

The CHURCH Series

Part 6 – The Deacon



Introduction...

- In our last session, we looked at Chapter six, the division between the two cultural groups over food distribution.
- We saw how the situation was resolved through the choosing of the seven including Stephen.
- We had a brief look at Stephen and how God used him before his martyrdom.



Introduction..

- We will look at another member of the chosen seven in this chapter.
- One of the key lessons of chapters 6-8 is that the Spirit of God can use any vessel for His purposes and Glory.
- The structure of the Early Church allowed for the gifts within these men to emerge and bless the Church.
- This principle will return to the Church in the seasons to come before the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.



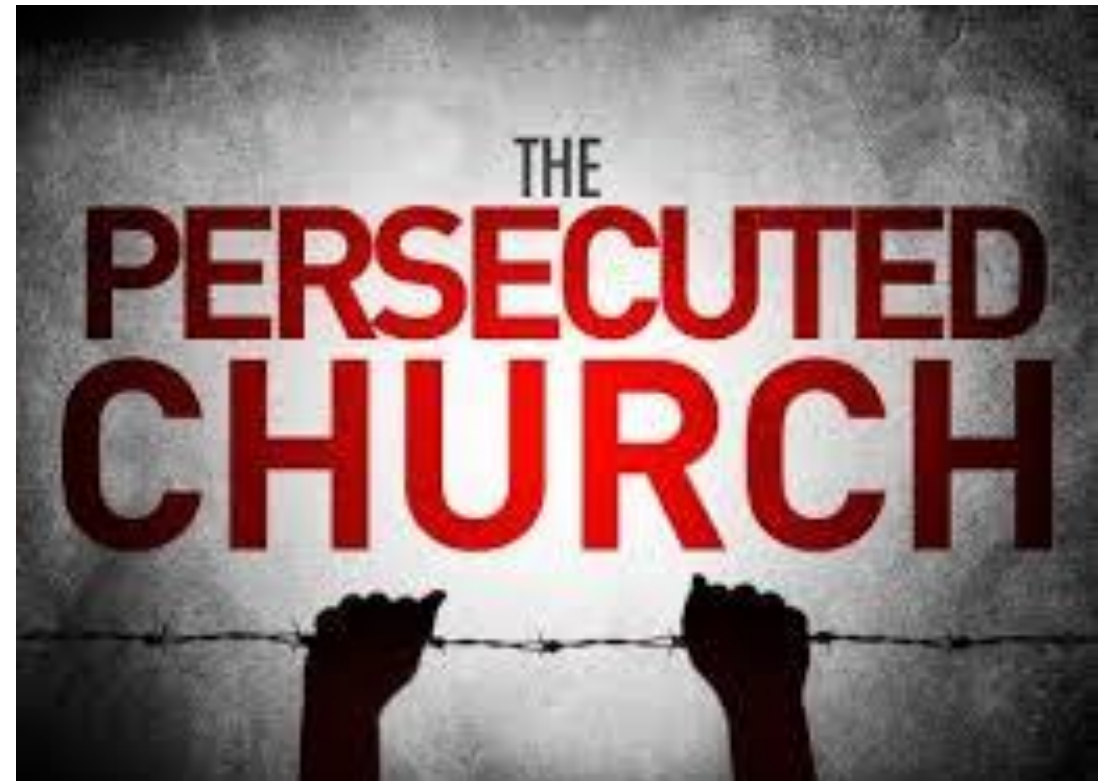
The P Word...

- *Now Saul was consenting to his death.*
- *At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem;*
- *and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.*
- *²And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.*
- *³As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.*
Acts 8:1-3



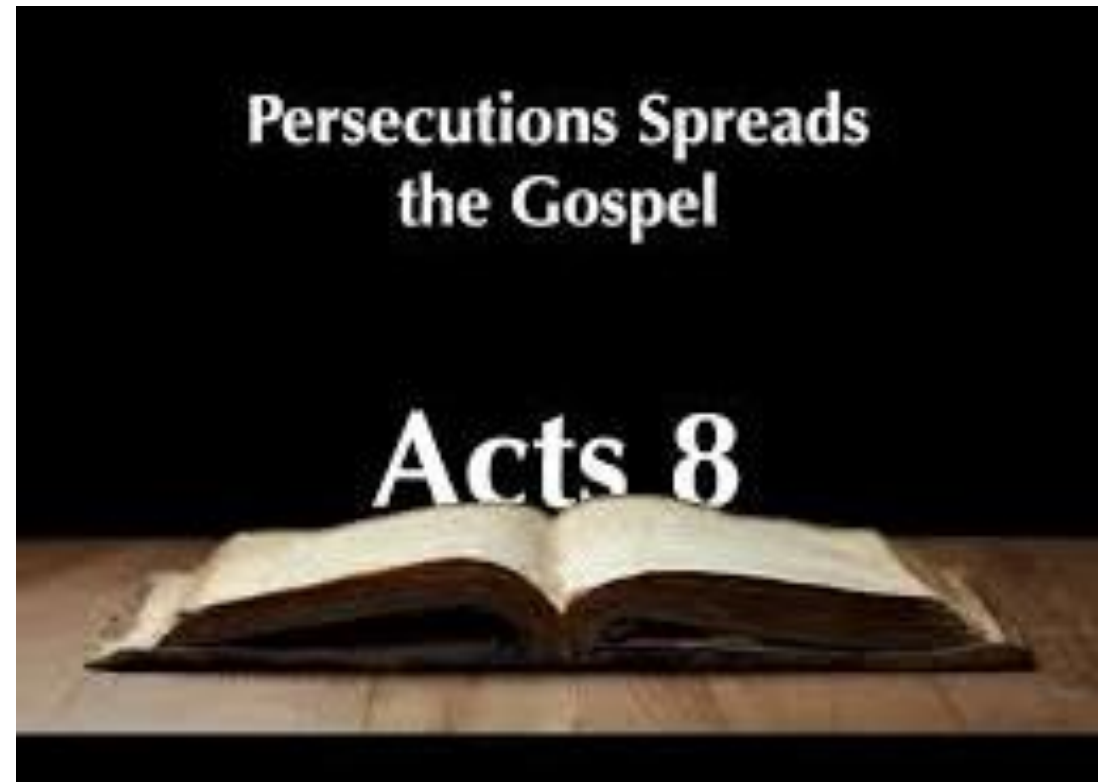
Persecution is in the package

- One of the common themes that runs through the scriptures is the P word.
- *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
Matthew 5:10
- *Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they **persecuted** the prophets who were before you.*
Matthew 5:12



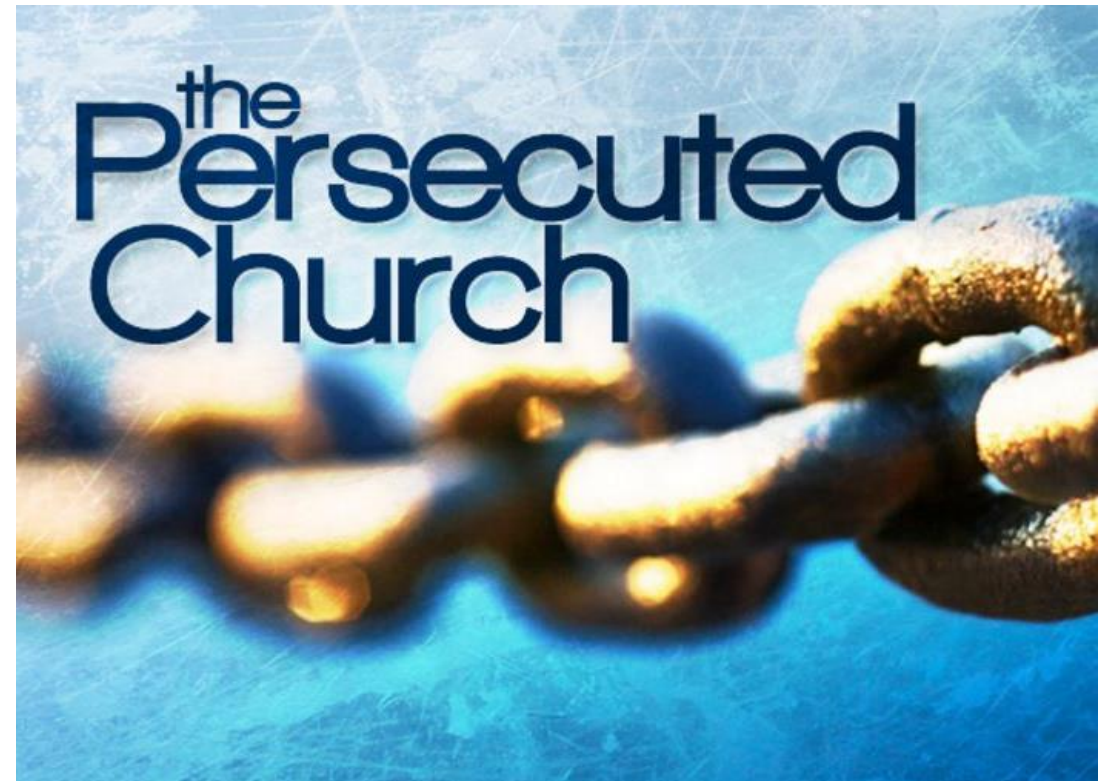
We reject Persecution...

- Many of us believers in the 21st century do NOT want to hear that word persecution.
- We believe its for those believers that live in extreme totalitarian nations.
- Or it is for those Christians who wouldn't keep their mouths shut!
- And for those Believers who do not walk in wisdom like we do!



Persecuted..

- *For this reason the Jews **persecuted** Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. John 5:16*
- The spirit of the anti-christ in the world is the same yesterday and today.
- If you are not suffering persecution, then you are not serving the Kingdom in the spirit of Christ!
- Let me say that again. If you are not suffering direct or indirect persecution, you are likely not serving the Kingdom!



Scattered...

- The church was huddled in Jerusalem
- When the persecution hit, interestingly, they started fulfilling the command of Jesus to go unto Judea and Samaria and everywhere.
- The enemy attacks you and inadvertently drives you more into destiny and God's plan for your life!
- Do not shy away from trials and persecution because they enable you to grow and go!



Trials...

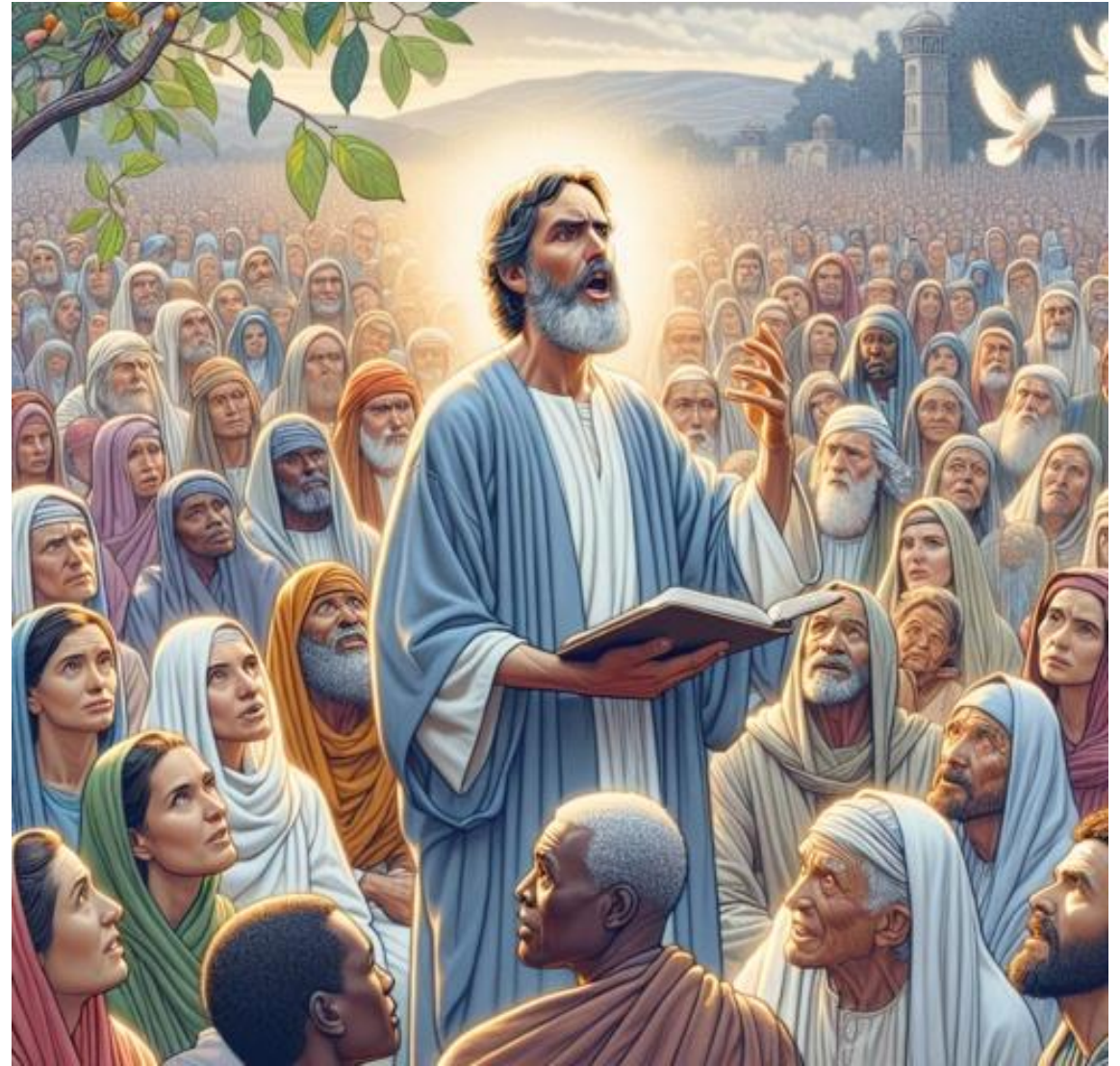
- ² Consider it nothing but joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various trials.
- ³ Be assured that the testing of your faith [through experience] produces endurance [leading to spiritual maturity, and inner peace].
- ⁴ And let endurance have its perfect result and do a thorough work, so that you may be perfect and completely developed [in your faith], lacking in nothing.

James 1:2-4



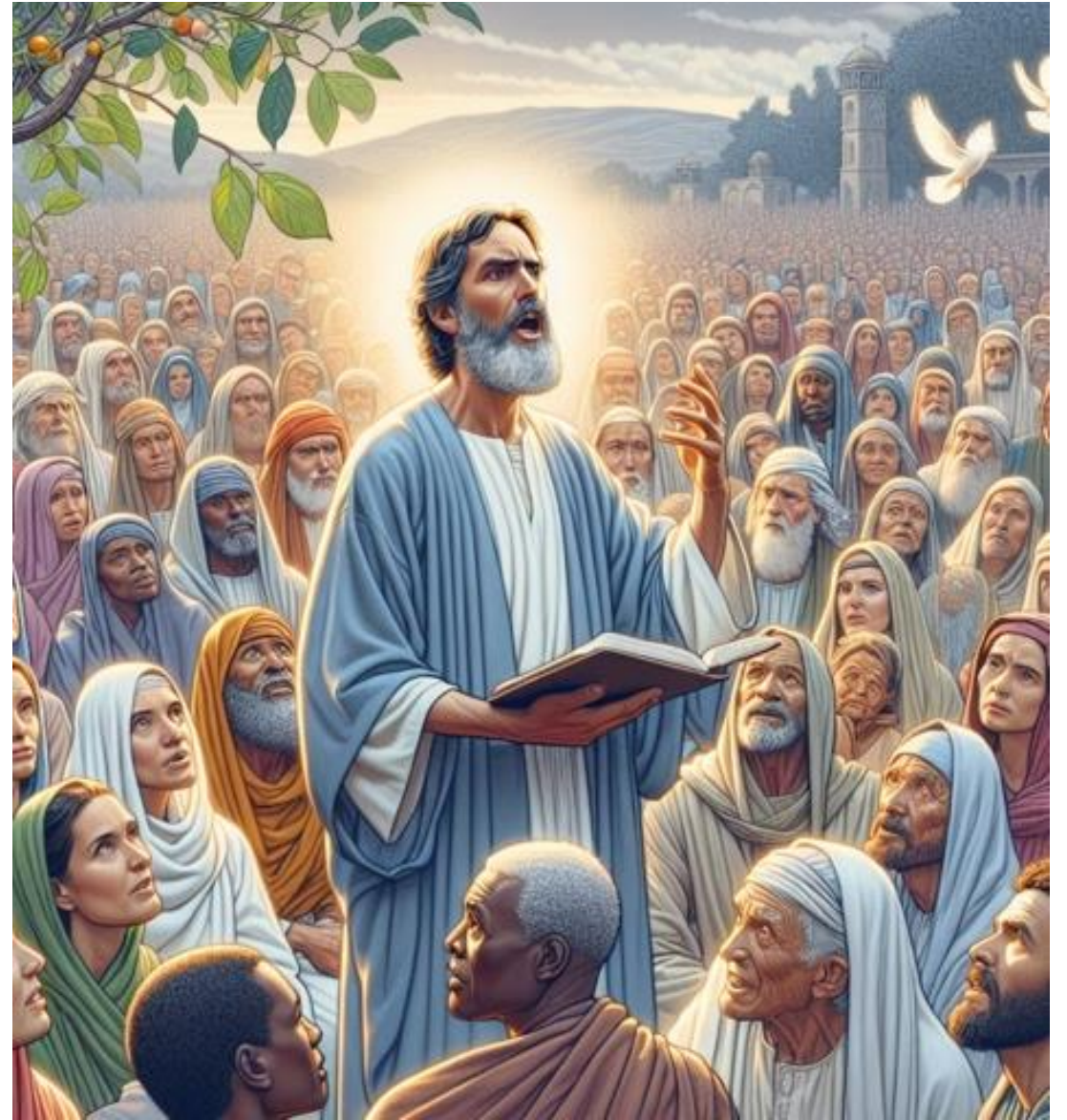
Philip...

- *⁴ Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.*
- *⁵ Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.*
- *⁶ And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.*
- *⁷ For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.*
- *⁸ And there was great joy in that city.*
Acts 8:4-8



Preach CHRIST!

- *5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.*
- *He did not preach breakthrough*
- *He didn't preach prosperity*
- *He did not preach "7 steps to...."*
- *He preached CHRIST!!*
- *This is the message that we should preach*
- *This is the ONLY message!*
- *As we will see going through the rest of the New Testament*
- *The state of the Church comes from the state of the pulpit!*



Philip...

- Philip the Deacon was one of the seven men chosen by the early Christian community in Jerusalem to help with the distribution of food and other resources, as mentioned in Acts 6:1-6.
- As described in Acts 8, Philip the Deacon played a significant role in spreading Christianity beyond Jerusalem.
- He evangelized in Samaria, converted Simon the Sorcerer, and baptized the Ethiopian eunuch.



Philip...

- Represents YOU
- Church member
- Loaded with gifts
- Seating in the church
- Not a Pastor
- But called by God
- When will you go to your Samaria?
- By the way, we didn't read about him getting a Pastor's permission before going to preach.



You are Philip

A man in a white shirt is seen from behind, standing and pointing at a whiteboard. He is addressing a group of diverse people seated in a modern office environment. The group includes a man in a white shirt, a woman in a purple top, a woman in a blue top, a woman in a white top, and a man in a white shirt. They are all looking towards the presenter. The background is bright and out of focus, suggesting a large window or open-plan office.

- *6 And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.*
- The multitudes are NOT in Church
- Do not water down the message of Christ!
- Your audience is awaiting you!
- Miracles are more outside the church than within it!

Step on serpents...

- ⁹ But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great,
- ¹⁰ to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."
- ¹¹ And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.
- ¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.
- ¹³ Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done



As you go...

- As we go in the name of Jesus, powers will bow to the Name we proclaim.
- The power is in the Gospel
- The power comes from God not you!
- The power is released when you GO not when you stay in church!
- You will be surprised by YOU!



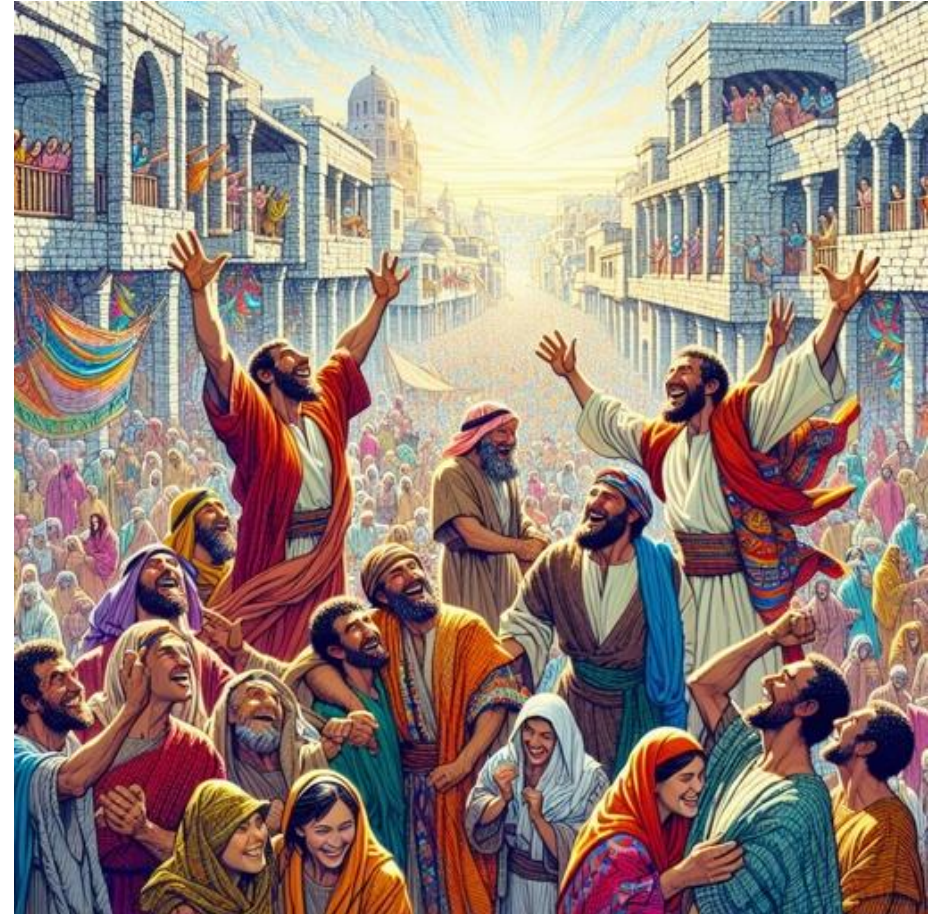
Laying Hands...

- ¹⁴ Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,
- ¹⁵ who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.
- ¹⁶ For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
- ¹⁷ Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.
Acts 8:14-17



Holy Spirit...

- Philip moved in a level of Grace that brought the Gospel.
- The Apostles moved in a level of Grace that filled people up with the Holy Spirit.
- In as much as the people had received Christ and were born again, they were not yet Spirit filled.
- This shows the distinction between a Christian and a Spirit filled Christian.



Simon!

- ¹⁸And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,
- ¹⁹saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."
- ²⁰But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!
- ²¹You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God.
- ²²Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.
- ²³For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity. Acts 8:18-23



Simon...

- Simon had become a Christian
- But he was still carnal
- Simon represents those Believers who are still in need of some major construction work of the Word and Spirit in their hearts.
- His carnal nature was very much on public display and Peter rebukes him because of it.
- The fact that a person receives Christ does not mean they still are not capable of some serious errors of sin!



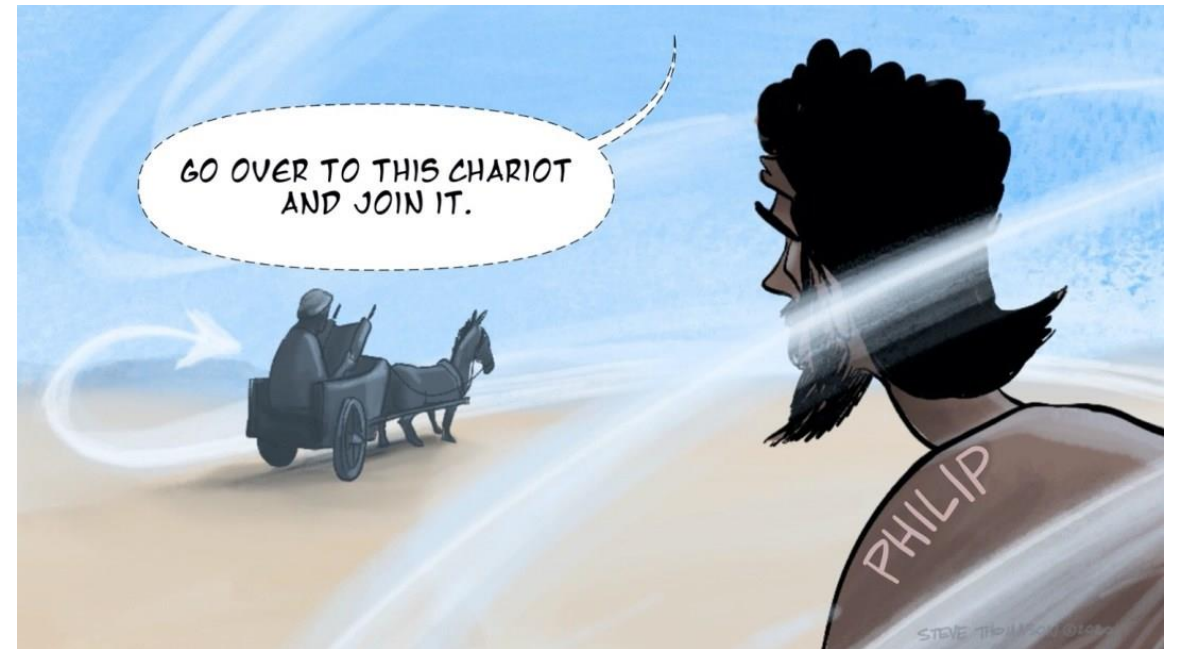
Philip

- Philip was used of God to open the gateway into Samaria.
- *25 So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.*
Acts 8:25
- The next time we see him, he is carried by the Spirit unto another assignment.



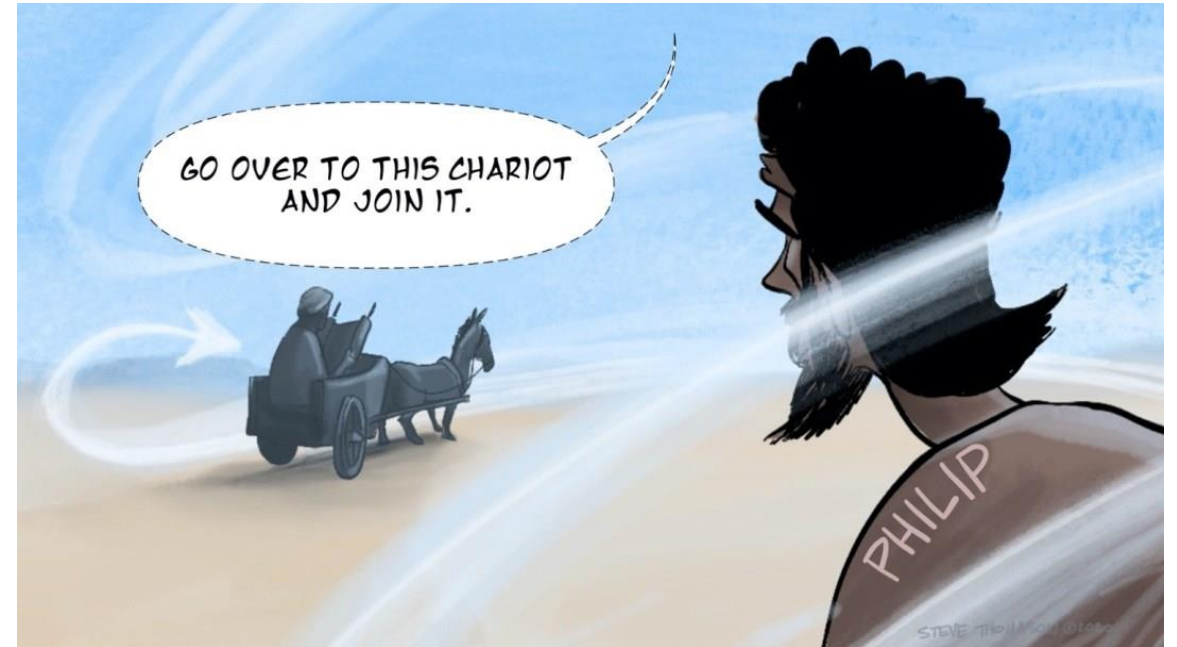
Combo...

- ²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is desert.
- ²⁷ So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians,
- who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship,
- ²⁸ was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.
- ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and overtake this chariot.”



Combo...

- There are four characters mentioned in this passage:
- The Angel of the Lord
- Philip
- The Spirit
- The Eunuch
- First an Angel speaks and directs Philip.
- Then the Holy Spirit takes over the guidance.
- This shows that as a Believer you can receive revelation from both an Angel and the Spirit on the same assignment.



God's Timing...

- The Lord's ways are not our ways.
- He knows everything
- So when He says, speak to the Lady in red opposite you on the train, you better obey!
- The Eunuch was reading the Scripture about Christ and his heart was ready for the Gospel.
- God knows those whose hearts are ready for a SEED of the Word or a HARVEST of the Word in their lives.
- Be ready to be used of God to touch lives!



Memory Verse...

- *37 Then Philip said,*
- *“If you believe with all your heart, you may.”*
- *And he answered and said,*
- *“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*
Acts 8:37

