

# Seed Scattered and Sown

Acts 8:4-8

## Introduction

Acts 1:8

*"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." v1*

**Persecution strengthens the Church and stimulates growth through divine *Dispersion*.**

*"But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison." v3*

*"house to house"*

*"Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word." v4*

**The dispersion of the Church allowed the seed of the Gospel to be scattered.**

*"To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion" (James 1:1).*

*"To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion" (1 Peter 1:1).*

*"scattered" Gk diaspeiro 'to sow; to scatter seed; to disperse.'*

Acts 11:19

What they did NOT do when they dispersed:

- 1) run away and hide;
- 2) abandon their Christian faith;
- 3) keep silent about their faith (note: all these stem from *fear of man*);
- 4) nor did they retreat and regather somewhere so they could train an army, return and fight.

*"preaching the Word" 'to preach the Gospel, to evangelize.'*

Matthew 13:37-38

*"But the word of God increased and multiplied." Acts 12:24*

*"So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily." Acts 19:20*

2 Corinthians 2:14

Philippians 1:12-14

**Philip, deacon, preacher, and evangelist, proclaims Jesus Christ to the Samaritans**

*"Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ." v5*

Previously, the disciples were told *not* to go to the Samaritans: Matthew 10:5-6

“Philip the evangelist” once an enemy, will become a fellow preacher and friend to the apostle Paul:

Acts 21:8-9

**By evangelizing the Samaritans, God is building a *bridge* that will include the Gentiles.**

“How is it that you a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?’ (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans).” John 4:9.

“*proclaimed*” means ‘to announce as a herald.’

**The power of God unleashed to validate the message as divine.**

*“And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. For unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed.” vv6-7*

**As extraordinary as this scene must have been, the emphasis here is on the Word of God.**

The people gave heed to the Word because they saw the miracles, and by believing the Word, they were saved (v12).

The real power on display here is the conversion of souls. Nobody was ever saved because of miracles.

John 2:23-25

They “believed in his name,” but rejected who He was and what He came to do.

“Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him.” John 12:37

**The prevailing heart attitude of every new believer is JOY!**

*“so there was much joy in that city” v8*

Both in his Gospel and in the Book of Acts, Luke emphasizes the joy of salvation:

Luke 2:10

Luke 15:7

Luke 15:10

“And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,” Luke 24:52

“And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 13:52

Acts 15:3

Paul issued a two-word imperative: “Rejoice always.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16).

Why? Because we are called to rejoice, and because we have so much reason to rejoice.

The antidote to all spiritual depression, emotional distress and sadness; loneliness, and worry is JOY.

“Christ is not only a remedy for your weariness and trouble, but he will give you an abundance of the contrary, joy and delight.” John Calvin

Nehemiah 8:10

Some of you need to learn how to let yourself be joyful. You need to give yourself permission to be joyful.

“A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.” Proverbs 17:22

**Be careful not to think that you are expected to ‘pursue joy.’**

The vigorous pursuit of joy simply for joy’s sake will awaken and engage the flesh, becoming an insatiable, unrelenting expectation that is elusive—a sure way to remain joyless!

**Joy is the wonderful internal reward for pursuing Christ vigorously!**

There are no ‘half-breeds’ in the gospel.

The gospel provides equal joy for all regardless of gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, physical disability or mental impairment.

The gospel has no prejudice, no bias, no nepotism. Equal acceptance for all; and equal joy for all – *forever!*

Isaiah 12:2-6