

Community Group Discussion Questions

“The Service of Philip”

Acts 8:26-40

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.

Setting: The book of Acts is a transitional book between the resurrection of Jesus and the established local churches of the epistles. With Jesus’ call to the church in Acts 1, we see how the gospel spreads to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the end of the earth.

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.

Sermon Points:

1. The Example
2. The Exile
3. The Explanation
4. The Exclamation

Main Idea: *“Jesus restores our brokenness and brings us into His family.”*

Opening Question

1. What makes a church or a ministry thriving or flourishing? Why?

(Answers will vary.)

Some may say that Philip’s ministry to the Samaritans last week was thriving and flourishing. Many people were coming to faith in Christ. However, we see that the Lord leads him away to minister to a sexually broken Gentile.

Read Acts 8:26-40

Community Group Discussion Questions

2. Have there been times when you've felt like the Lord was leading you nowhere for no reason? How did you navigate that season?

(Answers will vary.)

This is what happens to Philip. He was driven out of Jerusalem to Samaria because of persecution. He made the best of his circumstances to minister to the Jewish enemies, the Samaritans, and many were coming to faith. It seemed like a thriving and flourishing ministry. And yet, in our passage, the Lord leads him to a desert place in the middle of nowhere with no one. God does not give an explanation for the sending, but he just calls him to go. And Philip willingly obeys. It shows that his identity, worth, comfort, and security are not found in his ministry or his success. They are tied to Christ, and being obedient to Christ is what is most important for him.)

3. How do you relate to the brokenness of the Ethiopian eunuch?

(Answers will vary.)

The Ethiopian was a Gentile. He was not part of God's people. Not only that, he was sexually broken, being a eunuch. He was rich and powerful, and yet there was a longing in his soul that money and power could not buy or give. He needed restoration and redemption. He desired to be included. He wanted to be free in worshipping God. He needed the satisfaction that only the love and grace of God can give. Unfortunately, he was not given any of those things through his trip to Jerusalem and the temple. Instead, he was not allowed in the temple, and he didn't receive any guidance for the Scripture he was reading.)

4. How does the gospel minister to his and our brokenness?

(Answers will vary.)

For the Ethiopian, he is drawn to the passage in Isaiah 53 on the Suffering Servant after reading Isaiah 56 about the restoration of the foreigner and the eunuch. In Isaiah 53, the Suffering Servant was broken in every way. He was crushed for our sins, and through His punishment, He gives us peace. By His wounds, we are healed. He was broken on the altar of the cross. He took on our shame, our brokenness, and our sin. He was exiled, kicked out of the city just like the Ethiopian. And through His death on the cross, we have life. We are restored. We are made new. We are brought into the family of God. This is what the Ethiopian has been looking for, and this is what we all need.

Community Group Discussion Questions

This gospel is what brings him great joy, so much so that it leads the eunuch to be baptized, exclaiming his faith and salvation.

Do we see the gospel in this light? Have we experienced the salvation of Christ in this way?)

Final Thoughts: *In our passage, we see the security, worth, and identity Philip has in Christ that he is willing to go wherever whenever in humble obedience. Part of God's calling on him is to minister to a broken Ethiopian eunuch. We see God's sovereignty in bringing Philip to this eunuch at the perfect time as the eunuch is meditating on Isaiah 53. In the gospel of Christ, the eunuch experiences healing from his brokenness, freedom from his shame, and a welcome into the people of God. This is all because Jesus was broken on the cross for our sin, Jesus took on our shame, Jesus was exiled so we may be brought, and Jesus died so that we may live. Have we experienced this restoration and redemption?*