

## Notes - Book of Acts Study, Part 34 – Wed, September 30, 2020

Acts 8:1-8

<sup>1</sup> *And Saul approved of their killing him.*

*On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. <sup>2</sup> Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. <sup>3</sup> But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.*

<sup>4</sup> *Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. <sup>5</sup> Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. <sup>6</sup> When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. <sup>7</sup> For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. <sup>8</sup> So there was great joy in that city.*

Acts 26:9-11

<sup>9</sup> *“I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>10</sup> And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord’s people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. <sup>11</sup> Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities.*

1 Corinthians 15:9

<sup>9</sup> *For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*

Philippians 3:5-8

<sup>5</sup> *...of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.*

<sup>7</sup> *But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ*

**God can radically change anyone or anything!**

Acts 1:8

*<sup>8</sup> 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.”*

**On the surface it looked like the enemy was winning.**

**What do we do when it looks like the enemy is winning?**

**It only looks like the enemy is winning. We know God always wins.**

2 Corinthians 2:14

*<sup>14</sup> But thank God! He has made us his captives and continues to lead us along in Christ’s triumphal procession. Now he uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume.*

**God allows evil to arise at times, but it is in order to position His church for a victorious advancement.**

**The very persecution that was meant to squash the church in Jerusalem caused it to spread to Judea and Samaria, which was exactly what Jesus wanted to begin with!**

**Each of us has a past. Each of us has fears in the present. The enemy wants to use it against us to discourage us, to disqualify us, to rob us of our hope. But God does the opposite...He takes the very things Satan uses to destroy us and uses them for good. Out of our greatest hurts can come our greatest ministry.**

*“God can and will use pressing circumstances to guide us into His will. Sometimes we have to be shaken out of our comfortable state before we do what God wants us to do.”*

*“We shouldn’t think that those who left Jerusalem left as formal preachers. Most were “accidental missionaries” who talked about Jesus wherever they went.”*

**We are the only Christ many will ever see!**

Acts 6:5-6

<sup>5</sup> ...They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. <sup>6</sup> They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

### **God can use anyone for His purposes.**

Colossians 3:16

<sup>16</sup> Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

### **We each have a ministry**

Acts 8:6-8

<sup>6</sup> When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. <sup>7</sup> For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. <sup>8</sup> So there was great joy in that city.

1 Corinthians 4:20

<sup>20</sup> For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

2 Kings 17:33,41

<sup>33</sup> They worshiped the LORD, but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought.

<sup>41</sup> Even while these people were worshiping the LORD, they were serving their idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their ancestors did.

### **God loves all people and wants to save all people.**

2 Peter 3:9

<sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.