

Sermon Date: October 27, 2013
Acts 8:1-25 – The Word Goes to Samaria
Doug McBride

Read Acts 8:1-25

1. See Acts 8:1-4. Stephen has just been stoned to death, the church is deeply mourning and is scattering.
 - a. Doug commented that God has a habit of making Gold out of the chaos of humanity. Where/when has this happened in your own life?
 - b. Who is Saul? For what purpose would Luke mention him here?

2. Note Acts 1:8, Jesus' words to the apostles before He ascended to heaven. See also John 4: 5-30, 39-42 with special emphasis on 4:9. What is the common connection between Acts 1:8 and Acts 8:1-25?

3. See Acts 8:14-17.
 - a. What is the purpose of the Apostle's visit from Jerusalem?
 - b. What was different about this picture of the new believers than when people believed at Pentecost (Acts 2)? What did the Apostles do differently with these new believers? What do you make of this?

4. See Acts 8:9-24.

- a. Why is Simon especially captivated by certain aspects of Philip's activity (v. 7-13)?
- b. When the new converts receive the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, Simon becomes even more intensely interested (v. 18-19). What is he really after?
- c. Why do you think Peter gives Simon such a strong reply (v. 20-23)?

5. Doug pointed out some good observations about what Simon teaches us:

- That we need to be aware of the difference between fascination and real faith.
- That any attempt to bring God's Spirit under human control is abhorrent.
- Whenever we are more fascinated BY WHAT HAPPENS than by God, we are way off.

What is a lesson we can learn and apply from this experience?

Personal Application:

Doug commented "Our life is not about doing stuff for God, but being so wowed by God that all we have to do is stand in the story and out of a deep sense of love and gratitude watch God on the move."

How can you personally apply this to your own life?

How is this freeing?