

Philip and the Ethiopian - Acts 8:26-40

A. Introduction

- In Acts 8 the gospel crosses beyond Judaism and reaches the Samaritans who had been alienated from the Jews for 700 years (Acts 1:8; 8:4-5, 25). Jesus had predicted this (John 4:21-26).
- God now moves Philip away to reach one individual (8:26-29). He is...
 - ⇒ An Ethiopian – modern Sudan – between Aswan and Khartoum.
 - ⇒ A high official in the court of Kandake - Chancellor/Prime Minister
 - ⇒ A eunuch – a necessary qualification for political promotion.
 - ⇒ Hungry for God – he travelled 500 miles to meet God in the temple.
 - ⇒ Deeply dissatisfied – as a Gentile he was an outsider, as a eunuch he could not even enter the “Court of the Gentiles” (Deuteronomy 23:1)

B. Divine Sovereignty

- God directs Philip by an angel (8:26) and the Holy Spirit (8:29).
- It is the exact time and precise place at the right point in this man’s life.
- ❖ **God is concerned for the world**
 - God has a plan to reach all nations with the gospel (Genesis 12:2-3; Isaiah 42:6; Luke 2:31-32; Revelation 7:9)
 - Ethiopia was beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire – virtually the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8; Isaiah 11:11)
 - God always takes the initiative in salvation (Ephesians 1:3-14)
- ❖ **God is concerned for individuals**
 - God brings the gospel to one individual – He knows us personally and intimately (Psalm 139:1-6)

C. Human Instrumentality

- ❖ **You must be available**
 - God uses people to reach people. Philip was willing to leave the scene of a revival to go exactly where God wants him to go (8:26-29)
- ❖ **You must be prepared**
 - Philip communicates the truth – evangelism always involves teaching the truth (8:4-5, 12, 25, 35, 40; Romans 10:13-14)
- ❖ **You must be focused**
 - Philip preaches Christ - “he evangelized him about Jesus” (8:35)
 - Evangelism is always telling people the facts about Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)

D. Personal Responsibility

- ❖ **He sought**
 - He went 500 miles to find God. His circumstances excluded him, but he continued to seek and was full of questions (8:30-34)
- ❖ **He found**
 - Philip showed him that through Christ’s substitutionary death anyone can be reconciled to God – even eunuchs (Isaiah 56:3-5)
- ❖ **He rejoiced**
 - He was baptized as a sign and symbol of his reconciliation with God (8:36-38)
 - Full of joy he went on to take the gospel to his own land (8:39-40)