**The Conversions in Samaria**

*Acts 8:4-25*

**Introduction**

1. Jesus commanded the apostles to preach the gospel, and be witnesses of Him – **Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49**
2. Before leaving them in His ascension, Jesus disclosed God’s plan for the gospel’s spread – **Acts 1:8** – Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth.
3. In **Acts 8**, the gospel reaches Samaria by the preaching of a man named Philip.
4. The Will of God Persists
5. Persecution
   1. **Acts 8:1-3** – After Stephen’s death – great persecution arose.
   2. The word of God is met with opposition because Jesus was met with opposition – **John 15:18-21**
6. “But if it is from God…”
   1. Some persecution had already taken place before this time.
      1. Peter and John preached contrary to the Sanhedrin’s will, and were placed in prison.
      2. Despite being placed in prison, after being released by an angel they persisted in preaching God’s word.
   2. The Sanhedrin considered what to do, and received counsel from one of their respected teachers of the Law.
      1. **Acts 5:38-39** – Gamaliel spoke true in verse 39.
      2. God would show this to be the case by the persistence of the Gospel being spread in spite of persecution. (**cf. 2 Timothy 2:9** – the word of God is not chained)
7. The Scattering of the Persecuted
   1. **Acts 4:29-31; 5:40-42** – the persecution against Peter and John had the adverse effect.
   2. **Acts 8:4** – those scattered in persecution did not keep their mouths shut, but preached the word.
   3. NOTE: THIS SHOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GOSPEL – **Romans 1:16 –** IT IS GOD’S MEANS OF SAVING MEN, AND THOSE WHO REALIZE THIS PERSIST IN GIVING IT TO THOSE WHO DON’T HAVE IT. (Philip is a microcosm of this incredible character exhibited by the early church.)
8. Philip – A Preacher to the Samaritans
9. God’s Plan (**Acts 1:8** – for the gospel to spread to Samaria after Judea)
10. Philip’s Character
    1. As seen before – chosen for the business of distributing to the needy saints, especially because of the neglected Hellenist widows – **Acts 6:2-6** – GOOD REPUTATION, FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WISDOM.
    2. In going to Samaria to preach – **Acts 8:5** – Philip was one of the persecuted scattered preaching, and he went to Samaria:
       1. Jews and Samaritans – **John 4:9** – no dealings with each other. (Dating all the way back to the building of the temple in Nehemiah)
       2. A Christ-like expression of love – **John 4:10, 13-14, 39-42** – revealed Himself to the Samaritans in His preaching – **Acts 8:5** – Philip did the same, seemingly without direct command like with the Ethiopian eunuch. (LAID ASIDE PREJUDICE AND PREACHED THE GOSPEL) (**cf. James 2:1** – don’t hold faith with partiality)
11. The Message Preached
12. The Word
    1. **Acts 8:4** – Philip was one of those who were scattered in the persecution.
       1. Word – *logos* – something said. (STRONG); a word or saying. (VINE)
       2. This is very significant:
          1. Salvation NOT a “better felt than told experience” but comes from reason – something said.
          2. Salvation NOT a miraculous event – response to something said.
          3. Salvation NOT mysterious – something that can be said.
    2. **1 Corinthians 1:18, 21** – (“message” – logos) save world through foolishness of message preached.
       1. **Romans 1:16** – power of God behind salvation is in a message.
       2. Gospel – good news.
    3. **Romans 10:5-15** – word of faith is brought near by a preacher, and the message preached is believed, and acted upon.
13. Christ
    1. **Acts 8:5** – Philip preached Christ to them.
       1. Christ – *Christos*; from 5548; anointed, i.e. the Messiah. (STRONG)
       2. **John 4:19, 25-26, 28-29** – Samaritans anticipated the coming of Christ – excitedly left water pot to tell others!
       3. **Deuteronomy 18:15** – THE Prophet.
    2. **Genesis 12:3** – Samaritans knew they would be blessed by His coming.
    3. Imagine a scene similar to the proclamation of John – **John 1:29** – HE’S HERE!
14. The Kingdom of God
    1. **Acts 8:12** – concerning the kingdom of God.
    2. In preaching Christ, Philip would preach that CHRIST WAS TO SIT ON A THRONE – **Acts 2:30-31**
    3. **Isaiah 9:6-7** – Upon the throne of David He would sit, and rule.
    4. Kingdom is spiritual – **John 18:36**
       1. Kingdom is the church – **Matthew 16:18-19**
       2. Added to kingdom = saved; saved = in the kingdom – **Acts 2:47**
       3. KINGDOM HAS COME – they could be a part of it:
          1. Some teach that the kingdom has not come.
          2. **Colossians 1:13-14** – in 1st century, men and women were a part of that kingdom.
15. The Name of Jesus Christ
    1. **Acts 8:12** – name of Jesus Christ.
       1. Preached Christ already.
       2. NOW he identifies who specifically the Christ is.
       3. THE MAN JESUS IS THE CHRIST OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.
    2. **Philippians 2:5-11** – the Son of God became flesh. In His humility God exalted Him. Jesus is that Man!
    3. **Ephesians 1:21** – above every name that is named.
    4. **Acts 4:11-12** – salvation only in HIS name. (**John 14:6)**
    5. **Colossians 3:17** – all is to be done in His name.
16. Baptism
    1. Philip also preached baptism for the remission of sins.
    2. **Acts 8:6** – they heeded the things spoken by Philip.
       1. How? – **Acts 8:12** – they were baptized.
       2. In preaching the kingdom of God, baptism was preached – **John 3:3, 5**
       3. In preaching the name of Jesus Christ, baptism was preached – **Matthew 28:18-20**
    3. **NOTE: saved by baptism before receiving the HS – Acts 8:14-17 – salvation is independent of a direct operation of the Spirit.**
17. The Response, a Fall, and a Restoration
18. The Gospel Prevailed in Honest Hearts
    1. **2 Corinthians 10:3-6** – the weapons mighty in God prevail against that which is false. For honest men, it brings their thoughts into the captivity of obedience to Christ. (Truth trumps error.)
    2. This is set on full display in Samaria – **Acts 8:6-13** – the miracles performed by Philip were undeniable, and his word irrefutable, where even the sorcerer himself believed.
19. Simon’s Fall from Grace, and Restoration
    1. Once saved always saved is error – **Hebrews 12:15** – fall short of grace.
    2. Yet, provisions are made in the Divine protection to restore us again – **1 John 1:9; 2:1-2**
    3. Simon was saved, was lost, and was saved again – **Acts 8:18-24**
       1. **(v. 20)** – perish with you – in a state of perishing.
       2. **(v. 21)** – no part or portion – no fellowship in spiritual matters.
       3. **(v. 22)** – wickedness – in need of forgiveness.
       4. **(v. 23)** – poisoned by bitterness (extreme wickedness); bound by iniquity (bondage of sin).
       5. **(vv. 22, 24)** – repentance and prayer was necessary for Simon to be restored.

**Conclusion** – The grace of God is abundant. This is especially on display in the conversions of Samaria.