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| **SERIES** | ACTS: Church for The People |
| **BIBLE** | ACTS 8-10 |
| **TITLE/TOPIC** | Church for the unwanted |
| **OVERVIEW** | The church is not simply for those who have it all together, are cleaned up, have no problems and seem perfect. The church is for those who make us feel uncomfortable. The church is for those not like us. The church is for those who are unwanted. The church is for sinners to come and find a savior, just like us. |
| **SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN** | **Acts 8:8-13 & 26-31 🡪 The gospel must go to those we would normally avoid or want nothing to do with**   * What’s amazing about this story is that the gospel was going to the Samaritans!   + The Samaritans weren’t necessarily Gentiles, but they weren’t seen as proper Jews either. The Jews of this time hated the Samaritans! Even John mentions it in his gospel, “For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. John 4:9”   + So for Philip, who was a Jew, to present the gospel to Samarians…a Samarians magician of all people…would have had people going, “What? Them? Wait!” * But Luke is painting a picture – the gospel goes to people like the Samaritans. And it goes to magicians and Eunuchs   + In Judaism, the law excluded eunuchs from public worship. See Deut. 23:1.   + Clinton Arnold says, “Not only is the Ethiopian a Gentile, but he is from a distant land and in some ways an outcast with respect to Judaism since, as a eunuch, he is regarded as in a constant state of ritual impurity.”   + Not only is the gospel going to people they had a problem with, it’s also going to people they wouldn’t come in contact with. It’s going to the “unclean” people.   **Acts 7:51-8:3 🡪 God uses the least likely to reach the least likely**   * Summarize Acts 7, the stoning of Stephen, but make special note of 7:54-8:3, that this is when Saul is introduced. * Summarize Acts 9:1-6, this is the story of Saul’s conversation. * Acts 9:15-19 🡪 The one who tried to stop the gospel moving forward would now be the main instrument to spread the gospel! * The Magician and the Eunuch stories are actually tangents in the midst of Saul’s story and most importantly the story of the developing church.   + They’re sidebars – but crucial ones in us seeing the plan of God and the heart of God.   + What does Jesus say in Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” The good news of Jesus Christ isn’t staying in Jerusalem – it’s moving out, expanding, to…EVERYONE!   + This part of Acts is a message to all the stiff-necked people who think the love of God is only for people like them, or have it all together, or are already in the fold. * **It’s a message that the gospel is good news for EVERYONE!**    + To the people you have problems with. To the people you don’t want to be around. To the people you look at as being unworthy or unclean.   + And not only is the good news going to the people you don’t think it should go to – but I’m going to take your stiff-necked MVP and change His heart and then use him to deliver the message!   + Because it is totally a God thing that He would use the most unlikely person to share love with those seen as the most undeserving people so that they can be brought back to God * **That’s the gospel. That’s the direction the kids of God are supposed to be pointed in!**    + To those who don’t know of God’s immense love for them.   + Those who don’t know Jesus died and made a way back to God for them.   + Toward people like that is the direction we are supposed to be pointed in.   + If you only look in you are pointing in the wrong direction, the gospel always moves out TOWARD those who need to know and experience the love of God! * Questions I need to ask myself:   + Is the church my social hub or the movement I am apart of?   + Is my Christian existence defined only by interactions with other believers?   + Can I name 1 person I’m building friendship with who doesn’t know Jesus? |
| **GOSPEL** | How does this sermon bring people to the Gospel? |
| **NEXT**STEPS | Begin | Connect | Engage | Grow | Disciple  GROW to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit  DISCIPLE – take initiative to be bold witness for Jesus no matter what physical, ethnic, religious lines God calls you to cross. Witness with bold love! |