

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for September 23, 2012

The Ministry of Philip to the Samaritans
Acts 8:5-8

Acts 8:5 begins the second major section of Acts based upon Acts 1:8 as the witness for Christ spreads to Samaria.

1. The preaching ministry of Philip to the Samaritans (8:5)

Philip was first mentioned in the Bible in Acts 6:5 and was one of the seven designated to minister to the church problem of overlooking the needs of the widows who were Hellenistic Jews.

The reason that Philip had fled to Samaria was due to the persecution that broke out against the Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem.

The city of Samaria may be an ancient name for the town of Sebaste, or it may be simply undefined, nevertheless, the focus of the ministry was the Samaritan people, not the geography.

The death of his co-laborer and fellow Hellenistic Jew, Stephen (Acts 7) , did not diminish Philip's resolve for ministry.

The Samaritans were even more hated by the Jews than the Gentiles were (cf. Luke 9:51-55; John 8:48).

As a Hellenistic Jewish convert, Philip had an advantage when proclaiming Christ in Samaria since he was not from the Hebrew culture but from the Greek culture.

2. The power of the ministry of Philip to the Samaritans (8:6-7)

a. The Words of God

Philip preached the word of God and drew their attention.

b. The Works of God

Philip's miraculous works of God also drew their attention.

Both the healing of the lame and the casting out of demons were miraculous works of God and mirrored the works of Christ during His earthly ministry.

The purpose of these miraculous works of God was to validate the messenger and the message.

The coming out of unclean spirits is considered to be a healing of someone afflicted (cf. Acts 5:16).

The primary work of the evil one against mankind is one of deception.

According to the instruction of the New Testament, our battle against the spiritual forces of evil is to resist, firm in faith (1 Peter 5:8-9).

3. The product of the ministry of Philip to the Samaritans (8:8)

Joy will become a theme in the book of Acts.

The joyful reception of Christ in Samaria is contrasted with the angry rejection of Christ in Jerusalem, which ironically led to the gospel arriving in Samaria with a fleeing Philip.

That people 2,000 years later would respond joyfully to the proclamation of a Jewish Messiah is just as much a supernatural work of God.

May we have the faith to act in the confidence that God is at work among people today to bring them to salvation and the joy that results from faith in Christ.