

Acts 8:1-25

Missions Begin

Good morning church, it is such a joy to be here with you this morning.

We welcome those of you watching online as well, we are glad you could join with us, as we continue our study of the book of Acts.

This morning we are in Acts chapter 8, we will be in verses 1 through 25 today.

Let's pray before we get into the Study...

Now, the book of Acts began with some very important instructions from Jesus to the disciples.

Acts 1:8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

However, so far in the Book of Acts the Church has grown pretty well within the city of Jerusalem, and its influence over the city was growing.

And the great numbers and success within the religious city of Jerusalem presented an unintended danger within the church, it was becoming a purely Jewish institution, almost becoming another sect of Judaism.

The Church outreach was becoming inclusive to only Jews.

We saw this with even the Hellenized Jews, or the Greek speaking Jews, even being treated as a subclass of Christian.

This was never the intentions of the One who is considered the Head of the Church, Jesus who gave a world-wide mission to His Church.

The Church worked through its differences between the different subgroups of Jews, and they came out stronger because of it, as Seven Greek speaking Jews were appointed as deacons.

Now, we saw one of these deacons last time, Stephen who was a well versed and Spirit filled man, he preached boldly as he fiercely confronted his lost countrymen.

Stephen had a mind above many of those within the church, perhaps even above the Apostles, yet he had no ambition.

Many have wondered had his life been spared, if he would have gone on and made the same kind of impact as the Apostle Paul.

But as we saw last time his tenacity pushed the Church's enemies toward the same animalistic tendency that Jesus had garnered from them.

Stephen met the same fate as Jesus as well, death, but his was by stoning.

At his death, we met another fierce character, filled

with the most incredible venom and hatred toward this New Way that the Apostles were preaching.

Acts 7:58 And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Saul was too refined and cultured to pick up the stones himself, but he lived vicariously through those brutes who did pick the stones up to kill Stephen.

He loved every second of the bloody ordeal.

He was content to hold the coats for the stone throwers.

A passion awoke in Saul that day, he was confident that God had called him to be the chief persecutor of the Way.

And the death of Stephen is a historic time stamp for the Church, because this will be the point and event that Jesus uses to stir His Church up to finally get up and Go into the world.

Saul, who would become Paul would not only become a dynamic missionary himself, but even before his conversion to Christ, his evil deeds are the catalyst for the first mission's movement.

We start chapter 8 here in verse 1, as Luke the writer of Acts first takes us back to the terrible murder of Stephen, then he records the havoc created immediately after it.

Let's read the first 4 verses of chapter 8...

Saul Persecutes the Church

8:1 Now Saul was consenting to his death.

At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

Here we see the danger of religion, as Paul's religious eyes were satisfied with the murder of this innocent man, done in the name of God.

Understand, that religion without the Holy Spirit indwelling a person is the most hostile force on this earth.

So much evil has been committed in the name of religion throughout history.

Saul here is under the sway of the ruler of this world, he is of his father the Devil, who was a liar and murderer from the very beginning.

And it was in the name of religion that most of the persecution of the early church came in.

In fact, nearly all of the opposition recorded in Acts came from the religious Jews.

Today, I can tell you, there is no greater force that comes against the church than those who come in the name of religion, or some false form of Christianity.

The most savage and mean spirited opposition comes today from those who were once among us, and had us believe that they were with us at one point.

Religion is dangerous, we do not offer religion here.

My prayer is religion never makes its way into this church.

We desire for people to come into a genuine relationship with God, that is what Jesus came to this world to die for, to offer us a relationship with God, one that is active and alive, and full of Love and Grace.

Religion kills any work that the Spirit may be doing, it is one of Satan's greatest tools against the work of God, to get his people entrenched in religion.

He wants nothing more than for religious cliques to drown out God's all-inclusive message.

He wants us competing with our religious dress, and drawing attention to ourselves through are fresh styles.

He loves to create insecurities through pompous show, he loves to create inner circles of gossip and he loves so much when we create subgroups for us, and not them.

Satan loves hierarchy and position, he creates honor for some and makes others outcasts.

And when he is allowed to operate in this manner, using devout overtones, the life is choked out, and the Spirit is grieved and hindered from working, as pride overtakes those who are called to a life of humility and service.

Religion is terrible 100% of the time, and Saul is the poster boy here of where religion leads, to a religious rage.

In verse 3 the word behind Saul's ravaging suggests a sadistic barbarity, like a wild boar tearing a victim's body apart.

Paul would later describe his actions in **Acts 22:4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women,**

And in Galatians he wrote **Gal 1:13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.**

Saul brought death and misery upon God's people, and in his later years, Stephen's death and this brutal persecution would constantly haunt him, and we can understand his passion for God's Grace, and even why God used him, the Chief Sinner to be a proclaimer of this wonderful Grace.

Now, as terrible as ordinary persecutions were, notice Luke records there in verse 1 it was a Great Persecution.

The church today is experiencing light affliction, and some have already tapped out and surrendered to the whims of the ruler of this world.

Imagine Great Persecution....

Now, as terrible as it all was then, it served a very important purpose, it actually served God's purposes.

Understand this about our journey of faith in this fallen world, whatever Satan means for evil, God will use it for His Good, this is an unchanging principle.

And this Great Persecution will be used as a catalyst for the Gospel to now invade the rest of the world.

Comfort is always bad for God's people, we are at our best when the fire is hot and times are trying.

Now, before we move on to the next section, notice the reverence Stephen received from the church as his pallbearers were other devout men.

The church had lost one of its champions, and great sorrow is experienced here.

But it will not be in vain, Stephen's life and death will never be forgotten, he is the first to die in the Name of Jesus, what a wonderful legacy he left us, as his example has paved the way for millions more to have

the courage to leave this world unfazed in their resolve in the face of death.

He left an incredible example for us all to follow.

So now, let's read the good that came from the devil's evil...

Christ Is Preached in Samaria

4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

And here begins the worldwide witness of the church.

Now, understand something, the Devil never has a good day, any plans, any attacks, any strategy that he has ever used, God has in turn used it to further His agenda.

Since time began, this has been the case, and he has to be one of the most frustrated beings in existence.

Maybe that is why he continuously has so much venom and hatred to all things Jesus, because he is continually outdone by Him.

Satan must know his end, and his fate has always been a series of reminders of his original sin, and the cost of his rebellion, he will forever be the loser.

So world missions begins here, and Luke will give us a window into one of the events that took place as the Gospel spread into other regions.

And to Samaria we go now, verses 5-8...

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. 6 And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 7 For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. 8 And there was great joy in that city.

Now, like Stephen, Philip was one of the Seven deacons chosen by the Jerusalem Church.

He should not be mistaken with Philip the Apostle.

This Philip was one of the Greek Speaking Jews appointed to serve the Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem.

Now, this is interesting, as a Hellenistic Jew himself he was not particularly welcome in Jerusalem, and now that he was a Christian he was doubly looked down upon by the pure Hebrews.

And when the persecution began, we see that he fled to Samaria, where he preached, or more literally he evangelized and proclaimed or heralded Christ to them.

Now, he probably was unaware of the historic strides that he was making at the time, but as history looks back at his story, he is recorded as the first of the Church to present the Messiah to an alien and even hostile culture.

Remember Jesus went to Samaria too, and there He ministered to a sinful woman at the well, and she testified of Jesus to her countrymen, and maybe she was sowing the seed still, there in Samaria, preparing the ground for Philip's ministry.

We know that Jesus toward the end of His ministry tried to go through Samaria and He was refused, as the racial barriers of the day were too great a hurdle for them to get over.

Why was there such great racial tension between the Samaritans and the Jews? Well, I am glad you asked...

You Wednesday Night people will remember that not too long ago in our studies in 2 Kings, in chapter 17, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was the first to fall as the Assyrians came in and conquered them, then deported them into other settlements.

The capital of the Northern Kingdom was Samaria, and in Samaria the Assyrians brought in foreigners to settle in Israel.

The Jews that remained in the territory began to intermarry with the Assyrian settlers and also Cuthites that were now in the land.

They adopted a corrupted form of Judaism and even built a rival temple over time at Mt. Gerizim where they worshipped with a mixed, syncretistic form of Judaism.

Now, we just finished 2 Kings last Wednesday, and it was really a sad ending, as now the Southern Kingdom of Judah, whose Kings descended from David, were also chastised by the Lord, they too were taken captive by the Babylonians.

And although they too were taken into a foreign land, they never intermarried, and remained pure blood Jews unlike those of the North.

When they were able to come back to the Land, they came back with their true Jewish identity, and were uncorrupted by the nations around them.

From that point the Jews looked upon the Samaritans as half-breeds and a mongrel nation.

“The Jewish rabbis said, ‘Let no man eat the bread of the Cuthites (Samaritans) for he who eats their bread is as he who eats swine’s flesh.’” Kent Hughes p.111

No self-respecting Jew would dare go into Samaria.

Yet Jesus did, and now Philip.

Now, understand something about the Apostles, they were purely Jewish, most of which Galileans, and this Jewish Pride ran deep in their blood.

We will see their struggle all throughout the Book of Acts, they are mere men, we can never lose sight of this, that they were very imperfect men, with great flaws.

The Samaritans would have immediately refused their words, and the Apostles would have had to fight through years of prideful prejudice of their own.

We know the Apostles stayed in Jerusalem, and that was not bad, they were courageous in the midst of terrible hostility.

But they were instructed to go to Samaria by Jesus, then to the ends of the earth.

However, we see God the Master Tactician, He got Philip, a Hellenistic Jew to fulfill this part of His plan.

You see Philip had common ground, he knew what it was like to be looked down upon by the Hebrews, he knew what it was like to be an outcast among the elite.

He also knew that it was Jesus in him that helped him overcome any root of bitterness.

This brought a certain amount of kinship between him and the rejected Samaritans.

And noticed Philip did not preach a new form of Judaism to the Samaritans, look again at verse 5, what did he preach, a Christ-centered message.

There was no more need for competing Temples or debates over Moses, all of it pointed to and was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

There was no need to bring up controversies or separations, a New Day had dawn, where all mankind, all people, all nationalities, all races, all ages, all social

status' now come to Jesus, the Savior of the Human Race.

Perhaps the Apostles would have been too easily tempted to get into foolish disputes about why the Republican party was the greater party, or why the Democrat party was better, there would have been too much animosity for the bridge to be built.

There social idiosyncrasies kept the Apostles out of Samaria for a while now, some suggest the Church is 6 years old at this point, and perhaps it is getting as rigid and religious as Judaism.

They should have gone to Samaria a while ago, but they stayed in the comfort of their own culture and ideas.

I was talking to a group of young people yesterday, who are leaders in the church, and I was telling them how they are the Philips that the church needs today.

Not to demean the older generation, but there is such a gap between the world of an older Christian to that of the younger Christian, the politics, the social ideologies and the methods.

And many cannot share Jesus Christ with someone without also sharing their politics and social agendas, which are not as appealing to the younger generation.

There is a schism in the church today, as we see even existed in the early apostles, there were ideas that they had they just could not get passed, and some

today are suffering from the same kind of rigid mindset.

Not bad of course, it is good to know where you stand, and to stand firm there, but the Greater Mandate is to Go, to Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

We are too reach, and this group of young Christian leaders are just the ones to do it today, they can reach and even like Philip have some common ground in their reach.

Now, Later we will see Philip still honors the Apostles, as they come to check out all that God was doing.

The younger Philips are just another part of the Body of Christ, all of us having a purpose.

We need more Philips, we need more younger bridge builders in the church, or we will be stuck in our own Jerusalem close to our own religious relics and traditions, where it is safe.

Philip was not an Apostle, he was not one of the big names, and at this point, he was a hunted refugee fleeing persecution, and God just loves to use the nobodies of this world for His Great Program in reaching humanity.

Understand here too, Philip's greatest trait is his genuine love for Jesus, it radiated out of him in such a way that he could not but help tell others about Jesus.

His environment, his circumstances never changed mission number one.

And because of his passionate love for Jesus, he had Revival at his fingertips.

Power flowed through him, so much so the crowds were drawn to him, and even unclean spirits fled his presence as their captives were set free.

He healed and preached, and verse 8 tells us that there was so much joy in that city.

There is nothing more needed today in this dark and wearisome world than the Joy that Jesus offers.

“A man, a woman, a boy, or a girl that is filled with the sunshine of heaven.” Has a great impact on the world for which they live. Phillips p.150

You may not even recognize it in yourself, but when you have the Spirit of the Living God living inside you, you radiate Joy.

Now, Joy is something that cannot be touched by a bad day or pressing hardship, I have sat with the widow who is in tears over her soul mate being gone, yet there is still a spark of joy in her eyes.

Our Joy comes from our Promised Hope, and it stands out in you, and maybe you have been too focused on the miserable state of our fallen world to even notice, but when you are among God's people you will see it.

Those who are in this world and of this world, they have a hopeless stare, their eyes are often empty, but when a person awakes to the offer of Grace given to them by a Holy and Loving God, a spark ignites in their hearts.

I see it in you all every week, that is why this is my favorite place to be, here with the people of God, what Joy there is when we gather together in His Name and in His Presence.

Samaria was full of laughter and hope as this vibrant spiritual power was working through Philip the table server.

The Joy of Jesus was contagious and spreading.

Now, as we have seen from the birth of the Church to this point, every time the Spirit of God moves in a new and spectacular way, it is not long before Satan counters.

We have seen him try to use money and lying with Ananias and Sapphira, he has tried murder in the case of Stephen, and he is continually trying to use persecution, and now we will see another tactic here, imitation.

There in Samaria, Satan had a willing vessel ready for this counter attack, and Satan will even have his man go through the act of conversion and he will try to convince the Church that he is one of them.

But he has nothing but selfish motives and mischief set in his heart.

The Sorcerer's Profession of Faith

9 But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, 10 to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." 11 And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. 12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. 13 Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

Samaria was full of love, joy, peace, repentance, even Revival, New Life was springing up all over the place, then Luke inserts here the conjunction word, 'but.'

At that word the picture changes dramatically.

In this man Simon the Sorcerer, Satan still reigned supreme.

This enchanter must have had a dominating personality, charisma and charm.

His theatrics and style garnered himself immense power and sway over the people.

He was a self-promoter claiming that he was something great, and the people bought it, from least to the greatest, accrediting him to even having or being himself the Great power of God.

The people rationalized that his supernatural presence had to be Divine.

And his ego loved every bit of the endorsement.

Simon was a man of immense power, but Philip's power surpassed the Sorcerer's.

Simon began to lose his following, and for a man like Simon, that just won't do.

He did not have Instagram or Facebook to feed his ego, to garner attention to himself, he had to work hard for his attention.

And worse of all his fame was eclipsed by a Jewish Refugee.

There was only one thing for this man to do, he had to go where the attention was being drawn too.

"If you can't beat them, then join them," kind of thinking.

So he went ahead and made a public confession, and even performed in a baptism, but his heart remained unchanged and unconverted.

Satan has joined the Church at this point, and this is still a tactic of his today.

He sends in those who only play the part, but they are here for nothing more than their own ego and they are here for destructive purposes.

They are hard to spot, Paul even warned **2 Cor. 11:14-15 For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.**

Simon joined Philip and as we will see he lusted after the Power that worked through his hands.

In the meantime, the spell Simon had over the people with his Sorceries was broken, and soon the ruse he was pulling among the believers will be exposed.

Now, Word was spreading at what God was doing in Samaria.

The Word of God had power not only among the Jews, but even among the Samaritans now, and this was something the Apostles needed to witness for themselves.

Let's start now in verse 14...

The Sorcerer's Sin

14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive

the Holy Spirit. 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

When the two Apostles arrived they found everything as it was told to them.

The Samaritans did believe on Jesus as their Savior, and their faith was genuine, but they lacked one thing. They had not received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit yet, this Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And they laid hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them.

This is a historic moment here for the Church, the Spirit came upon Samaritans, confirming here that they were not second class Christians, and that they were on par with the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem.

And this is the reality that Christianity has brought about, it is in direct contrast to this fallen world's system.

All of humanity is equal in Christ, we all equally come to Jesus as sinners, and in Christ there is no separation or subgroups.

Of course the Church has struggled in its humanity with this reality throughout the centuries, but this was the intentions of the Holy Spirit's display here.

Faith and faith alone, in Jesus is the requirement.

Now, we are not told how the Holy Spirit fell, what evidences did they have, there is no mention of tongues here or any other phenomena.

But something happened, there was some kind of evidence that was so dazzling that this Simon the Sorcerer wanted it.

You see since his entrance into the Body of Christ, the only thing that kept him up at night was how he could make it back up to the top.

Power was this man's drug.

And we see this often in the Church, especially when we first started out here a few years ago, it seemed every few months someone spotted me as a young and impressionable pastor, and they would come here under the guise of humility and servanthood.

But it did not take long to see that they were here for prestige and to be honored, they wanted to know the quick way to the top.

And over time the true motives of the heart come out, and agendas were revealed, and as soon as they find out there is no quick way to the top they move on, to find another unsuspecting group to try to manipulate.

Simon sees this power here, and he sees his way to the top and he is willing to pay any price to get it.

Look now starting in verse 18...

18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! 21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. 22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."

24 Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me."

This Sorcerer who had spent his life dabbling in the dark magics, seeking satanic mysteries was now confronted with the Power of God.

His eyes gleamed as he asked for the power to bestow the Holy Spirit on others, but he failed to ask for the Holy Spirit himself.

He, being a rich man actually thought that he could buy this power.

In Simon's world everything had a price... and he wanted the market value for the Spirit.

Now from this incident the word *simony* came about within the Church.

Throughout Church history there came to be periods of time when offices within the Church were for sale to the highest bidder.

They did not even need to be Christians.

It was even inferred that spiritual benefits and privileges within the Church could be bought.

All kinds of Ecclesiastical indulgences had price tags.

The heart behind *simony* is to obtain spiritual power in order to promote oneself.

Anytime we seek spiritual power to move ahead we commit this *simony*.

Serving God to gain some kind of recognition.

Today, *simony* exists on many Christian's social media page, where it is a billboard for their service to the Lord.

Every time they pray for someone in public, they need to make sure that someone is taking a picture of them, anytime they go to the pulpit, they have to promote how it was such a privilege to share at church today.

Anytime they feed a homeless person, they are taking a selfie to promote themselves, and to garner attention for their religious deeds.

They must show their cup of coffee early in the morning next to their Bible, and all their notes that they have written, so people can see how dedicated they are.

They long for people to sing their praises, to give them their accolades, they live for the honor and attention.

To live godly just so other people think you are godly, well this is *simony* and it still exists today.

Now, Peter's response to Simon was fire, as the kids would say today.

It was a firm response, but it was the truth.

In verse 20, he says, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased."

Hear that, Jesus purchased our salvation for us on the Cross, it is given to us as a gift, and the Holy Spirit is assured to those who believe upon Jesus as their Savior.

How ridiculous for my kids on Christmas to run to their piggy banks and empty all their saved allowances up to open those gifts their mother has given them freely.

No, we want them to open them and enjoy them freely.

Peter says "your money perish with you!"

Now, that may seem harsh, but as we have seen, although Peter is forceful in his preaching, he always presents God's Grace.

Verse 22 Peter tells him to repent, and to ask God for forgiveness.

First a strong conviction of sin, and then a call to repentance.

Simon was in spiritual danger, and Peter does not want to dance around the Truth of it all.

Understand something about the softened tone of the Church today, this caution not to offend, if there is no conviction of sin, people will not understand their need for repentance.

We must bring the full force of the Gospel, people are sinners, and then when they understand that fully... then we lead them to the solution, God's Grace.

John Phillips writes here, "What we have today is profession without possession, conversion without repentance, and a religion without the Holy Spirit..."

Peter not only preaches with power here, we see that the Spirit has given him a measure of spiritual insight to this man, as he tells him that he is poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.

Deep down, he long to be the center of attention again, and he was a prisoner to his sin.

Peter saw his true ambitions, and now Simon knows that there is nowhere to hide any longer.

Yet, the bitterness was too deep for him to make his own confession, to own up to his sin, to speak it out.

He cowardly asks Peter to pray for him to be spared of these judgements.

And there is no evidence here that Simon the Sorcerer ever came to a Genuine Faith in Jesus.

In fact, there are stories and legends of him becoming one of the fiercest enemies of the Church, and even becoming the father of Gnosticism, the early Church's greatest foe.

Here in Acts he fails to come through the Way God had already provided for him, and his bitterness and envy cause his pride to rise up, and he remains unrepentant and his name will go on in infamy as a sinner.

So let's end this morning on a good note, read with me now verse 25, in spite of Satan's best efforts we read...

25 So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

On the way back, they were so fired up about what God was doing, the Apostle now take up preaching and testifying in Samaritan villages.

What a wonderful thing to consider, that it was this layman Philip, an outcast who was used to influence a whole culture for Jesus Christ.

His own ministry inspired even the Church leaders to engage in the mandate of missions work.

And consider this, Philip merely loved Jesus purely and simply, and great and powerful works were done through him.

Alexander Maclaren said it like this, “A heart right in the sight of God is the indispensable qualification for all possession of spiritual power, or of any blessings which Jesus gives.”

Spiritual power cannot be bought, it is given freely to those who genuinely seek to Love God and Serve His Purposes.

“Men and women then become fountains of divine power right where they are.” Kent Hughes

Church, every day you are in a mission field, Christians are meant to reach out.

We are not supposed to be in our warm Christian safety bubbles.

Wherever you are whatever you are doing reach them for Christ.

Today, as Church history is being recorded, we are going through another refining time, and we are being stirred up, our comforts are being challenged.

Please know, that these times of shaking serve a purpose always for the Church, whatever Satan is allowed to do to us is only to benefit God's overall work and plan for the Church.

And many Christians today are getting depressed and they are living in fear, and they are content in their solitude.

The answer is we need to get busy in doing God's Word, only then will you find true satisfaction.

Think about when God has you minister to someone in public, to pray with someone, to share your faith with someone, it does something inside us, it fans the flame, it excites us, because that is what we are supposed to be doing.

Think about the last time you led someone to the Lord, the thrill of it all, there is no greater joy then hearing someone confess their need for Jesus, and Jesus coming into their lives and changing them.

This is what we are supposed to be doing, even when the enemy comes against us.

Philip was chased to Samaria, and there he preached, and opened up a door that the Church had not yet opened.

Now, next week, this table server Philip will be used to open up the door to not only Samaria but to the ends of the earth.

And all he had was a simple love for Jesus, and that was all God needed to change the world historically.

Avail your life to Jesus, and see what great and amazing things He does in and through you...

Let's pray...