***Scattered to Gather*
Expect the Unexpected
Acts 8**Acts: Unexpected problems, prison, snake bite, ship-wreak, riot, internal crisis. Nothing ever goes exactly the way we plan.
Law of thermodynamic
How do you react….sickness, change of plans,

Philip hides to Samaria Nablus
a safe place away from the Sanhedrin.
Samaritans smearing blood on temple in Jerusalem and Jewish attacking Samaritans temple. Samaritans believed in the Taed

 **1. Expect God to turn the Unexpected into Gain**On that day a great persecution broke out against the church
in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered
throughout Judea and Samaria… Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Acts 8:1,4

“you will be my witnesses…” did they go everywhere?
No, they stayed in Jerusalem. Why leave…success, favor of all people
ACTS 8:4 believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.
Sometimes we get so comfortable where we’re at, we don’t move where God wants us to go.
from addiction to sobriety, career person to family person, casual Christian to committed Christians, success to significance.
Job Lose, relationship break-up better in the long run.
often it doesn’t happen until we are prodded by pain.

point me in a new direction
God directs your steps through PROBLEMS
Problems change your plans so HE can redirect you
We change not when we see the light, but when we feel the heat.
We learn by being burned
pressure, problems cause us to question our life and values
God will use all the bad in your life for his good if you trust him.
problems never leave you where they find you.
Aristotle said: We can’t learn without pain.

**2. Expect God to know the Unexpected Heart**“You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God**”** Acts 8:21
Not everyone who believes and is baptized is a real disciple
Why was the Holy Spirit was not conferred immediately when they believed? This is the only time after Pentecost that falling of the Holy Spirit is delayed. After years of hostility, they wanted to show that they were included.
Simon seems to have believed in a “Jesus and…” gospel.
Jesus has 99% of me. Are you a 99% faithful spouse?
you either have given Jesus full control or you haven’t given him control at all. **3. Expect that God has Scheduled unexpected Appointments For Us**

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch...
Acts 8:26-27
Philip was comfortable in Samaria, but then goes to Gaza
Meets Ethiopian eunuch that changes the country’s history
racial tension, political tension, and religious tension.
God changed your plans. fender bender divine appointment
**What you look for tends to be what you see.**Look for trouble, you’ll find it. Look for divine appointments.

**4. Expect God to reach out to unexpected People**

On his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet.
Acts 8:27,28

The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. Acts 8:34-35

unexpected people respond to the gospel.
Never assume someone’s response to the gospel.
Samaritans, Ethiopian eunuch, Pharisees leader, Roman officer…

Ethiopian any African south of Egypt.
Kan-da-ka v.27
Nubia, Queen…middle of Sudan
Queen Amanitore, very wealthy, built 200 pyramids, gold, jewelry, expensive fabric
horse pulled chariots only in war, cows in time of peace
castrated, probably while a young boy. to serve royalty, no offspring
no facial hair, high voice, no children.
reaching to the down and out, up and out….
after all that travel, they won’t let him into the temple
He was an outsider. No mold in your house, not touched a dead body
no eunuchs ever allowed in the temple.
Went to all that trouble just to be excluded.
reading Is. 53: 7-8 but perhaps went on to Isaiah. 56:3-5
Armenia perhaps wasn’t the first Christian country
it was Nubia

TWO FINAL TAKEAWAYS: *The Whisper Test*Mary Ann was born with a cleft palate before the time when reparative surgery was easily available. She was also deaf in one ear. In school, her classmates teased her without mercy. She couldn’t blow up a balloon without holding her nose or drink from a water fountain successfully.“Oh Mary Ann,” her classmates would say, “What happened to your lip?” “I cut it on a piece of glass,” she would lie.

One of the worst experiences at school, she reported, was the day of the annual hearing test.  The teacher would call each child to her desk, and the child would cover first one ear, and then the other.  The teacher would whisper something to the child like “the sky is blue” or “you have new shoes.”  This was “the whisper test.”  If the teacher’s phrase was heard and repeated, the child passed the test.  To avoid the humiliation of failure, Mary Ann would always cheat on the test, secretly cupping her hand over her one good ear so that she could still hear what the teacher said.

One year Mary Ann was in the class of Miss Leonard, one of the most beloved teachers in the school.   As Mary Ann cupped her hand over her good ear, Miss Leonard leaned forward to whisper.  “I waited for those words,” Mary Ann wrote, “which God must have put into her mouth, those seven words which changed my life.”  Miss Leonard carefully leaned over to get as close as possible and whispered, “I wish you were my little girl.” She got married, children and great grandchildren, was a faithful Christian who passed away in 2012 at the age of 83.

**When You feel like the “outsider”, remember God welcomes You in
When we think you’re an “insider”, remember to go near the outsider**

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Acts 8

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