

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did persecution have such a positive effect on the church?
2. Is persecution necessary for Christians? Why?
3. What requirements are necessary to preach the gospel?
4. What is the responsibility of believers in spreading God's Word?
5. What made the preaching in Samaria so successful?
6. What was wrong with Simon's attitude? What was right?

SUMMARY:

When Stephen had been slain, Saul gained boldness to persecute the Christians. The Church was scattered, and with it the Word of God and the preaching of Christ was spread. What a testimony of a work of Satan that backfired and became an instrument used of God to further His cause!

Many in Samaria believed and the Holy Spirit was bestowed upon the believers. This was a time of great rejoicing as the disciples witnessed the spread of the gospel into this area. This was another step in Jesus' command (Acts 1:8) to be witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and now in Samaria. The next step still waited to be accomplished, namely witnessing to the uttermost parts of the earth.

NOTES:

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bible Lesson #2

January 12, 2003

First Quarter

THE OUTREACH OF THE CHURCH

LESSON TEXT: *Acts 8:1-25*

LESSON SETTING: Jerusalem and throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria.

TIME: Approximately 34-35 AD

I. THE CHURCH IS SCATTERED. Acts 8:1-4

- A. Persecution (vs. 1) Matthew 5:11; 10:22
- B. Imprisonment (vs. 3) Acts 5:18; 16:23
- C. Dispersion (vs. 1, 4) Matthew 26:31; Acts 11:19

II. THE REVIVAL SPREADS. Acts 8:5-13

- A. Preaching Christ (vs. 5) Psalm 51:13; Ephesians 4:11; 2 Corinthians 4:5
- B. Receiving the Word (vs. 6, 13) Acts 11:2; Acts 17:11

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GIVEN. Acts 8:14-17

- A. Prayer for the believers (vs. 15) John 17:9; Ephesians 1:15-16
- B. Holy Spirit received (vs. 17) Acts 10:44; Acts 13:52; 19:6

IV. SIN IS JUDGED. Acts 8:18-25

- A. Bribery (vs. 18) Exodus 23:8; Mark 14:11
- B. Sacrilege (vs. 19) Daniel 5:2; Matthew 21:13
- C. Reproof (vs. 20-25) Luke 17:3; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20

GOLDEN TEXT: *THEY THAT WERE SCATTERED ABROAD WENT EVERYWHERE PREACHING THE WORD.*

Acts 8:4

NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON: Acts 8:26-40

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES: Isaiah 53:1-12; Psalm 2:1-8;
Romans 10:8-18

QUARTERLY THEME: The First Church Officers

TOPIC: PERSONAL WITNESSING

INTRODUCTION:

As we studied previously, Philip was one of the Christians who was scattered when the early church was persecuted. Philip had gone to Samaria and spoke openly about Christ. The people heard him and gladly gave heed to the things he spoke.

Why was Philip different than most Christians today? His heart was filled with love for Jesus and he was deeply impressed and full of joy in the knowledge of what Jesus had done for him.

Because he was active in witnessing without any special direction, God was able to use him in a specific way. He knew Philip, who showed such zeal, would also be quick to obey without questioning. Thus the Lord spoke through His angel and instructed Philip to go into a desert highway. Perhaps the average person would have complained because the desert way would be barren and isolated, but he went and received the opportunity to witness. This man went to his own country and had the opportunity to become a witness to countless others about the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you have the same kind of love for the Lord and zeal Philip had for the Lord's work, you too can be used as he was.

CENTRAL TRUTH: If we are willing, the Holy Spirit will guide us into effective service for God and others.

GOLDEN TEXT: *AS MANY AS ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD,
THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD.*

Romans 8:14

We should think, as we consider this verse, what makes a relationship between a father and a son or daughter. A child is loved by the parents, but also is subject to the leading and training of the parents. During childhood the very life of a child depends on this training and submission to it. In fact, this relationship and obedience supersedes any other relationship such as teacher and pupil, citizen and governor, etc.

It is only natural then, that those who are sons of God must be led by His Spirit. Being led also means being submissive. There is a big difference in being led and being dragged. God will never "drag" or force anyone who rebels against Him, but He will lead into all righteousness one who wants to become a child of God.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF January 13 - 19

M. A Fruitful Witness. Isaiah 55:1-13

T. *A Personal Witness. Acts 8:26-40

W. A Faithful Witness. 2 Corinthians 4:5-15

T. A Hopeful Witness. Galatians 6:1-10

F. A Good Witness. 1 Timothy 6:11-21

S. A Steadfast Witness. 2 Timothy 4:1-8

S. A Patient Witness. James 5:7-20