

November 16 Answers

- 1) Acts records that a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem. This teaches us that there's no such thing as a **resistance**-free ministry. Saul led the persecution, and his zeal was such that he dragged men and women off to prison, tried to make them to **blaspheme**, beat them, and voted to put them to **death**. This had the effect of scattering the disciples throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, and as they went, they **preached** the gospel. This teaches us that God can turn persecution into an opportunity to reach the lost. Philip ended up going to the **Samaritans**, the very ones that James and John wanted to burn up with heavenly fire (Luke 9:54). His work there reminds us that the gospel knows no social or religious boundaries, for it spans the divide between different cultures. God even had Philip minister to an Ethiopian eunuch, and the man's salvation shows that those who seek God with their **whole** heart will find Him (Jer 29:13). Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples, pursued them even to Damascus, but Jesus met him on the road and stopped him: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting **me**?" This teaches us that when the world persecutes us, they are really persecuting **Jesus**, for we're part of His body. It also shows us that we should **pray** for those who mistreat us, for God may have a plan for their lives in which they are converted and labor to spread the gospel.