

Acts 8:26-40 (NIV)

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

³¹ “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,

so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth.”

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” ³⁷ ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Sermon for April 28, 2024: www.collegechurch.org/college-church-online

KNOW ... God and his Word.

- As Pastor Mark pointed out in his sermon, “This is the most unlikely of stories.” And, it includes the most unlikely people encountering each other. What do we know about Philip (*the evangelist, not the Apostle — Acts 6 and 8*) and the Ethiopian eunuch (*Acts 2:1-11*)? List the differences between them. How could they be similar? Discuss what makes this an “unlikely” story.
- Why was the Ethiopian eunuch traveling so far from his home? Where and how did Philip encounter the Ethiopian? Who sent Philip to him and for what purpose? Once Philip fulfilled his “unlikely” mission, what happened to him?
- Although the Ethiopian had political and high economic status, in many ways he was an outsider — considered defiled by Jews and deviant in normal society because of his eunuch condition. Why do you think this passage from the Book of Isaiah (*Isaiah 53:7-8 quoted in Acts 8:32-33*) attracted his attention? In what ways is the “good news about Jesus” that Philip shared truly good news for the Ethiopian eunuch? How do we see God’s kingdom reverse the boundary lines from exclusion to inclusion in this passage?

- When God sends someone on a mission, he provides what is needed. Name the ways we see God's prevenient grace laying the groundwork for this evangelistic mission and providing the impossible for the Great Commission to be carried out.
- Discuss any additional insights, thoughts, questions you may have for Acts 8:26-40.

ACT ... responding to & applying what we know.

- Have you ever been tutored or tutored someone? Describe the experience. Was it effective in learning the subject matter? Why or why not? What qualifies someone to be a tutor? As far as Christian faith, name those who have "tutored" you or those you have "tutored," *discipled*.
- Do you have an "unlikely story" you can share? How did two "unlikely" people meet and result in one helping the other to experience God's kingdom in an "unlikely story"? Share it with someone.
- What about Philip's interaction with the Ethiopian eunuch reflects the *ethos* (characteristic) of God's kingdom? Where do you see the *ethos* of the kingdom today?

BE ... living in light of what we've heard, becoming more like Christ.

What "unlikely story" or "unlikely way" is God writing a story in and through you?

READ Acts 8:26-40 several times this week. LISTEN for the Holy Spirit's voice. CONSIDER how God is asking you to express the *ethos* of his kingdom this week and obey.

KEEP becoming more like Jesus!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Angela

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