

Week 5 Discussion Group Questions

His Kingdom Comes...in Persecution
Acts 6-8:8



1. *What impacted you from last week's message?
2. *What do you learn about God and His role in the church from what you have read today?
3. *In evaluating your own life, do you tend to prioritize the ministry of the word? Or the ministry of meeting physical needs? What can you do to balance these priorities in your life?
4. *From verse 15, what does it mean to "have the face of an angel"? What would it look like for you to "have the face of an angel" during times of conflict or accusations?
5. *In what situations do you need to be bold in speaking the truth about the bad news of sin while also pointing to the good news of Jesus? What do you learn from Stephen's example?
6. *How do modern people misplace their worship - focusing on people, places, and ideas rather than on the Lord and the truth of the word? What do you tend to focus on rather than worship of Christ as your King?
7. *From Acts 7:54-60
 - a. How did the listeners respond to Stephen's charges in verse 51-53?
 - b. Describe Stephen's response to these events.
 - c. In what ways does it seem significant that Jesus was standing to greet Stephen?
 - d. When do you need to focus on eternal things rather than the noise and chaos around you?
8. *How are you encouraged as you think of Jesus standing in heaven to greet you (Acts 7:56)? In what ways does this image bring conviction?



Week 5 Listening Guide

*His Kingdom Comes...in Unexpected Ways
Act 8:9-40*



1. The Work of the _____: Understand that though the way the Holy Spirit moves and works is _____, the principles by which the Spirit moves and works are _____. (4-25)

Lined writing area consisting of multiple horizontal lines for student input.

Week 5 Homework

His Kingdom Comes...in Unexpected Ways
Act 8:9-40



Day One

PRAY: Romans 11:33 says, “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!” As you open today in prayer, please ask the Lord to show you a greater picture of His unsearchable judgments and inscrutable ways.

MEMORIZE: Please write Acts 8:35 on the following lines and repeat it several times, emphasizing different words each time.

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.”

STUDY: Today we’ll get an overview of this week’s passage. Persecutions have started to grow, but that hasn’t stopped the Gospel from spreading or stopped people from being saved. As you read today’s passage, please look for the evidence of God working outside the box of our expectations. Please read Acts 8:9-40, and answer the following ~

1. What unexpected things do you see in these stories that we don’t typically see today?

2. *If you had to write a title and a brief statement to grab someone’s attention and inspire them to read these stories, what would you write?

a. Title and statement for vs. 9-25 ~

b. Title and statement for vs. 26-40 ~

3. What insight does this passage give you into God’s power?

Please close this time in prayer, and tell the Lord anything that you saw of His “riches, wisdom, and knowledge.”

Day Two

PRAY: As you open in prayer, please ask the Lord to reveal to you anything that is keeping you from bowing to Him as Lord. Ask Him to show you what next steps to take.

MEMORIZE: Please number the following phrases from Acts 8:35 to put them in order ~

1. And beginning with _____
2. Then Philip opened _____
3. He told him _____
4. This scripture _____
5. About Jesus _____
6. The good news _____
7. His mouth _____

STUDY: Have you ever seen a movie in which they retell the same story, but from different perspectives? Let's take a look at Acts 8:9-25 through a few different lenses over the next few days. It tells the story of salvation and redemption as well as the need not only to A – admit and B – believe, but also C – confess Jesus Christ as Lord. To be Lord is to be Master, in charge. As you read today's passage, please consider the man, Simon. Please read Acts 8:9-25, and answer the following ~

1. Please use vs. 9-11 to describe what the people thought of Simon and how that must have affected his view of himself.

2. What do you think Simon would have thought when he first realized that the people were turning to the good news of Jesus Christ?

3. *Based on Simon's request in vs. 18-19, what do you think drew him to say that he believed the gospel?

4. Do you think Simon's belief was real? Please give reasons for why you think that.

5. Please read Peter's response to Simon's request in vs. 20-23.

a. What was the evidence that Simon's heart was not right before God (vs. 20)? (Whether he was truly a believer or not, his heart was not right.)

b. What did Simon's request reveal about the intent of his heart?

c. *How do you think bitterness played a role in Simon's need for repentance?

6. *2 Corinthians 7:10 speaks of worldly sorrow (being sorry that you got caught) vs. godly sorrow (repenting before God for sinning against Him). What do you think Simon's response to Peter revealed about the sorrow of his heart?

Please close this time in prayer. Talk with the Lord about the motivations of your heart and the purpose of your personal repentance.

Day Three

PRAY: Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Please open this time in prayer and ask the Lord to give you insight into the abundant life that He has for you.

MEMORIZE: Please fill in the blanks to complete Acts 8:35 ~

"Then Philip _____ his mouth, and _____ with this scripture he told him the _____ news about _____."

STUDY: Today we'll take another look at Acts 8:9-25, but this time we'll see it through God's eyes. When God exposes something about someone's heart, His plan is always to rescue and never condemn. Please look for God's plan of redemption as you answer the following questions in Acts 8:9-25 ~

1. If God were a power-hungry tyrant, how might He have responded to the fact that Simon didn't stop people from saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great"?

2. *What did God reveal about Himself “through the good news about His kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ” that would draw people away from following Simon to following Him?

There are different theories as to why the people received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands rather than through prayer as we do today. One thought is that the Lord was establishing the authority of the apostles so that they would be respected as they spoke the truth of His words. Whatever the reason, we can celebrate that the Lord gives us the Holy Spirit to dwell in us.

3. What do the following verses tell you about the importance of the Holy Spirit’s role in our lives?

a. Ephesians 1:14

b. Romans 5:5

c. Romans 8:26-27

d. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

e. Imagine trying to live out your faith without the things you saw in the previous verses. How would that affect you?

4. *What do you think God’s purpose was in revealing the evil intent of Simon’s heart (please see vs. 22-23)?

Please close this time in prayer, and tell the Lord what you see about His power, wisdom, and love from today’s study.

Day Four

PRAY: Please open this time in prayer, and ask the Lord to give you a deeper understanding of how He can't be contained in a box.

MEMORIZE: Please fill in the blanks to complete Acts 8:35 ~

“Then _____ his mouth, and _____ with this _____ he _____ him the _____ news about _____.”

STUDY: We often talk about the ABC's of the gospel. A – admit that you are a sinner in need of a Savior. B – believe that Jesus paid the price for your salvation. C – confess Jesus as Lord. In today's passage, we'll see the story of someone who had experienced the A and the B, but had yet to experience the C until the Lord sent Philip. As you read Acts 8:26-40, please look for evidence of God at work in miraculous ways to help this man get from B to C. Please read Acts 8:26-40, and answer the following ~

1. *John Piper has a statement: “God is always doing 10,000 things in your life, and you may be aware of 3 of them.” Can you list at least 3 obvious, yet out of the ordinary things you see the Lord doing in this passage?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Where was the eunuch from, and why had he traveled to Jerusalem?

3. *When did the eunuch actually grasp his need for a Savior?

4. What “coincidental” evidence do you see of God drawing the eunuch to a relationship with Him through Jesus?

5. Can you see evidence in your life of Jesus drawing you to a relationship with Him BEFORE you actually confessed Him as Lord? Please describe how that happened. (If you are not sure that you've confessed Him as Lord, please write down any questions or concerns you have about making that decision, and if you feel comfortable, please talk with your discussion group leader about it.)

6. What things do you see in this passage that point to Philip's trust in Jesus as his Lord and Master?

Please close this time in prayer, and tell the Lord what you see about Him that is "out of the box."

Day Five

PRAY: Please open this time in prayer, and ask the Lord to show you how He meets you right where you are.

MEMORIZE: Please write Acts 8:35 from memory.

What scripture would you share with someone to tell them why Jesus is worth following, and why?

STUDY: In Matthew 28:19, after rising from the dead, Jesus told the disciples to "Go therefore and make disciples of ALL nations." In Acts 1:8, right before He ascended into heaven, He told them that through the power of the Holy Spirit, they would be His "witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." How cool that the people we have read about this week are from Samaria and the "end of the earth!" God was fulfilling His purpose and giving His disciples the joy of participating in His plan.

Let's take one final look at the whole passage, Acts 8:9-40. We'll look for evidence of how God sees us in our need and meets us where we are. Please read Acts 8:9-40, and answer the following questions ~

1. *What was God's approach with Simon vs. the eunuch? Why do you think He approached them differently?

2. *How have you seen God's approach in your life to draw you to Him? (How did He meet you where you were?)

3. Looking at both Simon and the eunuch, notice when each admitted to believing in God vs. when they would have confessed Him as Lord. What is the difference between believing in Jesus and confessing Him as Lord?

4. How was Philip living out God's Great Commission and his purpose from Matthew 28:19 and Acts 1:8?

5. *Please take one last look at Philip as a follower of Jesus Christ. How would you describe his character and his commitment to Jesus? What impact does character and commitment have in sharing the gospel?

6. What are ways in your life that you can practically participate with God in fulfilling His purpose to spread His good news?

Please close this time in worship, sharing with the Lord the impact He's had on your life through the good news of the gospel.

