

What Personal Evangelism Looks Like: The disciples went everywhere, from Acts 8 and 11

Something to think about before we begin:

As the early disciples scattered from Jerusalem under the heat of persecution, they went out into the world, but did not cease to share the gospel as they went. In a world where Christ had not yet been preached, what might the “religious landscape” have looked like? How might you approach a world to teach where they had never heard of Jesus, who is called Christ? [In this class, we will see *exactly how they did this...*]

Acts 8:4-5; 11:19-20

This pair of texts presents a set of parallel concepts. What is stated *generically* in the first verse is then repeated *more specifically* in the second one, which is a technique of parallelism used often in the Scriptures of God. [consider, for example, how Genesis 1 is a *generic* statement of God’s creation of the universe, while Genesis 2 is then a *more specific* statement of the creation of man and man’s habitation within that universe]

With this understanding, answer the following:

- Of first note, what are we told about “those who were scattered”, in terms of what their “roles” were in the church? Were these heralded as “preachers”, “elders”, and “deacons”, or were they simply disciples who were scattered as a result of the persecution?

- *Generically*, what did “those who were scattered” (8:4; 11:19) go about “preaching” (8:4) and “speaking” (11:19)?

- *More specifically*, according to the parallel in the second line of the text, what did “those who were scattered” “proclaim” (8:5) or “preach” (11:20)?

- In the light of this set of texts, as we go out “preaching”, “speaking”, or “proclaiming” the word, what does that really mean, specifically?

Acts 8:4-13

Even though Philip clearly possessed the power to perform miracles (vv6-8), to what were the crowds “paying attention” “with one accord”? [v6; cp vv12-13]

In contrast, why were the people “paying attention to” Simon? [vv9-11]

What was Philip preaching that led “both men and women” and even Simon himself to be baptized? [vv12-13]

Though we are ourselves unable to perform miracles, it is clear the miracles themselves were not *the determining factor* in the conversion of the Samaritans. In what way can we do exactly what “those who were scattered” did?

Acts 11:19-26

What *two* things were the initial results of these men “preaching the Lord Jesus”? [v20-21]

- What is indicated by the phrase “turned to the Lord”? [v21; see also Acts 3:19; 14:15; 15:19; 26:16-20; cp 1 Thess 1:9-10; Luke 24:44-47; etc]

What did Barnabas see when he arrived in Antioch? [vv22-23] What might that have looked like? [cp Titus 2:11-14; 1 Thess 1:9-10; etc]

- What was Barnabas’ response to what he saw, and what did this compel him to do? [v23]

What character traits are especially noted about Barnabas in this context? [v24]

- What was the result of the good work Barnabas was doing in Antioch? [v24]

When Barnabas realized he needed help, he went to Tarsus to bring Saul the apostle to the work (vv25-26). What did they do once Saul had arrived? [v26]

As we look at this entire text, *who* is overwhelmingly the focus? [Acts 11:19-26]

- In practical terms, what was the result in Antioch when “those who were scattered” preached “the Lord Jesus” (v20), when believers “turned to the Lord” (v21), when disciples were exhorted to “remain faithful to the Lord” (v23), and when “a great many people were added to the Lord” (v24)? [cp v26] What should be the result if we do this same thing today?

May the Lord help us to GO EVERYWHERE and PREACH THE WORD OF THE CHRIST!!