

Study Guide for Oct. 3rd, '04 Powerful Advance – Acts 8:4-25 (Philip in Samaria)

Introduction: When have you been amazed by the power of nature? Have you been amazed by the power of the gospel? When? How did you see the gospel's power?

I. The Divide -- Bridged:

- A. What can you discover about the differences between Jews and Samaritans?
- B. Between what groups might a comparable distinction exist today?
- C. Reflect on Col. 1:6 "All over the world the gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth." How have you seen this to be true?

II. A City Evangelized: (Acts 8:4-8)

- A. What was Philip's message? (see also John 4:25) How was it validated?
- B. How did the crowd react to Philip's ministry?
- C. Note the mention of JOY in the following (Luke 10:17, 15:7,10, 24:41, 52). If Jesus and the gospel brings such JOY, why aren't we more JOYFUL?

III. An Obstacle Overcome: (Acts 8:9-13)

- A. How is Simon described? What did he do? What was his reputation?
- B. Contrast Philip's influence among the Samaritans with that of Simon's?
- C. What is the difference between mere profession and genuine faith? (see John 2:23-25 and James 2:14-19). How does this explain Simon's faith?

IV. A Schism Prevented: (Acts 8:14-17)

- A. Why do you think God delayed giving the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans and then used Peter and John to pray for them?
- B. How have you seen God use respected leaders to overcome divisions today?

V. A Hypocrite Exposed: (Acts 8:18-25)

- A. Why is Simon's request wrong? How might this occur today in the church?
- B. What does Peter's rebuke reveal about God and about the state of Simon's soul?
- C. How did Philip influence Peter and John (vs.25)? How can proclaim the gospel?