

An Unexpected Encounter

Acts 8:1-40

Into the Lesson:

When you have seen pictures, or the actual sites, of natural disasters like wildfires, floods, tornadoes, or hurricanes, what are some one-word responses that describe the devastation?

How about the emotions of those who are trying to "put the pieces back together"?

If the Book of Acts ended after Acts 8:1-3, what would be some of the one-word descriptions of Saul?

Into the Word:

Using different versions of bibles or bible apps, list some of the words used to describe Saul's response as listed in v.3 (NIV uses destroy).

We can only speculate, but why do you think the apostles stayed in Jerusalem where the greatest persecution was taking place?

According to v.4, did Saul's efforts have the affect he thought it would? (More about Saul next week).

Assuming there was no J.R.T. (Jerusalem Rapid Transit) system, a period of a few days must have transpired before Philip arrives in Samaria. How do the people respond to the message of the Messiah (vv. 6-8)?

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Compare and contrast the encounter with Phillip and the response to the Gospel message for these two men: (Keep in mind that Phillip has travelled over 100 miles during these two encounters.)

Simon -Acts 8:9-24

The Ethiopian-Acts 8:26-38

What can we infer about their frame of mind and motivation to hear the gospel message?

Of the two, who appears to go their way justified in their faith?

Into Life:

It is possible that we will encounter all three types of people as we share the gospel. How can we begin planning for each encounter?

Saul, strongly opposed to the church-

Simon, seemingly in it for what he can get out of it-

The Ethiopian, apparently seeking truth- (Kind of like three of the four types of soil spoken of in a past sermon.)

How can we know where others are in their journey?

How do these encounters fit in with Lane's comment about, "Divine Appointments"?

What are some things we can do to anticipate Divine Appointments?

How important is prayer in this process? How about bible study?

Will you ask God to provide you the appointment?

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