

Acts 6-9

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Acts 6-9.

II. Satan was out to destroy and divide the early church.

A. God's method has always been a better man to step into the gap. (Exodus 18:21)

B. The church found good men to move into the situation and handle it.

C. The Apostles knew that they had a unique position, so they had to seek out others to fulfill the task of serving such as Stephen. (Matthew 6:33, 1 Thessalonians 5:21)

1. The church needs someone to move into any position of need whether it is foreground or background.

2. The need today is for people to be available.

3. Stephen was a doer.

D. God was concerned with the promises He made to His men and the fellowship that He had with them.

III. The fulfillment of the commission of Acts 1:8 and the Devil's second major attack.

A. The Devil tried to divide the people through persecution.

B. The attempt backfires and the gospel spreads.

C. Philip preached Christ in contrast to Simon the Sorcerer who preached himself.

1. Philip overcame darkness by turning on the light.

2. He preached Christ alone.

3. Peter was the key man to open up the way for new people into the Body of Christ.

4. Philip identified the man of Isaiah 53 as Christ for the Eunuch.

D. To witness get your mouth open, get your Bible open and talk about Jesus.

IV. Saul's conversion.

A. Saul knew that the claim of a dead Messiah was blasphemy.

B. Saul discovered that he was persecuting Jesus by persecuting Christians. (Matthew 25:45)

- C. Before a man can become a saint, he must “become” a sinner like Saul.
- D. Two good questions to ask: Lord, who are you and what do you want me to do?
- E. Saul who became Paul became consumed with Jesus Christ for the rest of his life.
- F. Many pray, but few really pray. God could do great things with a men who really prays.
- G. Paul would bear the name of Jesus in conversation, conduct and character.

V. Mass evangelism is permissible. (Acts 10:35)

VI. Servants are hard to find and there is always room for one more servant.

Application questions

1. Ministry is often viewed as a public affair - how does Stephen model ministry differently?

2. Can persecution produce a positive effect? Defend your answer from Acts.

3. What does it mean that one must “become” a sinner before they can become a saint like Paul? Explain.
