

acts

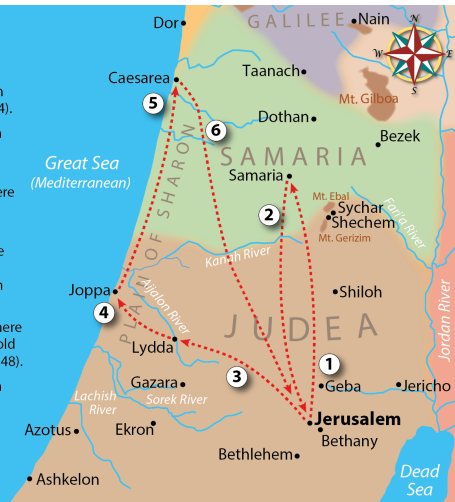
OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 5 • August 4
Acts 8-9 • “Saul, Why Are
You Persecuting Me?”

Journey of Peter

Acts 8:14-25; 9:31-43; 10

1. Peter and John travel from Jerusalem to Samaria (8:14).
2. Peter returns to Jerusalem and becomes acquainted with Saul (9:26-27).
3. Peter travels to Lydda where many turn to the Lord (9:32-35).
4. Peter goes to Joppa where he has a vision of a great, white sheet full of unclean animals (10:9-17).
5. Peter goes to Caesarea where Cornelius and his household become Christians (10:24-48).
6. Peter returns to Jerusalem (11:1-2).



Our last lesson ended with Stephen being killed for preaching the good news about Jesus.

And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

(Acts 8:1)

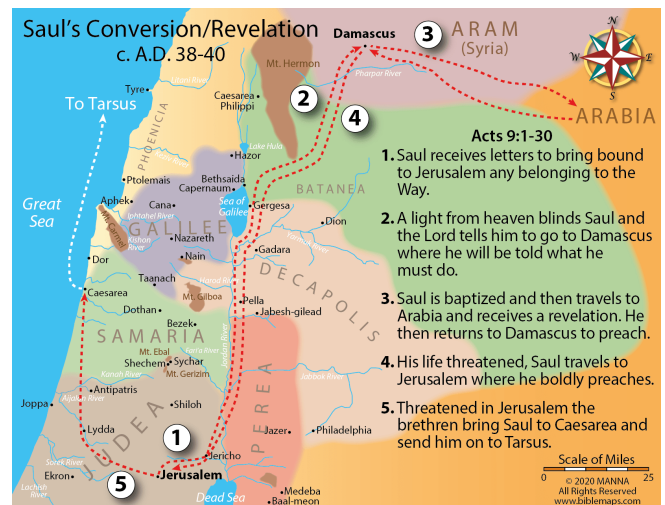
But even as Saul was “ravaging the church,” dragging off men and women and committing them to prison, “those who were scattered went about preaching the word” (8:4). In our study so far, we’ve been told mostly about very large crowds of people hearing and

responding to the gospel (2:41; 4:4; 5:14). But God also cares about individual people. Every single person needs to hear the good news about Jesus, and that’s what we find over the next few chapters—individuals impacted:

- 8:9-24: Simon the magician
- 8:27-40: an Ethiopian eunuch
- 9:1-30: Saul of Tarsus

Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.”

(9:3-6)



Everyone could respond to the good news about Jesus, even someone like Saul, who had persecuted Christians. In Acts 9:18, he was baptized. He immediately went into Damascus and started telling everyone who would listen, “Jesus is the Son of God” (9:19-20).

The rest of Acts 9 tells us about a paralyzed man named Aeneas being healed (9:32-35) and a woman named Dorcas even being raised from the dead (9:36-43)! The news was spreading far beyond Jerusalem.

For Class & Family Discussion:

- Why do you think Saul “approved” of the execution of Stephen (8:1)? How did he describe his mindset later on in Acts 26:9-11?

- “Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word” (8:4). Why is this a really big deal and what can we learn from it?

- Acts 8:9-24 tells us about Simon the magician. What can we learn from his story? How did he get himself into trouble?

- In 8:14-18, we read some important details about the work of the apostles. Why would Peter and John go down to Samaria if those people had already been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus?

- Acts 8:26-40 tells us about an Ethiopian eunuch. What can we learn from his story? What did he need to do in order to be saved from his sins?

- Acts 9:1-22 tells us about the biggest surprise of all—Saul of Tarsus obeying the gospel.
 - Why do you think Jesus said what he did in 9:4?

 - What do we learn about the Lord’s plans for Saul in 9:15?

 - What did Saul need to do in order to be saved from his sins?

 - In 9:26-28, Saul comes back to Jerusalem and attempts to join the disciples. What can we learn from how that went?

- What effect did the miracles we’re told about in 9:32-43 have? Is Luke just telling us about the incredible things Peter was able to do, or was there a point behind the miracles? If they were “signs” like the miracles of Jesus, what were they proving and pointing to?