

A *rise* Ω

impacting our culture

LIFE
GROUPS

WEEK 18 • JUNE 1



NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT

Hope changes everything.

ICE BREAKER

Have you ever been unprepared to share or present something to a person or group?
How did it work out?

BACKGROUND

This week we continue our journey with Philip, as an angel of the Lord directs him south to the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. Here he encounters an Ethiopian eunuch (a castrated man who guarded royal females) who was likely a new convert to Judaism. Philip hears the eunuch reading from the prophet Isaiah (vv. 53:7-8) from his chariot as he is returning home from worshiping in Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit directs Philip to join the eunuch, and he is soon invited into the chariot to help explain the passage. Philip uses this messianic prophecy to explain the good news of Jesus. As they travel down the road the eunuch requests to be baptized.

Here we see an interesting point in the text. Most Bibles are missing verse 37, while others may have it as a footnote, and some include it. Many of the original manuscripts do not have verse 37, thus creating a controversy of including it or not. (Verse 37: *And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*) This shows that the eunuch must have understood immersion as common practice in the Jewish culture, and the link as a confession of faith.

After Philip baptized the eunuch, the Spirit of the Lord snatched him away, similar to Elijah in 2 Kings 2:16. This passage is an important example of the movement of the Gospel from the Jewish people (Acts 2) to the Hellenistic Jews (6:8-9), to the Samaritans (8:5), to this gentile believer. Some traditions believe this eunuch was instrumental in the start of the Christian church in Ethiopia.

REVIEW

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



KEY VERSES: Acts 8:35

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

READ: Acts 8:26-40



HEAD LEVEL: *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. By what means do we see God directing Philip's actions?
2. What was the eunuch's title?
3. What happened to Philip immediately after the baptism?

DEEPER DISCOVERY

Look at the following verses and see how Isaiah 53 is further referenced in the New Testament. Do you see connections on how it is used?

- Matthew 8:14-17
- John 12:37-41
- Luke 22:35-38
- 1 Peter 2:19-25
- Acts 8:26-35 (today's text)
- Romans 10:11-21



HEART LEVEL: *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God's word.*

1. How do you think Philip felt to be called away from proclaiming the Gospel to the villages of the Samaritans? Do you think he understood why he was being sent?
2. To what extent do you see Philip being prepared to share the Gospel with this man?
3. What do verses 30 and 31 tell us about the eunuch's spiritual community?



HANDS LEVEL: *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

1. What skills or tools do you use to be prepared to share your faith?
2. How prepared was Philip to share the Gospel in this serendipitous situation? How prepared do you need to be before you will share the Gospel with a stranger, or even harder, a close associate?
3. If God were to suddenly call you to a different area, ministry, or life situation, would you be ready to adapt and effectively share your faith? Explain.



MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 3:15

But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

PRAYER REQUESTS

(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)