

Sermon Notes Session 4 ACTS: The Gospel is for Everyone

Today, we explored the transformative power of the gospel as depicted in the Book of Acts, focusing on how God uses even the most challenging circumstances to advance His mission. We began by revisiting the stoning of Stephen and the subsequent persecution that scattered the early church. Despite the fear and chaos, God used this scattering to spread the gospel beyond Jerusalem, fulfilling Jesus' command to be His witnesses in Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

We examined how the gospel reached various groups of people: the outsiders, the seekers, the religious, and those who had been counted out. Philip's journey to Samaria exemplified how the gospel is for those marginalized by society. His encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch illustrated that the gospel is for those earnestly searching for truth. Ananias' mission to Saul (later Paul) showed that even the most fervent persecutors and religious zealots are not beyond God's reach. Finally, Peter's interaction with Cornelius demonstrated that the gospel is for everyone, including Gentiles who were previously considered unclean.

The overarching theme is that the gospel is inclusive and powerful, capable of transforming lives regardless of social, religious, or ethnic barriers. As modern-day believers, we are called to continue this mission, reaching out to those who are marginalized, searching, religiously confused, or counted out. We must be ready to share the hope within us, acting with boldness and love, just as the early church did.

Key Takeaways

1. ****God Uses Persecution for His Purpose****: The scattering of the early church due to persecution seemed like a setback, but it was part of God's plan to spread the gospel beyond Jerusalem. This teaches us that God can turn our trials into opportunities for His glory and our growth.
2. ****The Gospel is for the Outsiders****: Philip's mission to Samaria shows that the gospel is for those marginalized by society. The Samaritans, considered outsiders by the Jews, received the gospel with joy, demonstrating that God's love transcends social and ethnic boundaries.
3. ****The Gospel Reaches the Seekers****: The Ethiopian eunuch's encounter with Philip highlights that the gospel is for those earnestly searching for truth. God orchestrates divine appointments to meet the spiritual needs of those who are genuinely seeking Him.
4. ****The Gospel Transforms the Religious****: Saul's conversion illustrates that even the most fervent religious zealots are not beyond God's reach. Ananias' obedience to God's call to minister to Saul shows that we must be willing to share the gospel with those who may initially seem hostile or indifferent.
5. ****The Gospel is for Those Counted Out****: Peter's interaction with Cornelius underscores that the gospel is for everyone, including those previously considered unclean or unworthy. This

inclusivity is a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham to bless all nations through his descendants.

Scripture References

- Acts 7:54-60: Stephen's martyrdom and the scattering of the church.
- Acts 8:1-4: Persecution and scattering of the church.
- Acts 8:5-8: Philip preaches in Samaria.
- Acts 8:26-40: Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch.
- Acts 9:10-19: Ananias ministers to Saul.
- Acts 10:24-35: Peter and Cornelius.

Reflection Questions

1. Who are the outsiders in your life that need to hear the gospel?
2. Are you ready to share the gospel with those who are searching for God?
3. How can you reach out to the religious people who may not have a relationship with Jesus?
4. Who have you counted out as unworthy of the gospel, and how can you change that perspective?
5. Are you living out the gospel in both words and actions?

Conclusion

The sermon concludes with a call to action for the church to continue the mission of spreading the gospel to all people, just as the early church did. The pastor encourages the congregation to read the book of Acts and reflect on their own lives in light of the early church's example. The service ends with a communal prayer and fellowship.