

THE IRONY OF KINGDOM ADVANCE

Acts 8:1-8 // July 25, 2021 AM

I. The witnessing church suffers in the world (vv. 1-3).

- A. The lie: persecution is ordinarily decreased by kingdom advance.
- B. The truth: persecution is ordinarily increased by kingdom advance.

II. The suffering church witnesses to the world (vv. 4-8).

- A. The lie: persecution is an obstacle to kingdom advance.
- B. The truth: persecution is an instrument of kingdom advance.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

1. Who is the one that was executed in v. 1? Why was he put to death?
2. Why does the gospel ordinarily meet with opposition in the world and lead the church to suffer? Why is it important for us in America to be reminded of this?
3. Where was the church scattered to by persecution? How did Christ use imprisonment and martyrdom to fulfill His word and advance His mission (see Acts 1:8)?
4. Is evangelism something only apostles and pastors do? Or is every member of the church to witness for Christ?
5. Who were the Samaritans? Why is it significant that Jewish believers are bringing the gospel to them? What does this teach us about the ethnic and racial tensions we face in our own day?

QUESTIONS FOR PRIVATE REFLECTION

1. Do I fear the potential of severe persecution in the future? How does this text address my fears?
2. Does persecution seem to me to be counterproductive? Do I think myself wiser than Christ?
3. Do I use suffering as an excuse not to witness and serve? Or does suffering drive me to witness and service?