

## The Acts of the Apostles

### [Wed. Jun. 25, 2014] Acts Series, Acts 8:1-14 - Craig A. Thurman Chapter 8

Reading chapter 7 we read the account of Stephen's answer to those of the Sandredrin that opposed the work of their Messiah, Jesus, for the nation of Israel. He summarizes for them the history of the work of God among them beginning from the calling of Abraham to the prophets, but mainly focuses on Moses and the people's rejection of him in that day, and likens this rejection to their own rejection of Jesus Christ, the one that was to come that was like Moses, and to whom they were to listen.

*Mt 12:41 ... behold, **a greater than Jonas** is here.*

*Mt 12:42 ... behold, **a greater than Solomon** is here*

*Joh 4:12 **Art thou greater than our father Jacob**, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?*

*13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:*

*14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

*Joh 8:53 **Art thou greater than our father Abraham**, which is dead? **and the prophets** are dead: **whom makest thou thyself?***

*...*

*58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was, I am.***

*Ac 7:37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.*

And as they rejected Moses, Christ, they rejected Stephen, rushed upon him and brought him instantly before the Council, and without so much as a legal judgment dragged him outside the city and stoned him to death as he called upon God. It is in this fevered pitch that the gates of hell open against the church

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which is at Jerusalem. Yet our Lord says that *Mt 16:18 ...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* Try to engulf the church/es with death and it cannot prevail against her work of God in the earth. Now we begin this chapter in the shadow of that terrible event.

1 ¶ *And Saul was ἤν consenting*

Saul accounted Stephen's death with pleasure.

*Consenting, συνευδοκῶν, nom, sing, masc, part, pres of συνευδοκέω, σύν with, together+ εὖ well + δοκέω KJV to suppose, think, account, reputation; KJV on συνευδοκέω, suneudokeo, allow (Lk.11.48), have pleasure (Ro.1.32), be pleased (1Co.7.12, 13).*

*unto his death.*

*Death, ἀναιρέσει, dative sing of ἀναιρέω, ἀνά raising, up + αἰρέω to take, choose; KJV kill (Acts 12.2 He **killed James the brother of John**; 7.27 *Wilt thou kill me, and thou diddest*), slay (Acts 2.23 *slain*; Acts 5.33 *slay*; 36 *was slain*), put to death (Lk.22.32), take away (Acts 7.21 **Pharaoh's daughter took him up**; He.10.9 He *taketh away* the first, that he), take up.*

Saul was agreed with the manner of Stephens' death; the acts that took place; the false witnesses; the injustice afforded; the lack of due process; all of this he agreed with. That marks a clear distinction between the true people of God and those that are feigned religionists. The first are not allowed to have the least infraction of the righteousness of God in the secrecy of the depths of their hearts, while the other can justify the use of any means possible to reach a desired end. In other words, the ends justify the means. They didn't care how they stopped this *movement* as long as they stopped it. No regard for right conduct; no regard for justice; no regard for honor; no regard for the Word of God; hire false witnesses, whatever it takes to stop this we will do it, and we believe we are doing the will of God!

*Jn.16.1 ¶ These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.*

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*2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.*

*3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.*

*4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.*

This is the marked distinction between the true churches of our Lord Jesus Christ and the religious systems of the world. Look at this. Churches don't go about killing people; killing dissenters; killing heretics; raising up militants to fight in a conflict of flesh and blood. Religionists do this. Look at what took place this past week (Jun. 21, 2014) with Presbyterian Church USA. They sanctioned the nation of Israel. This religious entity has decided to divest their stocks with companies that Israel uses in the West Bank as a protest of Israel's treatment of Palestinians. What is this? Should a religious entity do this? Is this what Christ's churches should do? This is precisely what happens with organized religion EVERY TIME. It doesn't matter if they are Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, or Baptist. Organized religion always becomes driven by men and money! What needs to happen is for the true churches to divest themselves from every other organization under the sun but their own little body of believers. But that isn't going to happen, and many other such things will be done in the name of Christ, and to the shame of Christ. Truly the mustard seed has grown into a (aberrant) great tree where the fowls of the air have lodged in the branches. (Always an evil indication of things taking place by religious entities doing so-called *kingdom business*. Lk.13.18, 19)

*And at that time*

Or, δὲ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, And in that day.

**This marks the day that severe persecution began for the church/es.**

*there was a **great** μέγας persecution*

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διωγμὸς, root διώκω, KJV *ensue 1, follow 4, follow after 6, persecute 28, press toward 1, press toward 1.*

*against ἐπὶ the church*

Ἐκκλησίαν, root ἐκκλησία, KJV *church 112, assembly 3;*

The only time that the Greek word *ekklesia* is translated with the English word *assembly* is when it is used to speak of the gathering of the citizens of the city of Ephesus into the public theatre *θέατρον*.

*Ac 19:32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.*

*Ac 19:39 But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.*

*Ac 19:41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.*

This gathering of the Ephesians into the theatre was a public gathering, a certain gathering, and a gathering for which the citizens of the city could be held accountable.

Some brethren think that it is time to change the word *church* in our King James Version Bibles to *assembly* or *congregation*. There are some reasons for this that sound good, however, giving up a word that has been so misunderstood by many for another that is even less clear as to its meaning makes no sense at all. The complaint that it is an old ecclesiastical word is true. As far back as we can search. If it is derived from the Greek *κυριακόν*, adjective, *of the Lord*, it dates as far back as the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, *kirk*. But whatever we think, *church* is a word that we all understand as relating to either a building; or if we have given this enough thought, to a special people *of the Lord*. The English word *church* is properly defined, even by the dictionary as, an assembly of people belonging to the Lord. *Assembly* or *congregation* do not carry, to such an extent, this same meaning. A *church* is a gathering of the baptized saints. The *church*, whether gathered

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or not, is an entity that can be gathered, scattered, touched, seen, and heard, etc., etc. (Acts 1.4; 2.7, 11, 33; 4.23; 9.4) The only entity that is properly, biblically a church is that which is a called out gathering of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, who agree to work together as one in the commandments of Jesus Christ. Otherwise, call it what you will, it is no church before the Lord.

There is only one kind of church. A church is only and always local, just like a human body is local. There is no universal human, any more than there is a universal church. There is no mystical human, any more than there is a mystical human. There is no invisible human, any more than there is an invisible church. Its members must be able to come together and interact with one another in Christian fellowship, just like a human beings arms, hands fingers, legs, feet toes, heart, head, neck, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, brain, all are together in one body, and form one person doing one work which contributes to the welfare of that body. That is what a church is by all of its members. That is all we have ever seen in our studies in the book of Acts. And that is all that you will ever see as we study throughout the N.T. Brethren can go from church to church, but if a church does not act to receive them into their body they do not constitute a part of that church. They can make no binding decisions for or with the church in any matter whatsoever. Churches decide when a member is received,

*Acts 9.26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.*

*27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.*

*28 And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.*

and when a member is to be rejected,

*Tit.3.10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject ...*

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or, put away.

*1Co 5:13 ...Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.*

(Read Acts 14.2-4 [distinctions between church sending and church in Jerusalem] Acts 14.22, 25-27)

The church is the only entity whose place is ordained of God to offer acceptable spiritual sacrifices of prayer, worship, and praise, and from which to bring forth fruits of righteousness:

*Eph.6.18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication **for all saints** ...*

**Someone says of the next text that the first epistle of Peter is not a church epistle: it is written to strangers scattered that are in a church relationship throughout the nations of the gentiles. (2.5) When Peter sent this letter into these places do we suppose that it was not sent without a people in mind? Did he just 'throw' a 2 cent stamp on the envelope and whoever just came across it could read and enjoy it? Or, did Peter have people in mind that would circulate his epistle from one place to another?**

*1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light  
10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

The only place that I know of in all of the Bible, at this present time on earth, to give the glory to the Father by Jesus Christ is through a proper and living church.

*Eph 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

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If we wish to have the confidence that we have begun to walk properly before God and our Father, after repentance and faith, we need to plant our feet, and the light of our witness for Jesus Christ square in the place where there is a people that He has openly confessed His eternal love unto: and that is His church.

*Re.1.4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;  
5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of  $\epsilon\kappa$  the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from  $\alpha\pi\omicron$  our sins in  $\epsilon\nu$  his own blood,  
6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for  $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  ever [the ages] and ever [of the ages]. Amen.*

*And at that time there was a great persecution against the church... which was at  $\epsilon\nu$  Jerusalem;*

A real church can be touched. It can suffer. A mystical, universal, invisible or visible body of Christ can't be touched, it hasn't any real entity or organization. People believe in a mystical, universal invisible or visible church, but truth be told, if they are a true church, they are a local church. Saul knew that he could reach out and touch this church which was at Jerusalem and he did just that. And as he touched the membership of that church they began to do something.

*and they were all*

That is, of every kind of Christian, young, old, teacher, congregant. All does not mean all without exception, as we note in the following that the apostles were not scattered, but remained in Jerusalem. Therefore we must define *all* as being every kind of Christian outside of the apostles. Some (Gill) say that the ones here mentioned are only preachers, or the seventy of Luke 10.1. But there is no possibly way to make such a claim.

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None. This thought simply is not there unless we resort to the very common and favored interpretative rule called *eisegesis*.

*scattered abroad*

διεσπάρησαν, 3p pl, aor 1, ind, pass of διασπείρω, διά by, through + σπείρω **always the act of sowing or receiving seed**; 3 times and always *scattered abroad (Acts 8.4; 11.19)*; διασπορά, *dispersed 1 (Jn.7.35), are scattered abroad 1 (Ja.1.1), scattered 1 (1Pe.1.1)*.

*throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.*

This persecution scattered many of the church membership of Jerusalem also into Phenice (northward from Israel into Phoenicia, i.e. Tyre, Sidon), Cyrene (southward and westward into northwest Libya, or North Africa), and Antioch (Syria. **(Acts 11.19)** This was a considerable displacement of the saints throughout the then known world.

But, at the moment we are only concerned with the scattering or sowing of the saints in Judaea and Samaria. Remember, this book is entitled *The Acts of the Apostles* and it will show us the spread, growth, and maturity of the N. T. churches until the end of the apostolic age.

*Ac 1:4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but **wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.***

...

*Ac 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both **in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.***

*Mt 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ...*

The scattering of these baptized believers is a sowing of the once membership of the Jerusalem church into these other areas. Does scattering alone constitute a N. T. church? No. These saints must form into



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new churches where they are. Once this is understood we shall, during this persecution see the sudden, unexplainable growth from one church in Jerusalem to many churches throughout Israel and into Syria.

2 *And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made **great** μέγαν lamentation*

κοπετόν, acc sing of κοπετός, root κόπτω; Mt.11.17 and ye *have not lamented*; Mt. 21.8 others *cut down* branches; Mt. 24.30 *shall* all the tribes of the earth *mourn*; Lk. 8.52 And all wept, and *bewailed* her.

*over him.*

3 *As for Saul, he made havock*

ἐλυμαίνετο, 3p sing, imperf of λυμαίνομαι; used only this once; used a number of times in the LXX; Ex. 23.8 *corrupt* just words; 2Chron. 16.10 And Asa *vexed* some; Pv.18.9 is brother to him that *ruins* himself; Pv. 18.22 folly of a man *spoils* his way; Pv. 23.8 and *spoil* thy fair words; Pv.25.26 and *corrupt* a spring; Pv.27.13 *lays waste* another's goods; Is.65.8 *destroy* it not; Is. 65.25 nor *destroy* in my holy mountain; Jer. 28.2 and *ravage* her land; et al.

Paul ravaged the Jerusalem church; Christ's body and witness in Jerusalem.

Let's be clear about Saul's work against the Lord's church. It must have been purposed by the Lord for the church to suffer persecution and that her members become scattered into the nations. We have, no doubt, already learned about the great power and jealousy that the Lord has in and for His church.

The Holy Ghost of God came upon her at Pentecost, Acts chapter 2 [Think about this, the Eternal, Holy Spirit resides with and is in the churches!]; The healing of the lame man, Acts Acts 3.1-8; The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira for their deception against the church, Acts 5. 1-11; And the power to deliver any whom He would from prison, Acts 5.19-24.

The Lord could have stopped this persecution had He chosen to do so. But He used it, as He does other evil works of men, for His own good purposes. *Ro.8.28 All things work together for good ...* It is not that these evils are good, but that our God uses these to produce good in us to His glory, that we might become conformed to the image of the Son of God (Ro.8.29); that we might be

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transformed in our minds, proving what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Ro.12.2) We are appointed to suffer for his sake. (Phl.1.29)

*2Co.1.5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

*6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, **which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings** which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.*

*7 ¶ And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that **as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.***

*1Pe 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, **after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.***

*of the church, entering into every house, and haling*

*σύρων, nom, sing, masc, pres, of σύρω, KJV Jn.21.8 *dragging* the net with fishes; Acts 14.19 having stoned Paul, *drew* him out of; Acts 17.6 *drew* Jason and certain brethren unto; Re. 12.4 his tail *drew* the third part.*

*men and women committed them to prison.*

And worse, had many killed, like he witnessed of Stephen.

*Acts 22.4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.*

*Acts 26.10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and **when they were put to death**, I gave my voice against them.*

*11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.*

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4 ¶ *Therefore they that were scattered abroad (διασπαρέντες, vs. 1) went every where preaching the word εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον.*

The persecution did not prevent the saints from preaching Jesus Christ! Now, what some would have us understand here is that only preachers, ordained ministers were involved in this work, and that only ordained ministers should do this today. But exegetically, no one can make that interpretation. What does this verse say? It says that the saints preached Christ [lit. evangelized] everywhere that they went. I repeat. This says, that the saints preached Christ [lit. evangelized] everywhere that they went. So, let me follow this up by saying that this preaching, evangelization is laying the ground work for the establishment of true churches where they are.

The book of Acts, by the Spirit of God, is disclosing systematically necessary information upon which we can build good, sound Bible doctrine about the establishment of N. T. churches.

Why didn't these scattered saints just up and establish a church? There is an order. First Jerusalem, then Judaea, Samaria, then the uttermost parts of the earth.

*Ac 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, **Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words ...***

The evangelization of Jerusalem and Judaea had become a reality. Jerusalem is in Judaea. And this region has received the preaching of the gospel, and a church, the church which is at Jerusalem is all there is at the moment. Now, we see the Lord working in Samaria ...

### 5 *Then Philip*

Not the apostle Philip, because verse 1 states that the apostles remained in Jerusalem; but the Philip who was selected by the church and appointed to the office of a deacon in Acts 6.6.

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went down to the **city** of Samaria,

All places leading from Jerusalem is said to be going down. You always ascend when you go to Jerusalem. So, Biblically, Philip descended from Jerusalem, northward to the city of Samaria.

and preached (ἐκήρυσσεν, cried out) Christ unto them.

Here, we have an example of one of the seven, having been scattered because of the persecution, crying out the message of Jesus Christ in the next region: northward into Samaria. Philip will later be call an evangelist.

*Ac 21:8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.*

Philip goes from Jerusalem, north into Samaria, then south to Gaza where he met the eunuch, then a little north from there into Azotus, and then continues in his travels along the coast of Israel, city by city until he reaches Caesarea. (Acts 8.5; 8.26, 40)

*6 And the people [of the city of Samaria] with one accord gave heed (προσείχον, attended, to possess; vs 10, 11) unto those things which Philip spake, hearing [most important, the gospel of Christ's coming, sufferings, death and resurrection] and seeing the miracles which he did.*

The miracles, for the lack of the complete revelation of the will of God in a Bible as we have it today, were used to certify the validity of those things which were being preached concerning Christ. Like tongues and prophecies of the early church were instruments which aided the saints in understanding the will of God, these miracles pointed to Jesus Christ. Seeing miracles, or even performing them, would have been utterly useless if not for the fact that they pointed souls to Christ.

Matthew Poole, vol.3, p. 409, 'these miracles were as so many evidences of the truth he spake, by which he showed God's authority for what he said.'

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*7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.*

For what purpose? To turn the souls of many to Jesus Christ when they heard the gospel.

*8 And there was great joy χαρὰ μεγάλη in ἐν that city.*

Here is that beautiful fruit of the Spirit again. Not happiness, but joy. Joy in knowing that the God of glory had reached down to touch people's lives, not just temporarily by touching those who had been afflicted with demons, and sicknesses and diseases, and disabilities; but that Jesus Christ has died for the remission of their sins. How many of the saints today are sick, have disabilities, and severe handicaps? Yet this one thing is absolutely correct, and this is their joy: their sins are forgiven them in Jesus Christ; their names are written in the Lamb's book of life!

*Lu 10:20 ... rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*

And one day, in the not-too-distant futures all of those things shall be gone forever. We are going to be changed at the coming of Jesus Christ with power and glory. Those things that troubled us our whole life long, gone. Depressions, oppressions, weakly, sicknesses, diseases, sorrow, and pain, gone. For God so loved the Word that He sent His only begotten Son to die for the sinner. By His death our judgment for sin has been settled, and our sin has been cast away. We are accepted with Christ. I think that this was the cause of the great joy in the city of Samaria, and in all of the saints to this day. The joy in knowing Him who died for us.

J-F-B, vol.3 p.49, 'This joy of the converted Samaritans was like that of the Jewish Christians at Pentecost (ch.ii. 46, 47). [But we note, the reference to chapt. 2.46, 47 is clearly of the church of Jerusalem, not the people at large. A church entity as such is yet to become a reality until the coming of the apostles. Do the apostles actually start a church, or do they set a pattern for all to do so themselves?]

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9 *But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime*

προυπήρχεν, 3<sup>rd</sup> sng, imperf of προυπάρχω; προ forward + ὑπο under + άρχω to begin, reign, rule; Only used in two places; here and Lk.23.12 for **before** they **were** at enmity; Only once in the LXX, Job 42.18 (which is a sort of appended notation) and his name **before was** Jobab.

*in the same city used sorcery,*

μαγεύων, nom, sing, masc, part, pres of μαγεύω; **vs. 11 bewitched; vs. 13 wondered**; In 13.6, 8 Elymas is a *sorcerer*, μάγος, magos. In the LXX, the book of Daniel has the magos in chapter 1, 2, 4, 5 *sorcerer, magician*; magic. It is sleight of hand; tricks.

Robertson, vol. 3, p.104, 'Literally, "Simon was existing previously practicing magic."'

*and bewitched*

ἐξιστῶν, nom, sing, masc, part, pres of ἐξιστάω; ἐξ out + ἵστημι to stand; from which we get the English word *ecstasy*; sometimes we think of the *out of body* experience; Mt. 12.23 the people *were amazed*; Mk.3.21 He is *beside himself*; Mk.5.42 They *were astonished* with great astonishment; Mk.6.51 they *were sore amazed*; **Acts 8.13 wondered, beholding the miracles**; 2Co.5.13 whether we *be beside ourselves*.

*the people ἔθνος of Samaria, giving out λέγων that himself was some great μέγαν one:*

10 *To whom they all gave heed* (προσείχον, vss 6, 11), *from the least to the greatest* μεγάλου, *saying, This man is the great* μεγάλη *power* δύναμις *of God.*

11 *And to him they had regard* (προσείχον, vss. 6, 10), *because that of long time he had bewitched* (ἐξεστακέναι perf infin) *them with sorceries* μαγείαις.

12 *But when they believed*

ἐπίστευσαν, 3<sup>rd</sup> p pl, aor 1, ind of πιστεύω

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In other words, when these had demonstrated a proper faith in Christ, and not a whimsical, feel-good sensation about all of the excitement and buzz that is going on in the city.

*Philip preaching εὐαγγελιζομένω the things concerning the kingdom of God,*

τὰ περὶ τῆς Βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ

This gives us more information about the content of the gospel. Here we learn that these heard *things concerning the kingdom of God*. What things?

*and the name of Jesus Christ,*

At the hearing of the gospel the faith of Christ in them released them from the fables and abuses of seemingly religious persons. Christ reigned now reigned in their hearts, and Simon was dethroned.

First we notice that these believed the preaching of the kingdom of God, and those things concerning Jesus Christ's person and work. Faith in Christ precedes the next spiritual work of baptism. Clearly, faith can only be manifested when once the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached.

*Ro 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher (or, without preaching, χωρίς κηρύσσοντος?*

*they were baptized,*

ἐβαπτίζοντα, 3p pl, imperf, pass of βαπτίζω;

Only after believing the gospel for themselves are any prepared to demonstrate obedience to the command of God to be baptized. And to be clear, everyone that believes in Christ to the saving of the soul falls under the command to be baptized.

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*Ac 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*

And those preaching the gospel have as much of an obligation to baptize that believer!!!

*Ac 10:47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

Who is it preaching? The saints of the church. Who is it baptizing? The saints of the church. Yes, I agree with order, and we can have order. But, given the same circumstances what must we as church saints do if we are scattered? Send off to Timbuctoo for a pastor to baptize? Brethren, do we suppose that our first priority is to keep traditions of associations, or that the Word of Christ has preeminence? It is amazing how convoluted some make the Scriptures. This spirit is not what should be in the true churches. We hear that churches can't be started without pastors; pastors alone baptize and conduct the Lord's Supper; churches begin as missions; where does this come from? We have once again reared up Nicolaitanism among men, and a chief Church over another church (It doesn't matter if it is just one church, ten churches, and all the churches. No church has any head over her but one, Jesus Christ.) We superimpose over the Word of God our bias and refuse to acknowledge the truth. And then, those that do practice the truth as clearly and distinctly as they see it written are rejected from fellowship. Too many so-called gospel preachers have sacrificed clear truth and simple actions to maintain a complicated system and tradition which ends up regulating the Word of God, instead of the other way around.

*both men ἄνδρες and women γυναῖκες.*

Again, as we have pointed out before, notice the non-mention of children. 1Co.13.11 gives us the distinction between men and women to children.

*1Co.13.11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*



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The issue of the understanding is at issue here. The lack of mention of children does not exclude them from a potential faith in Christ, and then baptism, and the service of Christ, but rather ensures that the proper order of faith, then baptism are maintained.

*13 Then Simon himself believed ἐπίστευσε also: and when he was baptized βαπτισθεὶ, he continued with*

*Continued with, προσκαρτερῶν, root προσκαρτερέω; also Ro.12.12 continuing instant in prayer; 13.6 attending continually upon this very thing; Col.4.2 continue in prayer. **Interesting that this Greek word is related mostly to continuing in prayer than any other thing.***

*1.14 These all continued with one accord in **prayer** and supplication ...*

*2.42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in **prayers**.*

*6.4 But we will give ourselves continually to **prayer**, and to the ministry of the word.*

*10.7 ... he called two of his household servant, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually ...*

*Philip, and wondered (ἐξίστατο, vss. 9, 11), beholding the miracles and signs which were done.*

As the people had formerly been enamored with Simons *magic*, so now he is with Philip.