

Sermon Discussion – 17 September 2023

Read Acts 8:1-8

Getting Started *Sharing from personal experience*

Life is full of unexpected change. Can you recall a time in your life when you experienced a significant displacement or major loss of relationship, health, finances, etc.? How did you feel and how did you handle it?

Observation *Discovering the context*

Reread Acts 7:58-60.

- What is the significance of Stephen's death on the early church. How did it lead to the widespread persecution of Christians and the scattering of the church?
- How does the early church respond to the persecution and displacement they face?

Interpretation *Discovering the meaning*

1. Why is Philip's journey to Samaria significant in the context of the early church? How does his obedience to God's call play a crucial role in spreading the Gospel?
2. What is the relationship between miracles and the message of the Gospel? Why do you think miracles were performed in Acts?
3. Look at v. 1 and then v. 8. Discuss the idea that joy is the ultimate result of displacement. How does this align with your own experiences or observations?
4. Reflect on the analogy of the church as God's bellows. How does this imagery emphasise the role of the church in fanning the flame of the Gospel?
5. How can we cultivate trust in God during seasons of displacement? What biblical principles or promises can provide comfort and assurance?

Application *Putting knowledge into practice*

- How can we, as individuals and as a church, become vessels of joy to those around us? What are practical ways we can spread joy through the Gospel message?
- Try memorising Acts 8:4...
“Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word.”
- How has God blessed you and answered prayer this week?