

Sermon Discussion Guide:

# Saul Ravages the Church

Sunday, June 26, 2022

Scripture: **Acts 8:1-3**

Series: **The Spirit & The Church**

---

## OVERVIEW

Bullying seeks to instill fear and to harm its target. The persecution described in Acts chapter 8 has some things in common with the type of bullying some of us are familiar with. But what the persecutors think will hurt the church actually helps the church in many ways, as **a persecuted church is a purified church**.

---

## CORROBORATING TEXTS

Matthew 5:11-12, 1 Peter 5:8-10, James 1:2-4, Psalm 26, 35, 43, Acts 26, 2 Corinthians 10, Matthew 10:23, 1 Peter 2:21-24

---

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of persecution or bullying have you witnessed or been a part of? What was the objective? What was the result?
2. Recall how Pastor Joe defined persecution (the intentional mistreatment of Christians because of their faith) and consider the following:
  - a. Where does persecution tend to originate?
  - b. Is all Christian hardship a form of persecution?
  - c. Where does the motivation to mistreat Christians come from?
  - d. Can persecution come from within the church?
3. Who specifically were the persecutors in this passage; what were their objectives; what was the result?
4. How did persecution strengthen and expand the church in Acts?
5. How does persecution produce purity? Historically? In the Church today? In our lives personally?
6. In light of all this – how should the Church respond to persecution it faces? And, if we are not currently facing much persecution, how do we prepare to respond this way when the time comes?
7. Read Matthew 16:18 and 2 Corinthians 4:8-12 and rejoice!