

From the message on April 23

SG Qs - Church The World Needs - Witness Works Outward (Part2)

Text Acts 8

From the Sermon

The book of Acts is about earliest Christianity. We see the character of the early Christians as Christ directs and sends the church outwards. Acts 8 is an amazing new part of the book in light of Acts 1:8. The first several chapters of Acts focused upon Jerusalem. Beginning the day after Stephen's martyrdom, persecution broke out like a tsunami storm against the believers. As a result of persecution, now in just one chapter Luke shows how Christ sent the church outwards to Judea, Samaria, and into the far corners of the world in the example of the Ethiopian eunuch. For the first time, the church is truly becoming a church on mission, which is what Jesus always wanted them to be. He wants us to be the same.

Opening Interaction.

Ask your group...Who was the leader in your life that had the biggest impact on you?

Read the Passage and Discuss

- In this passage, what details seem important? What stands out to you?
 - What does this passage teach us about God?
1. How is it significant that Philip, a Jew, went to Samaria? What models did Philip have in Jesus' life? What lessons had he learned in the first seven chapters of Acts that could have impacted his willingness to pause in Samaria, a region considered "out of bounds"? What models and experiences have you had that stretched your willingness to step out of your comfort circles?
 2. How was Simon the Sorcerer's life affected by the ministry of the apostles? What might he have considered as he thought about following Christianity?
 3. Peter discerned that Simon's belief was not a saving faith, but rather an interest on the basis of other things. What did Peter teach Simon about following Jesus in verses 18-24? What lessons do we learn about faith for our lives?
 4. The Ethiopian eunuch would not have been allowed to participate in much of Israel's worship and life. Yet he still wanted to experience and learn about the God of Israel. How might he have felt as he stood outside the courts of the temple, somewhat ostracized? The Bible calls him a God-fearing man. What might have kept him interested?
 5. What were the factors involved in the Ethiopian eunuch becoming a Christian? What role did the Scripture play in the eunuch's conversion?
 6. What would it have been like for Philip to leave a familiar place where many exciting things were happening in order to go down a desert road with foreigners?
 7. When and how has God led you to interact with people who are very different from you? Share how your heart was expanded or challenged by those experiences? How does a heart of contentment free you to reach outward to other people?

Pray Together

Pray that the Lord would transform you to someone who not only cherishes reaching outward to people who are different, but someone who actually seeks those opportunities.