

## Unusual Conversions

Before ascending to heaven Jesus gave His people the mission of preaching the gospel to the world (Matthew 28:19-20). Acts shows us when and how they carried out the Lord's marching orders!

### Conversions in Acts:

- The church starts with 3,000 on Pentecost (Acts 2:36-41).
- People were added to the church daily (Acts 2:47).
- The number of men grows to 5,000 (Acts 4:4).
- "Multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number" (Acts 5:14).
- "The disciples were increasing in number" (Acts 6:1).
- The number continues to increase; many priests even respond to the gospel (Acts 6:7).
- Despite persecution, the disciples continued to preach the word (Acts 8:4)!

From Acts 8:5 through Acts 10, Luke gives us a detailed description of who the disciples were preaching to once they fled Jerusalem (Acts 8:4). These are some very unusual cases of conversion!

### I. Unusual cases of conversion:

- A. The Samaritans (Acts 8:5-12)
  - 1. They were viewed as half-breed heathens by the Jews for hundreds of years.
  - 2. And yet, Philip (a Jew) preaches Christ to them and immerses them into the family of God.
- B. Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9, 13)
  - 1. He was a deceiver who practiced magic.
  - 2. And yet, he was pricked and touched by the gospel.
- C. The Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40)
  - 1. Eunuchs were not allowed in the congregation of Israel (Deuteronomy 23:1).
  - 2. And yet, under the New Covenant he was welcomed into the family of God!
- D. Saul the Persecutor (Acts 9:1-18, 22:16)
  - 1. He led an intense level of persecution against the church (Acts 8:1-3).
  - 2. And yet, he eventually surrenders to Jesus and becomes an apostle and preacher. He would even risk his life preaching the gospel.
- E. Cornelius the Gentile (Acts 10:1-48)
  - 1. Gentiles were not God's people under the Old Law.
  - 2. And yet, under the New Law both Jews and Gentiles could become part of God's family.

### II. What can we learn?

- A. God loves everyone (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:15).
- B. God has extended His grace to everyone (Titus 2:11).
- C. The gospel is powerful (Acts 8:5; Romans 1:16).
- D. The lost need to hear the gospel from disciples (Acts 8:4).