

Acts 9:31 serves as a simple yet profound snapshot of the early church: “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.” This verse encapsulates a season of tranquility, spiritual growth, and numerical expansion. It's a picture of a church thriving under the grace of God. Today, let us delve into this verse, exploring its significance for us as individuals and as a church body.

### 1. Seven Summary Statements in Acts:

- a. Luke’s summary statements punctuate the growth and movement of the early church. | Acts 2:47b, 6:7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, 19:20, 28:30-31.

### 2. The Church Following the Conversion of Saul:

- a. There Is One, Singular Church for all People.
  - i. The church isn’t just a particular building or congregation, but the spiritual fellowship of all who belong to Christ in every place and every time. | 1 Cor 1:10-13; Eph 4:1-6
- b. The Gospel Brings Peace Between People.
  - i. Judeans generally looked down on Galileans (cf. Jhn 1:46; 7:52) and both looked down on Samaritans (cf. Jhn 4:9; Luk 9:52-56).
  - ii. Yet, in Jesus disciples are at peace with one another. | Luk 2:13-14; Eph 2:14; Col 3:11
- c. Peace: A Time to Build Up One Another.
  - i. Build up: fostering spiritual growth and maturity in Christ. | Eph 4:11-12, 16, 19
  - ii. We’re to pray for times of peace so we can preach the gospel. | 1 Tim 2:1-4
- d. Peace: A Time for Holiness
  - i. The temptation is to squander seasons of peace by living life on our terms and neglecting God.
  - ii. Walking in the fear of the Lord. | Luk 12:4-7; 2 Cor 5:11, 14
  - iii. And [walking] in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. | Rom 14:17; 15:13; Gal 5:22-23
- e. Peace: Brings Multiplication
  - i. When the Church walks in peace and the fear of the Lord, empowered by the Holy Spirit, it cannot help but multiply.

Acts 9:31 offers us a glimpse of the church thriving in peace, being built up, living with a reverence for God, in the Holy Spirit's presence, all of which brought numerical growth. It's a model for us to emulate. Let us strive to cultivate these same qualities in our own lives and here at Jackson Heights. May we experience the peace, strength, and a spiritual vitality that comes from living in the fear of the Lord and being encouraged by the Holy Spirit. And may we see God's Kingdom expand as we faithfully *Reach Out* to those around us with the Gospel.