

## Acts 8:1-8 Church Vision: Sowing the Gospel

**CONSIDER:** Are there any things that make you feel fearful even at the thought of doing? [Maybe divide into smaller groups and then come together to make a list of things and then share them with the group, or else get everyone to write one on a piece of paper and then put them in the middle & read out].

1. What about speaking for Jesus / sharing the gospel? Where would that appear on your list? Why do you think you feel fear / nervous? How might **1 Cor 1:26-28 & Psalm 8:2** help to encourage us?
2. Look at the context of Acts 8:1-8; Can someone sum up what was happening? How does **v1** and **v3** amplify this? Alwyn paralleled this with the treatment of Christians we've seen in recent days in Syria/Iraq – is that helpful/justified?
3. Our situation in the UK isn't like that. But there is 'opposition' that causes fear. Go around the room and identify, with examples if possible, how we might be caused to fear these days. How did Jesus teach about this in **Jn 15:18-16:4;32-33**? What are we to know? How are we to respond? How does **Hag 2:6-9** also encourage us as we look at the trouble around us?
4. What was the response of the believers (**v4**)? The word 'preach' in Gk is 'Euaggelizomeno', best translated as 'well messaging' or 'bringing good news' ... did this look like a Sunday sermon? What might it have looked like? What would it look like today? What kind of heart leads to this response?
5. The big question, of course, is 'Why don't I do the same?'. The response isn't to 'condemn' or 'chastise' ourselves into doing this. What do you think is the right response? (consider **Acts 4:20 & 31**)
6. Ok, Philip was an 'Evangelist'. But **v5-8** isn't about a specially gifted person, it's about God working with people for whom a response to the gospel seemed 'impossible'. What do you know of Samaritans? [use Scripture to work it out!]. Why would gospel spread to them seem 'impossible'? Why do you think God ordained such an amazing response? Who/where do we feel is 'impossible' for God to work? [you may not say it, but our lack of effort there might show we believe it!]. What would God have you know?
7. What did they 'pay attention to'? (**v6**). It's really important to bring God's word, but we can feel unable. Think of some practical helps to bringing in God's word.

### CONTINUE TO APPLY & RESPOND:

- If there was one thing you could highlight that God is challenging you about to pray over / change / seek His help in, what is it?
- What can others pray for you to help you respond to His challenge?

**Don't forget to leave time to share and pray together.**

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