

Acts of the Apostles

Lesson 6

Acts 8

In the ministry of the Apostles in Jerusalem, in Peter and John's confrontation with the Jewish Council and in the preaching of Stephen, the Holy Spirit powerfully declared the gospel of Jesus, in word and deed, that He might "witness" to Jesus and show the truth of His gospel. That preaching declared Jesus as the prophesied Messiah, culminating in Stephen's extensive teaching from the history of God's dealings with "the fathers" in Chapter 7 to show Jesus as the "offspring of Abraham" and "the Prophet" foreseen by Moses. The power of the Holy Spirit strengthened the faith of the saints to withstand persecution. And for Stephen, the Spirit's revelation of Jesus as the Divine Savior standing at the right hand of God prepared to deliver His people allowed him to face martyrdom with full assurance that Jesus would receive his spirit. In Chapter 8, Luke presents the church's response to persecution from Saul of Tarsus and the beginning of the gospel's spread "from Jerusalem."

Chapter 8: 1-4

Question 1: How did Apostles respond to Saul's attacks on the church? Why do you think they were able to do that?

Question 2: What can we learn from the Apostles' and the other saints' example of faithfulness in the midst of persecution?

Chapter 8: 6-25

- vv. 6-8

Question 3: How did Samaritans respond to Philips preaching? Why?

Question 4: What does event this tell us about the Holy Spirit's purpose for preaching of the gospel beyond the Jews? What does that mean for our preaching?

Question 5: What response does the gospel create? v. 8. Do we have that?

- vv. 9-14

Question 6: Why does the example of Simon show the power of the Gospel and the true power of the Holy Spirit over worldly claims to "spirituality"?

- vv. 14-17

Question 7: Who sent Peter and John? What would be significant about the Samaritans receiving the Holy Spirit? John 4:9.

- vv. 18-25

Question 8: How did Simon view the gift of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles?

Question 9: What important lesson about motive does his example provide?

Question 10: What warning does his example provide about our need to let go of the life we had before the gospel if it was not consistent with the gospel?

Chapter 8: 26-40

Question 11: How do we see the Holy Spirit acting in the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch?

Question 12: Why does this event with the Ethiopian eunuch illustrate the fulfillment of OT prophecy? Isaiah 2:1-5; 42:1-9; 49:6; 53:11-12; 56:1-8; Zephaniah 3:10.