

The Leading of God in Evangelism

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"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. ³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

❖ Recap

- **The Church has been scattered to go about preaching the gospel**
- **Philip is one of these guys who goes to Samaria**
 - And He preaches there and many get saved
- **Simon the Magician believes**
 - We saw there was a difference b/w one kind of belief and another..
 - There is a kind of belief that does not save...
- **Simon's heart was not right before God**
 - We asked how our hearts were before God.

❖ Introduction

- **One thing has really stood out**
 - In the beginning of the book of Acts we see the church really start to grow
 - We see some big sermons from Peter and the disciples
 - We see lots of people being saved and added to the church
- **But, it is like this Huge Organism that is growing**
 - And you see an overview of what is going on.
 - You see the big picture
- **But, as the book continues...**
 - It starts to narrow down a bit...
 - It starts looking at the individual believers that went about being Christians
 - You start to see individual stories
- **And here we see how this one guy, Philip**
 - Lived his life as a witness
 - And you begin to see how the church could grow so quickly
 - It was because thousands of people like Philip, were spreading the seed of the gospel

- **This is how the church will grow today**
 - This is how the church is growing throughout the world today
- **This book continues to be Extremely Convicting**
 - It is continuing to press me
 - It is continuing to make me go to the Lord in prayer and ask for help
 - Ask for boldness
- **To be honest... going through this book has depressed me a bit.**
 - I have come to see how much I do not measure up to the believers of the past
 - I have also seen a picture of what the church could be doing now
 - But is not...
 - **How we could see God doing mighty things**
 - But we fail to see them
 - Because we are failing to take the lessons from the book of Acts
 - And begin applying them in our own Christian walk
 - **So, I have been a bit down lately about myself and about our commitment**
 - To the Lord Jesus Christ
- **So, We must pray to the Lord for His Help**
 - For all of us to overcome our weaknesses
 - Our selfish desires
 - To be bold witness of the gospel of Jesus
- **Because: I have noticed**
 - As I was preparing for this particular passage...
 - I was thinking on it since last Sunday... and asking questions as to why we do not evangelize more
 - **And besides the obvious reasons:**
 - Apathy and fear
 - **I saw busyness**
 - Extremely busy people scurrying from one job appointment to the next
 - Shuttling their kids from one place to the next
 - People trying to spend enough time at work, at church, and with their family
 - People trying to have a little me time
 - **People are busy...**
 - And they are so busy they do not see the world around them...
- **Therefore:**
 - If we are going to break this cycle... if we are going to break our failure to evangelize
 - We will have to put it on that busy schedule
 - Sure we need to slow down... but most of us will not...
 - Therefore we must find a way to be purposeful in evangelism
 - Or we will look back in ten years...
 - And we will have not went out of our way to reach one person with the gospel

❖ **Philip Was Obedient in Evangelism**

- ²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. ²⁷ And he rose and went.
- **Philip Was Ready to be Used by God**
 - He Rose and Went
- **Philip had been walking in an obedient walk with God**
 - We know this because he was chosen in ch. 6 to lead the ministry for widows
 - And they used 7 men that were

- Of Good Reputation
- Full of the Spirit and Wisdom
- **Philip had already been listening to God**
 - When the church was being persecuted and as a result scattered throughout the known world
 - Philip was one of these people that left Jerusalem
 - And He went to Samaria and began telling people about Jesus there
- **Philip Does Exactly what he is told to do**
 - Vs 27 says he rose and went
 - He left what He was doing and where he was living to go where God sent him
- **Then Philip does the unthinkable:**
 - He stops someone's vehicle to talk with them about God
 - You will see in verse 29 that the Spirit told Philip to do the most unusual thing
 - "go over and join this chariot"
- **Unbelievable**
 - Its hard to imagine that God would not have realized that this guy was in the middle of a trip
 - He was on his way home to see his friends and family and get back to work
 - Philip was only going to slow him down
 - How dare Philip go up to a person while they are traveling and just stop them...
 - To talk to them about religion
- **Philip does it though...**
 - He runs over to the chariot and interrupts the man's reading...
- **What Can We Learn From This?**
 - **1) Be a Man or Woman Fit to be Used by God**
 - Philip was fit for kingdom work because He walked in the Spirit...
 - He lived a godly lifestyle and spent time in the Word, in prayer and fellowship with other believers
 - **2) Quit worrying about bothering people**
 - If God is leading you to share Jesus with someone...
 - It really does not matter if it bothers them...
 - ◆ What?, is there tv show so important that they do not have time to find a way...
 - ◆ To have their sins removed so they do not spend eternity in a lake of fire
 - But you will find that more times that not, it doesn't bother them
 - ◆ We are the ones that don't want to be bothered
 - Because God has planned this meeting for the two of you...
 - ◆ And He has prepared you and the person for this meeting

❖ **The Lord Leads Philip To a Certain Person**

- **And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot."**
- **This Man was an Ethiopian**
 - **At this time Ethiopia was not a little small country like it is today**
 - It covered much of Africa
 - And this man was a high official in the court of the Queen Mother of Ethiopia
 - A country where they would worship the son of the Queen as the Son of the Sun
 - **This guy, though, was seeking the God of Israel**
 - He had been in Jerusalem to worship

- **God sent Philip strategically to this man**
 - It is obvious that this guy is why God sent Philip to this road...
 - He had this guy picked out, and God knew where he would be and when he would be there
 - **He had also already prepared the heart of the Ethiopian**
 - And God wanted to adopt this man into his family
 - **God is Seeking His Children**
 - Do not ever wonder if God is involved when you share Jesus
 - God is more concerned with the souls of the lost than we would ever be
 - He gives us the privilege to be a part of people knowing Jesus
 - **Each Person is Important to God**
 - When the Pharisees grumbled over Jesus eating with sinners
 - Luke 15:4-7 ⁴“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.
 - Expound
 - **Jesus and the Samaritan Woman**
 - In John ch.4
 - ◆ We come across a very familiar passage
 - ◆ Jesus was leaving Judea on his way to Galilee
 - From the southern part of Israel to the northern part
 - **And the scriptures said that He had to go through Samaria**
 - ◆ From a traveling aspect He did not
 - ◆ And most Jews would not go through Samaria on their way to Galilee
 - ◆ They would avoid it
 - **But Jesus had a divine appointment with someone**
 - ◆ And He met a woman... not just any woman
 - ◆ A very sinful woman
 - **A woman who had had 5 husbands and was with a man now that was not her husband**
 - ◆ So, she had been through a lot...
 - And Jesus goes out of his way to meet her and offer her
 - Living water...
 - ◆ Jesus tells her that He is the Messiah
 - **At the end of the exchange... Jesus tells His disciples this:**
 - John 4:34-39 ³⁴Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. ³⁶Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.” ³⁹Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.”
 - Jesus is concerned with the harvest
- **What Can We Learn from This?**
 - **God is Sovereignly Seeking His children**
 - He is sending people to share Jesus with them

- And He knows them... knows everything about them
- He will send us on divine appointments if we are willing
- He is preparing people to receive his word
- **We can be a part of this.**
 - He is leading us to go
 - He is sending us to go

➤ **He is sending Some people to:**

- Plant
- Some to Water
- Some to Harvest

❖ **Philip Was Prepared to Share the Gospel**

- ³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

➤ **Philip Takes the First Step**

- **He asks the guy if He understands...**
 - And Philip is ready to ask this because He is prepared to help the Ethiopian understand
 - Philip is not afraid that he will not be ready to answer this man’s questions about God
 - **Because Philip put in the effort to be ready...**
 - ◆ God did not just transfer information into his brain like we would into a computer
 - ◆ Philip worked

➤ **Philip is Prepared**

- We know from previous sections in Acts how Philip was prepared
- He had devoted himself to the apostles teachings
- To fellowship with other believers
- And to prayer
- Philip had been walking the walk of a Spirit led man

➤ **The Ethiopian Welcomes the Help**

- ³¹ And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.
- **This guy was desperate for a better understanding**
 - He had likely traveled to Jerusalem numerous times
 - He wanted to know God Better
- He was reading in Isaiah and did not understand who Isaiah was talking about
 - ³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”

➤ **Philip Begins Sharing the Gospel from Isaiah**

- ³² Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. ³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”....
- ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.
- The guy just happens to be reading an area of scripture that talks about the suffering of the Christ
 - This was a perfect situation for sharing the gospel.
 - The man was already looking at the right place...
- **Isaiah 53**
 - Begins describing the suffering servant...

- ◆ And the good Jewish scholars of today and yesterday
- ◆ Believe this is referring to the Messiah...
- ◆ Not saying they believe Jesus to be that Messiah
- ◆ But this chapter is well known for pointing to the Messiah
- It was written about 750 years before Jesus ever came
 - ◆ So this Ethiopian is reading a very old text at the time...
- **The verse he was at when Philip got to him was: Isaiah 53:7-8**
 - *“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. ³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.” ...*
 - So, here Isaiah describes that this servant would be like a sheep that was led to the slaughter
 - And He would be silent...
 - ◆ He would not protest this
 - ◆ He would keep quiet and not defend himself...
 - Isaiah says Justice would be denied him...
 - Isaiah writes that His life would be taken from Him
- So I can see Philip looking at Isaiah 53 after speaking to this guy
- **Philip Share the Gospel: I believe Philip Said:**
 - Yes, I know exactly who He is talking about...
 - Have you heard about that guy Jesus that was crucified...?
 - Let me tell you about Him...
 - **Isaiah says that One would come who bear the iniquities of His people**
 - But He would do this in grief
 - He would be seem smitten by God
 - He would be pierced for our transgressions
 - And crushed for our iniquities
 - **And this is exactly what happened to Jesus...**
 - Jesus was not just any other man...
 - He came doing miracles and signs and wonders
 - God proved to us that Jesus was His Son...
 - **And what is even greater...**
 - Here in Isaiah it speaks of his living after He dies
 - It says his days will be prolonged...
 - He will make many righteous
 - **And many of us saw Him after He died...**
 - He rose from the grave...
 - **And He is coming back... He has promised to return...**
 - So we believe that this Jesus was and is God who came to earth
 - To make an offering for sins...
 - So God would be Just and not just a God unconcerned with punishing sin
 - But He punished His Son for the sins of the people...
 - **Now: Ethiopian treasurer**
 - He is calling you to Repent...
 - He is calling you to put your Faith and believe in Jesus as the Christ
 - And be baptized as a profession of your faith in Jesus...
 - Peter told a lot of people when they wanted to be saved:

- ◆ Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins

➤ What Can We Learn From This?

- Be Prepared... Be Ready to give an account of your faith
- Know the Word well enough, so you can meet people where they are
- Some people are hard hearted and stubborn
 - And they need to know they are sinful before God
 - You need to be able to show them this from the scripture
- Others know they are so sinful and they hate that and live in fear of it
 - They need to know the grace that is offered by Jesus
- Be prepared:
 - And then God will lead you in what to say
 - The Holy Spirit will be very involved in you sharing of Jesus
 - He will not leave you to yourself in this

❖ The Spirit Moves

- ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.
- **The Holy Spirit had been speaking through the Word**
 - And the word of God had convicted this man’s heart
 - He saw his sin... He knew he need to believe and to be baptized
- **Through the writings of Isaiah and the sharing of the word by Philip**
 - God had moved in the heart of this Ethiopian
 - He is like... lets get to it...
 - Here is some water here... I want to be baptized
- **Sometimes today when people want to be saved...**
 - They are fearful of being baptized... they do not want to do it...
 - Which shows their faith as being very weak...
 - Not this guy... he was ready to get to it...
- **So, they stop the chariot and the Ethiopian is baptized...**
 - Notice... they both go down into the water
 - And this man is baptized, or immersed under the water
 - Signifying the washing away of his sins
 - Signifying the death of who he used to be
 - And the resurrection of a new person
 - A regenerated person... Person made new
 - A person with a new heart within him
- **This man had been changed by the power of the Holy Spirit**
 - Says, He went on His way rejoicing
 - And He would walk in the ways of God...
 - And He did...
- **We read from an early church father/historian**
 - Eusebias that this man became the found of a great church in Africa
 - The Ethiopian took the gospel back to his people

➤ **We are to do the same!**

❖ **Invitation:**

- Have you ever believed the gospel about Jesus
- Have you believed with a belief that saves?
- If you have, are you taking it those God is leading you to
 - Or are you suppressing the voice of the Spirit within you
 - Because you are not in the word and being led by God
- Repent