

Living in New Places

Next Steps

Acts 8:1-8; 11:19-26

OPENING PRAYER:

Holy God, you have done a new thing. Risen from the dead, you show us the path to new life. You give us your word, and we hear good news. You give us water, and we are washed clean. Let the words of Scripture and these moments of study impact my life. Help me to see a new way. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

BREAKING THE ICE:

- What did you agree/disagree with the sermon this week?
- What range of emotions did you experience the first time you moved out of your parents house?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

This passage begins the diaspora - the spreading of the gospel out from Jerusalem. Read Acts 8:1-8.

- What do you make of the fact that the spreading of the gospel comes because of the persecution of the church?
- This reference to Saul/Paul is one of the earliest in Acts. What does this passage teach you about God through Saul? How does this apply to your life?
- How do you think Philip felt having to flee from Jerusalem and settle in a new city like Samaria? How do you think he felt after v. 6-8? How can these verses help you to live in a new normal with the pandemic?

Because of the persecution in the Acts 8, now the gospel begins to reach Gentiles. Read Acts 11:19-26.

- Antioch was a far different city than the disciples were used to. It was the third largest Roman city with a very diverse population; yet we remember the church in Antioch. What is God's Word trying to teach us?
- Who is often left out by Christians today? How does this scripture impact your life?
- This passage is one of only a handful that use the word, Christian. Why do you think that is? What does the lack of the title teach you about faith? Life with Jesus?

NEXT STEPS:

- Take the following 7 groups and pray for one each day of the week: those who have hurt you, (y)our enemies, the LGBTQ community, those with COVID19, our leaders, those in the other political side from which you identify, your church.
- Pray with God about where you are being sent.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

O God, guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking guile! Let there be in me no malice, but a prayer for the good of all. Show me the way of righteousness, that I may hurt no one, and help me to bring the blessings of love to others. Open my heart to do your will; strengthen my desire to obey your commandments. May my thoughts and prayers be acceptable to you, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

--Gates of Prayer