


ROAD TRIP DEVOTIONAL

WEEK 1

Following the stoning of Stephen, the first Martyr of the church we read...

“...and Saul approved of their killing him. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison. Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed for one reason or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city.”



Acts 8:1-8

We can all probably recall more than one scattered moment in our lives. The death of loved one. The loss of a job. Struggles in parenting. In these moments we feel lost, far from the safety of home. But while the trials we endure are real and legitimate, so is the work God is doing through them. In today's passage we see that God uses the persecution of the Church not to destroy it, but to spread the Gospel into the world. In a sense, the very first major trial within the church is the very thing that leads it to grow. What people meant for destruction God has redeemed for His glory!

Saul, whose persecution of Christ's followers led to the scattering of the church, becomes the most unlikely beacon of God's light and love. Saul himself is ultimately converted by one of the very people he scattered! He dedicates his life to spreading the truth of the Gospel and authored the majority of what became the New Testament.

And Philip ends up in Samaria, among a society of the most unwanted and unwelcomed. The power of the Spirit is so great within him that the lame are healed, the impure driven away and rejection is replaced with joy.

While we would never willingly invite tragedy into our lives, when we are taken out of our comfort zones, we can be led to see God in a way we might not have considered before...through unexpected people, in unexpected places, under unexpected circumstances. There are no moments so scattering in our lives that God's power cannot manifest itself for His purpose.



Consider This...



Lord, I know that in You all things hold together. Let me hold tightly to you! Even amid trials that may scatter me. Allow me to find see your grace, your mercy, and your righteousness even through difficulty. When I falter remind me that you are on the throne, and you are always good even during the most difficult circumstances. Amen.

THE QUESTIONS

- Where have you seen God show up in the scattered moments of your own life?
- Where have unexpected people, places and circumstances been the work of His hand?
- How can you encourage others that might be struggling in a scattered moment to see God?

