

Welcome to *Faith Bible Church!*

June 14, 2020

Order of Service:

Opening Hymn: *Virginia Grosskurth*

Invocation

Scripture Reading: Acts 15:7-20

Announcements

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn: *Virginia Grosskurth*

Message: *The Aftermath of the Samaritan Revival*
(Acts 8:9-25)

Announcements:

Pastor's new book: Copies are available for \$5 each, payable to Pastor. Limit one per customer for now.

Many thanks to Myrtle for putting the church back together after the cleaning and painting we did during the lockdown.

Church Picnic Update: Cook County is not issuing picnic permits until June 25, so our spring picnic is on hold.

Midweek Bible Study resumes Wednesday night at 7 p.m. with Assistant Pastor Steve Schwieger teaching the Word.

Our offering box is located just left of the kitchen door.

Pick up today's cross reference sheet & silence your phone

Acts 8:1-8 The Aftermath of Stephen's Stoning

The “Saul” here (8:1) is the man who later became an apostle of Christ, but who began his career as an *enemy* of Christ (7:58). We know that he was probably more than just the hatcheck boy who watched their clothes (7:25) for he later said he could wish himself accursed for the sake of his people (Rom. 9:3,4). He probably felt that strongly because he had been *the driving force behind* Stephen’s death—the death that caused God to close the book on his people.

When it says Saul was “consenting” unto Stephen’s death, that indicates he was already a voting member of the council, for the word “consent” means *to give your permission for something to happen* (Dan.1:11-14). We know for sure that he was *eventually* a voting member for he said he gave his “voice” against believers (Acts 26:10).

It’s also reasonable to believe the “great persecution” that followed Stephen’s death (8:1) must have been led by Saul, for it stopped when he got saved (Acts 9:19,20). He never forgave himself for this (ICor.15:9;Eph.3:8) but didn’t let his dark past hinder him from the ministry. Instead he *used it* to propel him forward in the Lord’s work (ICor.15:10)—and so should you, if you have things in your past that haunt you!

When those Jewish kingdom believers hightailed it out of Jerusalem and fled to Judaea and Samaria, that makes it sound like they were obeying the Great Commission (Acts 1:8). But we know the Lord was telling them that Jerusalem had to be “filled” (cf. Mark 7:27) with God’s salvation before it could go to Judea and Samaria. Someday that’s how it will happen (Isaiah 52:9,10).

But here the saints who left *were fleeing for their lives* from Saul’s persecution—“*except the apostles*” (Acts 8:1). They were the only ones obeying the Great Commission, for they were the only ones who remained behind in Jerusalem to try to get the city redeemed, at the great risk of their lives.

Stephen’s name means *crown*. That’s why the Bible takes the time to mention his burial, for it was symbolic of the

burial of his nation's opportunity to wear the crown and reign with Christ in the kingdom (Rev.2:21; 20:4). The men who buried him are called "devout" (Acts 8:2) because that word means *devoted* to God, and such devotion can be expressed in ways like burying the dead, cutting the church grass, serving in the church kitchen, etc.

The "havock" that Saul wreaked in the church (8:3) is described in passages such as Acts 22:5, 26:11, Galatians 1:13,14, and Philippians 3:5,6. The word "haling" (Acts 8:3) means to *drag* (cf. Lu.12:58). Saul was ruthless!

When Acts 8:4 says that these saints "went every where preaching the Word," pastors say that they were obeying the Great Commission in *spite* of Israel's refusal to be God's channel of blessing in the world. But they didn't go out preaching the gospel "to every creature" as the Lord had said (Mark 16:15), they only preached to *Jewish* creatures (Acts 11:19).

"Philip" (Acts 8:5) was one of the ones chosen to help make sure the widows weren't neglected in Acts 6:1-5. He was faithful serving tables, so God counted him faithful and put him into the ministry, making him an evangelist to Samaria. God always rewards faithfulness with more responsibility (Mt.25:21).

The Samaritans liked what they heard, and believed on Christ "with one accord" (Acts 8:6). Compare that to how the unsaved Jews in Jerusalem stoned *Stephen* "with one accord" (7:57). What you are seeing here is the fulfillment of something the Lord told the Jews in Luke 13:28-30. When the kingdom is established, Samaritans who were the "last" to hear the gospel will be the "first" to sit in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

And what we are seeing here is an example of God reaching forth His hands "all day long" to *individuals* in Israel (Rom.10:21). Even though God had closed the book on *the nation* of Israel, He continued to give individual Jews in Israel a chance to be believe and be saved.

Faith Bible Church

www.faithbiblechurch.weebly.com

June 14, 2020

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

Thornton Harrison, Dave Stewart

Morning Service: 10:45 a.m.

Pastor Ricky Kurth

Junior Church: 10:45 a.m.

Myrtle Harrison

Wednesday Night Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

Assistant Pastor Steve Schwieger

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