



ACTS: Phillip

Acts 8:1-8 | Ryan Pfeiffer | May 3, 2026

INTRO. April 8, 1966 TIME MAGAZINE. Is God Dead?... June 21, 1971 Jesus Revolution... Jesus is alive and well and living in the radiant spiritual fervor of a growing number of young Americans.

Acts 8 same turn around... Great Persecution → Great joy!

WHY do we need “renewal, revival, awakening...” Acts stirs our longing!

- People are mourning for Stephen... The disciples are scattered...
- Saul’s going house to house... dragging men & women to prison...
- Try to imagine for a moment the fear, uncertainty, distress people feel

And yet despite the pressure the Church explodes with renewal to the world.

God wants to give us a longing for renewal... To understand its HIS desire.

And to understand it’s the greatest need of our generation...

As Mark Foreman once put it... Every generation needs its own revival.

I think that’s true for us individually and for the Church.

God wants to awaken a longing in us for renewal... that’s why its our vision

Pursuing Jesus together for renewal in every generation.

FOCUS. For us to long for renewal we need to understand 1) Why we need it 2)) What it is 3) How to get it.

WHY DO WE NEED IT? 4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. 5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there.

Notice it doesn’t say the church convened and decided they needed to spread the word to Samaria...

Even though in Acts 1:8 Jesus said... you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

It seems that it took this pressurized situation to propel the Church.

We need renewal because sometimes the we get comfortable & complacent.

I mean why leave Jerusalem? It must have been so exciting/ amazing! The miracles... the community... watching people coming to faith in 1,000’s!

Which is why sometimes God uses Crisis to push us out of comfort zones...

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” CS Lewis, The Problem of Pain.



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Because trials bring us to the end of ourselves and make us hungry for God.

Renewal awakens the Church to its purpose & Jesus' vision.

Rather than settling for a cozy huddle w/ our closest friends.

WHAT IS RENEWAL? Jumping ahead to v12 Luke gives us more detail... 12 But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Renewal is when God revives the vibrancy of the Church.

Greg Laurie— A revival, on the other hand, is what the church must experience. It's when the church comes back to life—when it becomes what it was always meant to be. Revival is a return to passion, a restoration.

Renewal is when we see a rising tide of faith & people coming home to God

Not just one or two... but crowds... when people we never imagined... believe

It's the idea that faith in 1 person can spark families/ communities w/ faith

But this isn't through human charisma, smoke machines and light shows...

Revival isn't something human beings do or the extraordinary apparition of the Holy Spirit. Real revival is the intensification of the ordinary operations of the Holy Spirit. — Tim Keller, Lord Do it Again, March 17, 2023.

What are those operations?

The Spirit opens God's word to us. "...they believed Philip as he proclaimed..."
The Spirit makes Jesus real to us.. Signs... More than a historical figure

If any one mark clearly identifies them, it is their total belief in an awesome, supernatural Jesus Christ, not just a marvelous man who lived 2,000 years ago, but a living God. — Time Magazine, June 1971.

The Spirit convicts us of sin.

The Spirit leads us to repentance.

The Spirit fills us with supernatural joy. V8 there was great joy in that city.

Which is why after believing... and being baptized... Peter/ John come down...15 When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit...

HOW DO WE GET IT? 18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money 19 and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.

Simon thought he could buy this power to control & sell it. Manufacture it...



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Renewal/ revival isn't something you can purchase with human effort...

But it is something we are told to seek and ask God for... We can't organize it, but we can agonize in prayer for it and call upon God to send it. --Greg Laurie.

Back to v15 again... 15 When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Why hadn't they received the Spirit? Many views...

But it does show when the Church prays for the Spirit to come... God listens!

God wants to pour out his Spirit again... But are we willing to pray for it?

Get right with God; gather with other Christians to pray for revival; and make yourself available to God for His purposes, especially in leading others to faith. --Greg Laurie.

Isn't that what Jesus commanded disciples to do in Acts 1...

Jesus in Luke 11:13 says... how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

Beginning tomorrow... ALL CHURCH PRAYER WEEK. (Take one step further...)

INVITE WORSHIP TEAM.