, to make Havok of. To ravage or waste. Metaphorically, it means to disgrace as by insult, to treat with indignity, injure, or destroy. Rogers says this was continual ravaging with physical injury compared to the mangling of a wild beast. In Psalm 80:13 (LXX) the picture is given of a boar rooting up vines in a vineyard.

Ps 80:13

13 Boars from the forest ravage it
and the creatures of the field feed on it.

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Saul and his cronies were going into churches and houses and dragging believers out and putting them in jail. ***They were literally rooting up the church.*** Christians met in secret in small groups for safety. Small groups were not a church growth philosophy but a mode of survival.

The result of the persecution was evangelism. Verse 4 tells us that the church began to move and evangelize. God always blesses in persecution.

Euaggelizo- to declare, to bring good tidings, to preach or herald the gospel or good news.

The job of the NT church is to evangelize the lost world.

1 Thess 2:2-5

2 We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you His **gospel** in spite of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the **gospel**. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.

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2 Tim 1:10-12

10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the **gospel**. 11 And of this **gospel** I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.

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Eph 3:7

7 I became a servant of this **gospel** by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

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Rom 1:1-3

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the **gospel** of God— 2 the gospel he promised

beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures
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Rom 15:16

16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the **gospel** of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

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Rom 15:17-21

17 Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. 18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done— 19 by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the **gospel** of Christ. 20 It has always been my ambition to preach the **gospel** where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.

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II. The Gospel Reaches **Samaria through Philip the Evangelist (A lowly place). Part 2. vv. 5-8**

- Who are the Samaritans? Verse 5
- What is the significance of Samaria and Judea?

John MacArthur Quote:

“Beginning his evangelistic work, Philip went down from the high plateau of Jerusalem to the city of Samaria, located some forty

miles north of Jerusalem. It was the ancient capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, founded by Omri (1 Kings 16:24), who moved the capital there from Tirzah.

(Philip is the only man called an Evangelist in Scripture (21:8)).

(Read 2 Kings 17:32 ff - Ezra 4:1-3)

After nearly a century and a half of idolatry and rebellion against God, the city fell to the Assyrians under Shalmaneser V in 722 B.C. (2 Kings 17:1-6; 18:9-12). Samaria's downfall marked the end of the Northern Kingdom. Many of its people were resettled in other lands by the Assyrians (2 Kings 17:6), who also located people from other nations in that region (2 Kings 17:24ff.). **The resulting mix of Jews and Gentile peoples became known as the Samaritans.** Second Kings 17:33 records their religious syncretism: *"They feared the Lord and served their gods according to the custom of the nations from among whom they had been carried away into exile."*

Friction soon developed between the Samaritans and the Israelites. When some Samaritans offered to help rebuild the temple, they were contemptuously rejected-despite their claims to be worshipers of the true God (Ezra 4:1-3). Hostility between Jews and Samaritans grew during the intertestamental period, and hostility was manifest during New Testament times (cf. Luke 9:52-53; John 4:9; 8:48).

The Lord had defied conventional opinion by announcing his Messiahship to a Samaritan woman, setting an example of His commitment to the world and to sinners (cf. John 4:4ff) Jesus' express command in Acts 1:8 was initially fulfilled by Philip, who began proclaiming Christ to the Samaritans.

Proclaiming is from *kērussō* which means "to proclaim publicly," or "herald." By New Testament times, the Samaritans had shed their idolatry. They now worshiped the true God—although it was after their own confused fashion, which Jesus described as "worshiping that which you do not know" (cf. John 4:20-24). The Samaritans, like the Jews, looked for the coming of the Messiah (John 4:25). Given that foundation of belief, Stephen could simply proclaim Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. With some, we need to spend time in pre-evangelism, tearing down their false system of belief and proving the truth of Christianity. Only then will they be prepared to understand the gospel message. Others, like these Samaritans, already have that background. They are ready to hear the gospel. The Big Question? **Are we willing to reach Samaritans?**

Matthew 16:19 Keys to the Kingdom

Matt 16:13-20

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 **I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven;** whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20

Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

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Remember the keys to the Kingdom: Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8 – Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, World.

Acts 1-7 - Gospel to Jews in Jerusalem. **Key 1** Pentecost chapter 2.

Acts 8:15 – Judea/Samaria, **Key 2**

Acts 10:44 – Gentiles and the Rest of the world. **Key 3**

Matthew 16:19 – Jesus gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom.

In each place that Peter visited, the Holy Spirit confirmed salvation through the Holy Spirit.

* So what was the result of all this destruction? These Christians went into hiding. The church ceased to exist, and because of fear, the Gospel of Jesus Christ was snuffed out forever!! No! No! No! No!

The disciples carried the life-saving message of Jesus everywhere they went. You back Christians up against a wall and they will climb it and keep preaching.

And what, dear friend, did Philip do when he went to the Samaritans?

Verse 5: Did he take the latest fads of the Greek Philosophers? No – Did he try to raise a political movement to control Rome? No. Did he tell these outcasts that they were victims of history and God would surely understand their plight? No! Did Philip tell the people they had been oppressed and were going to heaven because they had been mistreated? No!

Acts 8:5

5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there.

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What happens when we preach the Messiah? Just preach Jesus. Lets skip ahead just a bit! Look at verse 12.

Verse 12: Philip went to them with the book. The Bible. The Old Testament Scriptures. Philip, in verse 12, is said to have told

them about the Good News. He shared the message of the Kingdom. He shared with them the Christ – The name of Jesus Christ.

Philip Preached and Proclaimed!

To preach is **εὐαγγελίζομαι** – To preach. Present middle participle. God was preaching through Philip. Philip was anointed or assisted by God. Philip was an anointed preacher. May I ask you to pray that God would anoint and assist your pastor in my entire ministry and especially in my preparation and pulpit ministry?

To Proclaim, preach – **κηρῦσσω** – Imperfect Verb in v. 5 Kept on preaching Christ. 2 Tim 4:2 - same word. Preach the word. The grammar there means not to begin to preach, but make preaching your “Priority,” and keep on preaching.

“The Preacher's Priority or Imperative.”

2 Tim 4:2-3

2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction.

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In 1943 – H. A. Ironside said this about Philip—

He did not go to them with what some people call the ‘Social Gospel;’ he did not go to talk to them on political subjects, but he went down to preach Christ. The message of God’s servants today should be the same as his, for “the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

Philip had one message and one Person to present to the people: the message of redemption and the Person of Christ who accomplished that redemption. And these poor, despised Samaritans, hated by the Jews because of their religious differences, “with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.”

Verse 6:

~Why were the Samaritans so ready to receive the Word? Jesus had been there. Jesus Himself laid the groundwork.

~It is so amazing to see God work through tragedy, pain, and persecution to bring salvation to the world. He is Sovereign.

Saul thought he had destroyed the church. Jesus was just getting started.

Verse 6 – They heard and saw the miracles. Genuine miracles never contradict the Word.

- * This is the Power of God in action.
- * When God moves, people listen.
- * If I could get this same thing to happen every time I preach, it would be glorious.

Verse 6 says the people paid “close attention.” The word is **prosecho (Imperfect verb)**. It means to give heed. To listen so that you may give a favorable response. To be cautious. To pay attention. To apply yourself to something (Earle, in loc).

- echo- hold
- pros- to
- Originally has **ton noun** (The mind) added with it.
- Altogether, it refers **to holding the mind** to something. So the word **prosecho** means that the Samaritans were

listening intently; they were holding to or giving attention to the message as Philip preached.

- **Homothumadon**- to speak in unity. **Homou**- together and **thumos**- passion. The Samaritans passionately spoke the same words about the message Philip preached because they were all listening so intently.
- God, please grant me this blessing.

Illustration:

This might be the most unexplainable spiritual principle I know and see. Why, or how, can one person sit in the same room, hear the same message, see the same power and be unaffected? One man gets broken, and the man sitting right next to him builds the callousness of his heart. The same sun that melts the snow...hardens the clay.

Question: The most important question you may ever be asked.

If you see His power, if the Word has been shared, if you hear it, right now! If you know that God reaches out to Samaritans. Why! Why! Why do you turn away and not believe in Jesus?

Think hard – everybody in this room.

If you refuse to allow Christ in – Why? Give me a reason.

There is no good reason to go to hell.

Verse 7 The power of God was on the people.

“It’s painful when we clean house.” Shrieks – means to cry aloud. Evil was dealt with.

When God comes in – evil goes out. We do not like to admit to evil.

A word of caution - Do not partake in extremist spiritual activities. Jesus will bind Satan at the proper time. (Rev. 20:1-3).

We will deal with this aspect of controlling the spiritual world when we come to Acts 19:13-16.

Acts 19:13-16

13 Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." 14 Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15 [One day] the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

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John MacArthur – We are to do spiritual warfare as it says to you in Ephesians 6:10-18. Don't claim spiritual authority you have not scripturally been given. We pray in Jesus' name.

Eph 6:10-18

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of

prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

NIV

Illustration:

Benny Hinn claims to have raised the dead, seen a man turn into a snake, and to have the gift of healing. He claims to have validated his healings medically. As reported on a major newscast, – He does not! A check with people who were cured of cancer was unsuccessful. **The people were all dead!** People say these faith healers are unaffected by their chicanery, but they are affected. These men are possessed by the Devil already. They are hell bound.

We have been called to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. We are not to carry the Gospel in a train with a traveling show or circus.

Verse 8: I love John MacArthur’s comments here about joy!

“As true biblical preaching inevitably does, it produced another vastly different response. Some accepted the gospel, believing and reacting with **much rejoicing**. They were the true believers, the wheat. Their joy came not just from physical deliverance from diseases, or spiritual deliverance from demons, but from complete deliverance from sin through the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Others, however, were false believers, or tares. Such a man was Simon Magus, the subject of the following narrative.

“Happiness depends on what happens – Joy depends on the Lord.”
-Adrian Rogers

Closing: The Prodigal Son – The Ultimate Samaritan

Luke 15:17 –

- “He came to his senses.”
- “Went to his Father.”
- “I have sinned.”

I’m asking you to do that-