



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

*Study 13:*

## **ALL-OUT COMMITMENT TO NEW TESTAMENT SATURATION EVANGELISM**

### **Acts 8:1-40**

This chapter is a great giant step as Dispersed Ambassadors Win Nationals (DAWN) in pursuit of fulfilling the Great Commission. The first phase of the Great Commission had been effectively carried out. Jerusalem had been thoroughly evangelized. ***“Behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine.”*** ***“And the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly”*** (Acts 5:28; 6:7). Persecution broke out against the Church and the Church was scattered and dispersed ***“throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria”***. This severe persecution, rather than destroy the Church, led to the explosive growth of the Church. ***“They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.”*** ***“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were multiplied.”*** ***“Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe”*** (Acts 8:4; 9:31; 21:20). ***“And Saul was consenting unto his death.”*** ***“As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committed them to prison”*** (Acts 8:1,3). ***“At that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem”*** and Saul committed himself to the persecution and destruction of the church (Acts 9:3-5, 13,14, 21; 22:19,20; 26:9-11). At the height of Stephen’s persecution, he prayed for his persecutors and Saul, the most zealous of the persecutors, actually became converted and committed to the Saviour and His gospel. It is interesting and instructive to note the similarities between Stephen and Saul (Paul). The Jews disputed and resisted Stephen in the synagogue, so they did with Paul. Stephen was accused of blasphemy, so was Paul. Stephen was accused of speaking against Moses, the Law and the Temple, so was Paul. Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin, so was Paul. The Jews rejected Stephen’s gospel, so they did with Paul. Stephen was dragged out of the city and stoned, so was Paul. Stephen was a martyr, so was Paul. Stephen’s suffering, service, sacrifice, submission and supplication was not in vain. As one of the fathers in the early Church, Tertullian, said, “The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church.”

## **PROVEN PATTERN FOR NATIONWIDE, THOROUGH EVANGELIZATION**

Acts 8:1-13; 11:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10; 2:2; Psalms 51:12,13; 68:11; John 4:28-30,39-42; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 9:32-35; 19:18-20; 2:38-42; 16:14,15,31-34.

Verses four and five of Acts chapter eight set out for us the New Testament pattern and model for DAWN – Discipling A Whole Nation. The two-fold approach demands the combination of dispersed members and dedicated ministers being totally committed to the evangelization of all cities, towns and villages in the nation. ***“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”*** Every believer preached the Word and brought sinners to Christ. ***“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.”*** If every church has a “Philip the evangelist” and all members are so full of Christ and His gospel that out of the abundance of their heart the mouth speaks, multitudes will be saved every day.

An atheist once challenged believers in his community. He said, *“If I firmly believed, as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of religion in this life influences destiny in another, then religion would mean to me everything. I would cast away earthly enjoyments as dross, earthly cares as follies, and earthly thoughts and feelings as vanity. Religion would be my first waking thought and my last image before sleep sank me into unconsciousness. I should labour in its cause alone. I would take thought for the morrow of Eternity alone. I would esteem one soul gained for heaven worth a life of suffering. Earthly consequences would never stay my hand, or seal my lips. Earth, its joys and its griefs, would occupy no moment of my thoughts. I would strive to look upon Eternity alone, and on the immortal souls around me, soon to be everlastingly happy or everlastingly miserable. I would go forth to the world and preach to it in season and out of season, and my text would be, WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN, IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD, AND LOSE HIS SOUL?”* Let the fire and passion for souls that burned in the heart of every member in the early Church burn in your soul. Preach to save the lost.

## PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIP FOR NECESSARY, TIMELY EDIFICATION

Acts 8:14-25; 11:21-24; 1 Thessalonians 3:2,10; Romans 1:7-11; Acts 19:1-7; Titus 1:5; 2 Kings 5:14-16,20-27; 2 Peter 2:15-19; 1 Timothy 6:5-11; 2 Timothy 4:10; 2 Peter 2:20-22; Hebrews 10:38,39.

Philip had preached the gospel in Samaria and many people had repented of their sins and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Many were saved, healed and delivered from unclean spirits. **"There was great joy in that city."** Hearing of the great revival in Samaria, the Apostles sent Peter and John to confirm and affirm, support and strengthen, to pray for and perfect the brethren. The Apostles, Peter and John, had more to offer the new believers than what they had received through Philip, the evangelist. **"They sent unto them Peter and John."** Peter was bold, forceful, zealous and fervent; John was gentle, tender, meek and subdued and their gifts complemented each other so that one compensated for the defects of the other. **"When they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost."** The baptism in the Holy Ghost is a definite Christian experience, distinct from the experience of salvation. Saved, healed, delivered, joyful and happy, holy and sanctified, transformed and renewed, it was still necessary for these believers to be filled, immersed, endued, empowered, baptized in the Holy Spirit. The promised baptism in the Spirit is necessary and indispensable for every believer, today.

**"Simon offered them money, Saying, Give me this power, that on WHOMSOEVER I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost."** Before the apostles came, **"Simon believed, was baptized and continued with Philip"** but now his heart was **"not right in the sight of God"**, he was in **"wickedness, in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity"**. There is no record that he repented after Peter's rebuke. **"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"** (1 Corinthians 10:12).

## PROPER PRESENTATION IN NOTABLY TRANSFORMATIONAL EVANGELISM

Acts 8:26-40; 5:19,20; 10:3-6; 11:12-14; Luke 24:44-47; Isaiah 53:3-8; John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18,19; 2:21-24; Philipians 2:5-11; Romans 10:9,10; Matthew 28:18-20.

Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans as they went. **"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward... And he arose and went. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."** Philip's prompt obedience is commendable and instructive. Our obedience to the heavenly vision, our commitment to the great commission, our consecration in seeking to save the lost should not be hindered or delayed by a successful pastoral ministry in the city. Philip was led and his obedience was prompt, unwavering, wholehearted, practical and productive. **"Lead me to some soul today, O teach me, Lord, just what to say; Friends of mine are lost in sin, And cannot find their way. Few there are who seem to care, And few there are who pray; Melt my heart and fill my life, To win some soul today."** If we are sensitive to the voice of the Spirit He will lead; we must respond promptly.

**"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."** The eunuch was reading Isaiah 53, the prophecy concerning Jesus who was to be our Sin-bearer, our Substitute, our Saviour. Philip preached clearly, convincingly and confidently; the eunuch believed, was baptized, saved and joyful, receiving the Saviour and eternal life. In the joy of salvation, the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. Caught away by the Spirit, **"Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in ALL THE CITIES, till he came to Caesarea"** (Acts 8:40).

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