

Sermon Series Title: "Church Beginnings"

Sermon Series Summary: From now until around Easter, we will be in the book of Acts, covering chapters 1-12. After the Ascension of Jesus Christ, we see the NT church being born by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through this series, we see the church being built, the kingdom going forth, and the gospel being proclaimed.

"We are in our "Church Beginnings" sermon series, and through this series, we're going to see that we need to know where we come from to know who we are now and to know who we will become in the future."

Call: Judges 5:3

Text: Acts 8:26-40

Title: "The Service of Philip"

Next Week's Call: Judges 5:4-5

Next Week's Text: Acts 9:1-19a

Next Week's Title: "The Salvation of Paul"

Future Calls: Judges 5:31, 2 Samuel 2:1-2, 3, 4, 7, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23-25, 26-27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 40-43, 47, 50-51

Future Titles: "The Start of Paul's Ministry" (Acts 9:19b-25), "Dwelling in Flesh" (Daniel 2:8-11), "EM Vision" (Luke 8:40-56)

Fallen Condition Focus: We don't follow the Lord by faith. We are broken and exiled in our sin.

Christ redeeming FCF: Jesus heals us by being broken for us and welcomes us in.

Proposition: "Jesus restores our brokenness and brings us into His family."

Summary: We see Deacon Philip continue in his ministry as he presents the gospel to an Ethiopian eunuch with great wealth and authority. The eunuch most likely visited Jerusalem and was not allowed in the inner courts of the temple. By the working of the Spirit, Philip presents the gospel of Christ to him which is the hope of restoration and redemption.

Reflective Questions:

1. Have there been times when you've felt like the Lord was leading you nowhere for no reason? How did you navigate that season?
2. How do you relate to the brokenness of the Ethiopian eunuch?
3. How does the gospel minister to his and our brokenness?

#### I. Introduction

- A. Hook
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

#### II. The Example (v. 26-27a)

- A. Philip's ministry was thriving in Samaria in our previous passage.
- B. God calls him to go south to a desert place.
  1. God doesn't explain to him why.
  2. Gaza was destroyed by Alexander the Great, so the road from Jerusalem to Gaza was abandoned. There wouldn't be many people there.
- C. It doesn't make sense why God would send him away from a flourishing ministry to a place where there is no one.
  1. There are times when God sends us into the desert place from a place of flourishing: Exodus to wilderness desert, Elijah's victory over the prophets of Baal to fleeing to the wilderness desert, Jesus' baptism into the wilderness desert
- D. Philip just obeys- identity and worth not tied to a place or success.

#### III. The Exile (vv. 27b-29)

- A. There was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her treasury.
  1. Men were made eunuchs, so they may be trusted by kings with their wives.
  2. Some eunuchs rise in power and hold various offices.
- B. Historically, this kingdom south of Egypt was very wealthy and powerful.
  1. A eunuch who had lesser authority would not be free and rich enough to leave the country.
- C. We know this eunuch is powerful and wealthy.
  1. He can afford a almost-1000 mile journey (Denver to SF) with a caravan.
  2. He most likely purchased the book of Isaiah, which was handwritten.

- D. He was a proselyte- a Gentile who believed in the Jewish faith.
    - 1. There are connections with this region of Ethiopia and the Queen of Sheba who visited King Solomon. She probably brought the Jewish faith to her people, and there were still remnants of those who believe.
  - E. He believed in the Jewish God. He wanted to worship at the Jewish temple.
    - 1. He had wealth and power, but that was not enough for him... maybe to be accepted... maybe to heal from his sexual brokenness.
    - 2. But he was not allowed to enter the temple- Deuteronomy 23:1- eunuchs are not allowed in the assembly of God.
  - F. He probably is leaving discouraged and saddened, being an exile of the temple because of his brokenness. The one thing he was looking for, he was not able to receive. His brokenness was the reason he was not accepted.
- IV. The Explanation (vv. 30-35)
- A. Philip runs over and has a conversation with the eunuch.
  - B. The eunuch is reading Isaiah 53 out loud (custom back then).
    - 1. Isaiah 53 catches his eye after reading Isaiah 56:3-5 (prophecy of God's restoration for the foreigner and the eunuch).
    - 2. This Suffering Servant will be the one who will the prophecy to come to pass.
  - C. The eunuch is humble enough to ask Philip for an explanation.
    - 1. He is just a stranger who appears.
    - 2. The apostles were in Jerusalem. Jews were in Jerusalem. No one was able to give him an answer if they even spoke with him.
    - 3. And yet, it is Philip who is sent to go to this man.
      - 1. God cares for the nations- Samaria; God cares for the individual- the Ethiopian eunuch
  - D. God's sovereignty
    - 1. Philip is called by God to go to the eunuch at the right time.
    - 2. There is no more appropriate Messianic passage in the OT.
    - 3. He explains the good news of Jesus from Scripture.
      - 1. Jesus was broken for the eunuch.
      - 2. Jesus takes on his shame.
      - 3. He was kicked out of the city just like the eunuch.
      - 4. Jesus brings him in through His exile.
- V. The Exclamation (vv. 36-40)
- A. As they pass some water, the eunuch is baptized.
    - 1. This is the eunuch's exclamation of being renewed and saved, even though this means that he is renouncing his nation's religion.

2. He was able to receive what money or power could not buy- salvation, restoration, inclusion in the family of God
  3. Philip is carried away, but the eunuch is still rejoicing.
- B. Last story of Philip's ministry in this book.
1. We see Philip again in Acts 21:8-9 as Paul and Luke stay at his house almost 20 years later.
  2. We see that he has four unmarried daughters who prophesy, which means... he has four daughters who walk with the Lord.
  3. We see dignity in ministry to family, even if it is unseen.
  4. Whether it's ministry because of persecution or ministry in a desert, we see Philip having the same joy and passion as the Ethiopian eunuch, because he was able to experience, know, and love the Christ who has loved him, gave himself for him, and restored him.