

THE BOOK OF *Acts*

|| Group Discussion Guide ||

April 7, 2024

THE CHURCH SCATTERED

Acts 8:1-8

1

What does it mean that Saul approved of Stephen's execution? (cf. the same word used in Luke 11:48 and Romans 1:32)

2

Why should we be careful about what we give our approval to? What is at stake?

3

The persecution scatters the believers, except the apostles (v. 1). Why might they have stayed behind?

4

How does this event point to the importance of "every-member ministry" (Eph. 4:12-13)? How is this concept necessary even in times less dire than persecution?

5

Although scattered, the believers "went about preaching the word" (v. 4). What does this say about their commitment to the gospel?

6

Historically, persecution has largely had the opposite of the intended effect—it has served to strengthen the faith of believers and disperse the gospel further. Why might this have been the case?

7

We find that the Samaritans “paid attention” (v. 6) to Philip’s preaching, and that the result was “much joy in that city” (v. 8). What likely caught their attention? What was the source of their joy?

8

How does the response of the Samaritans (who were despised as half-breeds in Israel) contrast with the response of the Jewish elite? How might this incident connect with Jesus’ overturning expectations about Jewish-Samaritan relations during his ministry (cf. John 4: 1-45; Luke 10:29-37)?

