

Unexpected Results

n/a

Ready:

Saul, however, was ravaging the church, and he would enter house after house, drag off men and women, and put them in prison. So those who were scattered went on their way proclaiming the message of good news.—Acts 8:3-4

Set

How often have we watched a football game in which one team is leading by six points with a few minutes left, and they decide to go into a “prevent defense”—allowing the other team to march down the field, throw short passes, and score a touchdown in the closing seconds? Or a basketball game in which they double-team the post player who has been scoring all the points, only to have that little point guard who hasn’t made anything all year, hit consecutive three-point shots and win the game? I call those unintended consequences or unexpected results.

In the Bible we often see believers persecuted for doing good. God used those situations to expand His kingdom. Phillip, a good example, was chosen along with Stephen to be one of the disciples’ helpers. After Stephen was killed and Saul’s persecution of the church intensified, Phillip went to Samaria (a place he probably would have not visited on his own) to escape. As a result, the gospel was preached in Samaria. Saul and the religious leaders thought persecution would stop the people from believing in Christ, when in fact the persecution resulted in many more coming to faith. Men can try to stop God’s plans, but it won’t work!

Go

1. What are some examples of your actions resulting in totally unexpected results?
2. How have you seen God take a difficult situation and make something good happen?
3. How does that affect your trust and faith in Christ?

Workout

Extra Reading: Acts 8:4-13; 9:1-18

Overtime

Lord, renew my heart and help me see what You are doing through my life. Help me be willing to go places I would not consider going—like Phillip in Samaria. Please use me. Jesus, thank You for dying on the cross for my sin. May I be bold in sharing Your sacrifice with others. Amen.

Bible Reference:

Acts 9



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