



The Expansion of the Church through Persecution (Acts 8:1-25)

Questions: Week Fifteen

The Church Persecuted and Scattered - [Acts 8:2-3](#)

Topics: [Church](#), [Courage](#), [Death](#), [Persecution](#), [Zeal](#)

Open It

1. What would you like people to remember most about you after your death?
2. If you could write your own obituary, what would you say about yourself?
3. What is the most important accomplishment of your life so far?
4. *When is a time you remember being rejected by childhood peers?

Explore It

5. Who buried Stephen? ([8:2](#))
6. How did the early believers react to Stephen's martyrdom? ([8:2](#))
7. How did Stephen's sympathizers show that they disapproved of the Sanhedrin's condemnation of him? ([8:2](#))
8. *How did Stephen's mourners show courage at his burial? ([8:2](#))
9. How did the godly men mourn for Stephen? ([8:2](#))
10. *What was happening to the church at this time? ([8:2-3](#))
11. *Who began to attack the church? How? ([8:3](#))
12. Who took a leading role in attacking the early church? ([8:3](#))
13. During this period of opposition, what did Saul do? ([8:3](#))
14. How were Saul's actions cruel? ([8:3](#))
15. How did the martyrdom of Stephen and the persecution of the church show that Israel had rejected the Messiah? ([8:3](#))

Get It

16. Why was it dangerous for people in the church to give Stephen a proper burial?
17. Though there was much sadness at Stephen's funeral, why was there also cause for celebration?
18. Why can we experience joy along with grief at a Christian's funeral?
19. How can you show courage in difficult circumstances, just as the "godly men" did in burying Stephen?
20. *In what ways are Christians under attack today?
21. *How can you respond whenever others attack or reject you for your Christian identity, views, or life-style?
22. How is our Christian experience very different from that of the early church?
23. How can you live each day as if it were your last?
24. How do you need to be more courageous in your identity as a Christian?

Apply It

25. *What will most remind you to respond with courage when you are attacked or rejected for your faith in Christ?
26. In what setting (at work, at home, in your neighborhood, etc.) can you show courage in identifying with Christ this week? How?

Philip in Samaria - [Acts 8:4-8](#)

Topics: [Bible](#), [Joy](#), [Miracles](#), [Witnessing](#)

Open It

1. *If you could give all your effort to a single occupation and be among the best in the world at it, what occupation would you choose?
2. What one talent or gift would you really like to have?
3. When was the last time you had a celebration of some kind?

Explore It

4. What were the Christians doing who had been scattered throughout Judea and Samaria? ([8:4](#))
5. What happened to the Word of God? ([8:4](#))
6. Why was the scattering of Christians a step forward for the church? ([8:4-8](#))
7. *Who was Philip? ([8:5](#))
8. Where did Philip go? ([8:5](#))
9. *What did Philip do in Samaria? ([8:5](#))
10. *What did the crowds do in response to Philip's teaching and miracles? ([8:6](#))
11. What miraculous signs did Philip perform? ([8:7](#))
12. How did Philip's work draw attention to his message? ([8:6-7](#))
13. Why did the people rejoice? ([8:8](#))

Get It

14. *How is your church, through its mission work, scattered throughout the world?
15. *How can you help spread the gospel in your community?
16. What is a miracle?
17. What signs and miracles have you witnessed in your church?
18. What makes your congregation joyful?
19. How can you help people who are sick or troubled?

Apply It

20. *What can you do this week to support or encourage a missionary?
21. What is one way you can support your church's ministry?
22. For whom can you pray for healing?

Simon the Sorcerer - [Acts 8:9-25](#)

Topics: [Awe](#), [Follow](#), [Good News](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [Jesus Christ](#), [Kingdom of God/Heaven](#), [Leadership](#), [Money](#), [Prejudice](#), [Sin](#), [Witnessing](#)

Open It

1. In what situations would you describe yourself as quiet or outgoing?
2. If you were a magician, whom would you have most fun entertaining?
3. *What people of different ethnic groups do you know?

Explore It

4. What was Simon's line of work? ([8:9](#))
5. What did Simon talk about? ([8:9](#))
6. How did the Samaritans react to Simon's sorcery? ([8:9-11](#))
7. When Philip preached about Christ, what did the people do? ([8:12](#))
8. What did Simon do when he heard the gospel? ([8:13](#))
9. *Why did Peter and John leave Jerusalem and go to Samaria? ([8:14](#))
10. *What did Peter and John do when they arrived in Samaria? ([8:15-17](#))
11. What did Simon want to buy from Peter and John? ([8:18-19](#))
12. How did Peter answer Simon's request? ([8:20-23](#))
13. Why did Peter use strong language with Simon? ([8:20](#))
14. How did Peter imply that Simon was not a Christian? ([8:21-23](#))
15. What was Simon's attitude in response to Peter? ([8:24](#))
16. *How did Peter and John's trip to Samaria influence their trip to Jerusalem? ([8:25](#))

Get It

17. How are some religious leaders today like Simon?
18. How are some religious leaders today like Peter and John?
19. When is it most tempting to brag?
20. What are some of the trappings of money?
21. In what way do some people try to "buy" God's favor?
22. What does it mean for your heart to be right before God?
23. Why is it important for us to have our heart right before God?
24. Most Samaritans and Jews didn't get along; why then did early Jewish Christians tell Samaritans about Christ?
25. *What ethnic or religious prejudices do you have a hard time shaking?
26. *What can help us change our prejudices against people groups?
27. Why did you become a Christian?
28. What motivates you to grow in your relationship with Christ?

Apply It

29. *What can you do this week to get to know someone who is from a different ethnic group or culture?
30. Whom can you invite from another culture to visit your church? When?
31. How can you invite the Holy Spirit to help you grow in faith in the coming days?