

## **Persecution, Preaching and the Spread of the Church**

**Acts 8:1-8**

**January 24, 2021**

Acts records the first triumphant steps of the conquering king - Jesus.

Jesus is bringing the gospel from Jerusalem to Samaria. (Acts 1:8)

Why do bad things happen to good people?

### **Persecution**

Christianity is publicly, officially rejected by the Jewish council.

Saul is unleashed to put down the 'blasphemy.'

The church is scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

Just like God planned! (Acts 11:19-20)

Saul was ravaging the church. (Acts 22:4; 26:10)

Saul the persecutor becomes Paul the apostle to the Gentiles!

Grace can make the vilest clean. (1 Timothy 1:16)

Paul is a living picture of the grace that he preaches to others.

Who serves God with the greatest gratitude?

Not all in Jerusalem agreed with the persecution. (Acts 8:2)

### **Preaching**

The gospel was scattered in a wider circle - in Judea and Samaria.

Those persecuted went 'gossiping' the Word. Personal evangelism.

Philip alone is called the evangelist (Acts 21:8, "Philip the evangelist").

He 'kerusso-ed', publicly declared the word; he preached. In Samaria!!

What was the history of Samaritans and Jews?

The political, racial, and religious divide are all overcome by the gospel. (John 4:7-9)

The transforming power of the gospel is for me!

“So there was much rejoicing in that city.” (Acts 8:8)