

*It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.*  
(Deuteronomy 31:8)

**I. Saul, the Enemy, on a Mission Against the Church (vv.1-3)**

- a. He consented (*gave witness to*) the stoning of Stephen and others. (Acts 22:4, 10, 20)
- b. Saul ravaged (as a wild animal) the church Saul persecute the church with much violence, hunting down men and women. The enemy came in like a roaring lion
- c. This persecution caused many believers to escape to other regions. (1.b) The apostles remained.

**II. The Church on the Move (vv.4-13)**

- a. The persecution actually aided in spreading the Gospel, by causing the believers to move from an inward focus to an outward focus. *The salt was now leaving the Jerusalem saltshaker.*
- b. The word "scatter" (*disaspeiro*) means to "scatter seed". Scattered seed will grow in good soil.
- c. Philip, a deacon, began preaching to Gentiles (of Samaritan descent and religious persuasion)
  1. Who were the Samaritans? Descendants of the Northern tribes, half Jew and half Gentile.
  2. They had their own, priests, Pentateuch, "holy Scriptures" and they practiced circumcision.
  3. To the Jews the Samaritans were half-breeds and heretics. (the woman at the well, John 4)
- d. Like the apostles, Philip preached and baptized. The Word was undergirded by signs and wonders.
- e. Philip evangelized outside of his culture. The result: The Church prospered (v.8)

**III. Satan is on the Move (vv.9-13)**

- a. It is a basic principle in Scripture that wherever God sows His true believers, Satan will eventually sow his counterfeits. (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43)
- b. Satan's tool in this case was a sorcerer named Simon. The enemy came as a serpent to deceive.
  1. Simon's sorcery was energized by Satan and was used to magnify himself.
- c. What does it mean that Simon himself believed? What was the basis of his faith?
  1. His faith was not in the Word of God, but in the miracles he saw Philip carrying out. He followed Philip to see the miracles and perhaps to learn how they were done.
  2. This narrative shows how close a person can come to salvation and not be converted.
  3. There is no indication that Simon repented of his sins. (v.22) (The imperative of Savior and Lord)

**IV. The Holy Spirit Cannot Be Limited**

- a. Peter and John arrive and *lay hands on* the Samaritans, their presence also endorses the ministry.
- b. Is the "laying on of hands" pertinent in order for a person to receive the Holy Spirit?
- c. No, the *Book of Acts* illustrates that sometimes the coming of the Holy Spirit precedes baptism and sometimes He follows. At Pentecost no one laid hands on the believers that were present.
- d. The Holy Spirit is connected with becoming a Christian (Acts 9:17-18; 10:44-46; 19:5-6). The truth is the Holy Spirit cannot be tied down or limited to human interpretation.

**V. Thoughts and Considerations for Actions**

- a. The gospel was created to reach *all*, therefore, there are no "half-breeds", no physical rejects, and no place for human prejudices in God's Kingdom. There is acceptance for all, joy for all. (Luke 2:10)
- b. Satan's opposition to God's Word and His people is widespread and deceptive. He is a lion (overt action) and he is a serpent (subvert action).
- c. We have to be on the move. The Holy Spirit encourages us to reach people, expand the Kingdom, and do the miraculous by the Word of God.
- d. God will truly bless as we take His Word to foreign territory. Go where you've never gone before.