



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 149 - To Samaria and the Ends of the Earth (Acts 8)

To Samaria

It's interesting to see that the twelve apostles weren't the first ones the Spirit used to spread the Church beyond Jerusalem and Judea. He worked through the words, miracles and martyrdom of Stephen and the Christians who went back home to flee the resulting persecution. He sent Philip to scatter the seeds of the Gospel in Samaria. When the Samaritans came to faith, the Spirit sent the apostles to strengthen and establish those new believers.

- Why is it important for Christians to gather together in local congregations like the first Christians gathered together in Jerusalem after Pentecost?
- Why do some Christians think it is the pastor's job (and maybe the evangelism committee's) to do the church's witnessing?
- Why is it most effective when all God's people scatter the seed of the Gospel, wherever God sends them?
- What is the importance of the pastor's work in the congregation through teaching and proclaiming God's Word?

Gospel to Africa

After God brought the Gospel to the Samaritans through Philip, He sent an angel to lead this food-distributor into the path of an official in the court of Ethiopia. As this important eunuch returned home, God sent His Gospel into northern Africa.

- How did the Holy Spirit prepare each of these men for this very fruitful moment?
- What people has God brought into your life at just the right moment?

The book of Acts shows us just the tip of the iceberg of the wonderful things the Spirit of God was doing to spread the Gospel throughout the world. Through Stephen's martyrdom and the preaching of Philip, the Gospel is spread throughout the Roman Empire. What did He accomplish through the other five food-distributors?

Or consider the twelve apostles. In the book of Acts we see a little of what Peter did, but mostly we will concentrate on the work of the apostle Paul. Think too about what He accomplished through the other eleven disciples? The same is true of us. We can only see the tip of the iceberg of those things God has accomplished—or is accomplishing—through us. How much is He accomplishing through all our brothers and sisters around the world to spread His Gospel to all His fallen creatures.

- What glimpses have you seen into the way God is impacting people through you?
- Why is it important for us to never underestimate the impact our lives have on the people around us through our good and our bad actions, words and attitudes?
- Why is it important to remember and pray for all the work God is doing through all the missionaries, congregations and organizations that serve His people throughout the world?