

# **LESSONS FROM ACTS 8:1-4**

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# ACTS 8:1-4

*Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.*

# LESSON #1: ALL CHRISTIANS ARE EXPECTED TO TEACH IN SOME CAPACITY

- The entire church at Jerusalem (which would include men, women, and children) faced persecution and they all "**went everywhere preaching the word.**"
  - Therefore, men, women, and children who are Christians today bear the same responsibility in teaching the gospel (Matt. 28:19-20).
    - What this teaching looks will vary depending on spiritual maturity (James 3:1) and the restrictions placed on women (1 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 14:34-35), but a Christian choosing not to teach the gospel at all is not an option.

# **LESSON #2: CHRISTIANS KEEP SPREADING THE GOSPEL, EVEN DURING HARDSHIPS**

- Even during hardships, Christians have a responsibility to spread the gospel (2 Cor. 4:1-2, 7-12; 1 Cor. 9:16).
- Glorifying in and spreading the gospel is the best response to hardships (2 Tim. 4:14-18; Eph. 3:8-13, 6:18-20; Phil. 1:7, 12, 17, 21-22; Acts 5:40-42, 16:23-25).

# LESSON #3: THE EARLY CHURCH WOULD DIE FOR THEIR FAITH

- The Christians in Acts 8:1-4 were truly prepared to be "*faithful unto death*" (Rev. 2:10).
  - The very context shows a Christian dying for his faith (Acts 7:57-60).
- These Christians heeded the words of Christ, who said, "*Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*" (Matt. 10:28).
- The early church was willing to die for their faith. Can we say the same?
  - If we realize that when we chose to follow Jesus that we “died,” it may be easier to die for our faith (Rom. 6:4 Col. 3:3; Gal. 2:20; Acts 20:24; Rom. 14:7-8; 1 Cor. 3:21-22; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).

# LESSON #4: THE WORD OF GOD CONTINUES TO ENDURE

- Before his conversion, Saul's primary goal was to destroy the church and the gospel message (Gal. 1:13).
- Yet, no matter how hard Saul tried, neither he nor anyone else can stop the word of God from enduring (Isa. 40:8, 55:11).
- No amount of wickedness will ever stop the gospel from saving the souls of people who earnestly desire to accept and obey it (Rom. 1:16).

# LESSON #5: AS LONG AS THE EARTH STANDS, THE CHURCH WILL STAND

- Acts 8:1-4 proves that true followers of God will always exist on this earth.
  - Saul sought to eradicate the church; he **failed** at his mission.
- Though Satan may draw people away from God and though man might seek to eradicate the influence of God and His people, as long as this earth stands the church of Jesus Christ will also stand (Matt.. 16:18).
- Like during the days of Isaiah there may only be small remnants of God's people remaining, but true followers of God will always be present on earth no matter how much Satan or his followers try to eradicate them.