

# — ACTS —

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DATE: MAY 11TH, 2025

## The Gospel Expands into (Un)Surprising Territory In (Un)Surprising Ways

Acts 8:4-40

NOTES:

### Review:

1. Relative peace and growth were experienced in Jerusalem. (Acts 1-7)
2. That peace disappeared after Stephen's death.

**Acts 8:1** And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles... **3** But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

### Through Persecution God Pushes the Gospel Into New Territory (8:4-25)

1. The gospel is enthusiastically received by those formerly seen as unworthy.

**Acts 8:4** Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. **5** Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ... **12** But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. **13** Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.

2. God uniquely confirms the new believers' faith to unite the Jews and Samaritans.

**Acts 8:14** Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, **15** who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, **16** for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **17** Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

### Peter's unique role in the establishment of the church:

**Matt. 16:18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Notice Peter's presence and role in key "expansion" passages:

- Jews receive the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)
- Samaritans receive the Spirit (Acts 8:14-17)
- Gentiles receive the Spirit (Acts 10:44-48)

### 3. A threat to the integrity of the Samaritan believers is called out.

**Acts 8:20** But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! **21** You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. **22** Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. **23** For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity."

### 4. With God's confirmation – the gospel spreads throughout Samaria.

**Acts 8:25** Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

### Through Divine Appointment God Pushes the Gospel Into New Territory (8:26-40)

**Acts 8:26** Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place... **29** And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." **30** So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" **31** And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

#### A guide to one-on-one discipleship:

**Acts 8:32** Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. **33** In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." **34** And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" **35** Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

**Acts 8:39** And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. **40** But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

### Review/Discuss/Apply:

Followers of Jesus continue to be his witness in the world just as the early disciples were. In what ways do you need to grow as a witness? What about Phillip's story encourages/challenges you? What can you glean from his example of one-on-one disciple with the Ethiopian?

#### SONGS

ALL CREATURES OF OUR GOD AND KING  
THE LION AND THE LAMB  
THE WONDERFUL CROSS  
10,000 REASONS (BLESS THE LORD)

#### ALTAMONT PROGRESS REPORT

[vbc.online/altamontprg](http://vbc.online/altamontprg)

#### BUDGET

Giving Last Week: \$51,153.09  
2025 Year to Date Giving: \$580,964.47  
2025 Giving vs Need: \$129,675.53 Below Need

Altamont Expansion Fund (5/8): \$226,024.04

#### COMMUNICATION & GIVING

Envelopes for financial gifts, prayer requests, & communication to our church leadership are in the seatback pockets. Please pass the envelopes to the ushers or deposit them in the offering boxes by the exit doors. Thank you!

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