

“VOICE OF PAUL-x-LUKE” SERIES

This series shows how the writings of the apostle Paul and his traveling-&-writing assistant Luke, all tie in together to construct “the basic frame of the entire New Testament” from 16 of its books. Under Paul’s unique influence, all these writings emphasize *God forging His People into a new kind of Followership whose “growth policy” involves embodying every kind of people & heritage.* It is within the framework of this people-building endeavor that (1) the Forgiving-&-Restoring Power of Jesus especially gets to be displayed, and where (2) its best participants are those whose lives have God’s Presence “pouring forth” within them.

study #14: The Sweep into All-Israel

— covering **Acts 8:1 – 9:31** —

ACTION #1. Luke, the author of the book of Acts, uses the story of Stephen’s death to introduce an amazing apostle who was named both **SAUL/PAUL**. Read **Acts 8:1-4** and then discuss:

- Describe in your own words what Saul was doing to Jesus’ followers in Jerusalem—what kind of “permission” does it look like he has been given, and what must the city have felt like at that time?
- Now read **Acts 9:1-2** and describe how Saul has recently expanded his own personal mission.
- Now read **Acts 9:31** and describe what the whole land finally became like, & what God did to pull it off.

ACTION #2. Remember that Stephen, the first martyr, had been the very first of the Seven Chosen men to become a new layer of leadership in the Church? Now read about the second name mentioned, **PHILIP**, in **Acts 8:4-8** and also **verses 14-17** and then discuss:

- What do you think “the word” means, when it says that people like Philip *proclaimed it*?
- Look closely—what does it seem like the similarities and differences were between the ministry that Philip brought to Samaria, and what Peter & John brought to Samaria—how would you explain this?

ACTION #3. Philip eventually gets called The Evangelist. After his amazing work in Samaria, the author Luke writes about how he traveled and evangelized all up and down the regions and coastlines of Israel until he finally came to live in a city called Caesarea. There, he had 4 daughters who were all prophetesses (wuuut!). Read about one of his traveling stories in **Acts 8: 25-30** and **verses 38-40** and then discuss:

- In your own words re-describe what all happened, and which parts especially stand out to you.
- How would you describe the strategy being used to get people in Judea & Samaria to know Jesus?

ACTION #4. Read about Saul’s conversion to following God in **Acts 9:1-16** and **verses 26-31** and then discuss:

- In your own words re-describe what all happened, and which parts especially stand out to you.
- In **verse 15** (look close), what is unique about God’s purpose for Saul (same/different with **Acts 1:8**)?

EXTRA... FOR THOSE MOTIVATED, DEVOTED, & WITH SOME SELF-COMMAND:

GOLD CHALLENGE ...read ahead (& maybe journal about) for next study: **Acts 9:32—11:18**

PENGUIN CHALLENGE ... (=daily reading + cover full NT+Psalms during series): read **GC** plus **Psalms 41-50**