

Catching up to the conversations that God is having

Jesus and us

- God created everything through a series of commands
 - Genesis 1:3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.
- God created man in His image, but we see a conversation in the God-head
 - Genesis 1:26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
- First Parents:
 - Genesis 3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”
- Jesus with the patriarchs
 - Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
- Jesus with the nation of Israel
 - Exodus 3:7 Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, 8 and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 9 And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. 10 Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”
- Jesus with His disciples

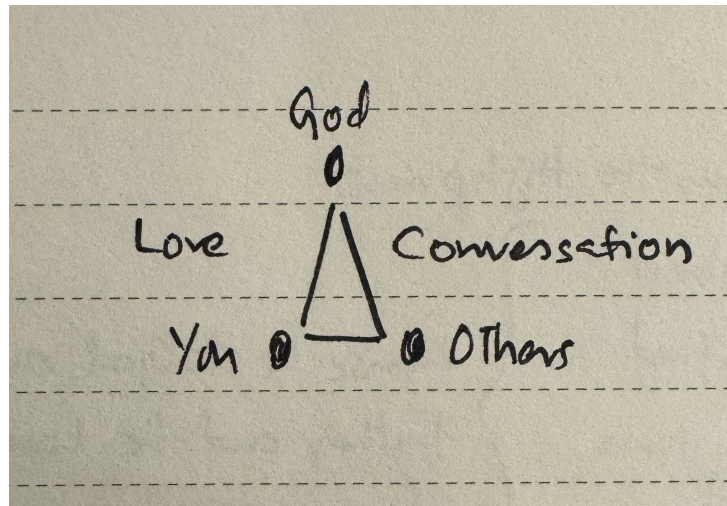
- Luke 24:15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.
- Jesus commending the faith of the gentiles in His time on earth. Disciples catching up to the conversations that our Lord was having with them, through their circumstances and life.
 - Luke 7:9 When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." <Centurion>
 - Matthew 15:27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. <Syrophoenician woman>
- Disciples and Gentiles
 - Acts 8:29 And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." 30 So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"
- The three-way conversation: The language is "love" -> "agape" Matthew 22:37-40
 - 37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with

ἀγαπάω
Transliteration: <i>agapaō</i> 
Pronunciation: ag-ap-ah'-o
Part of Speech: verb
Root Word (Etymology): Perhaps from agan (much) [or cf φιλέω (G5368)]
TDNT Reference: 1:21,5
Outline of Biblical Usage: I. of persons A. to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly II. of things A. to be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing

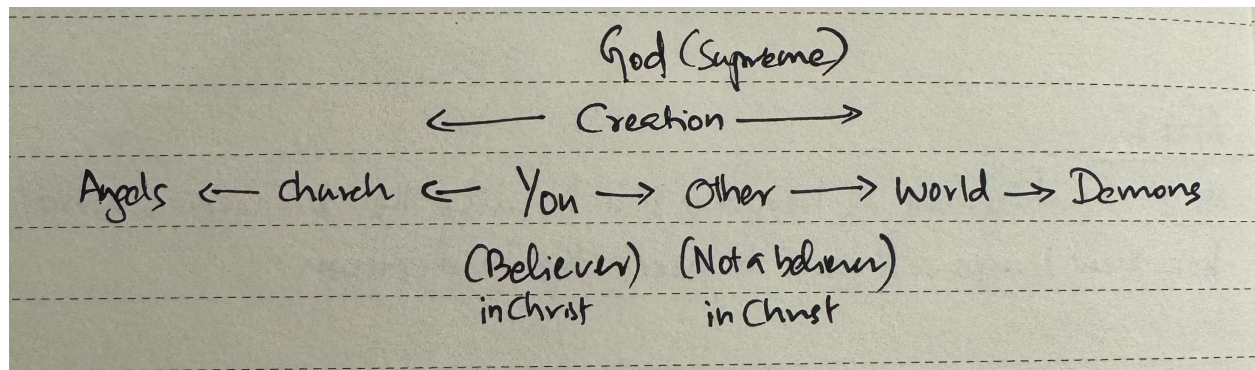
all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law

and the Prophets."

- God <> You <personal walk & body of Christ (Communal and small groups)>
- You <> others <Individuals: christians and others not christian>
- God <> others <God, church and world>



- While Word <Content> and Prayer <Connection> are the means of communication with God and others, the <Power of God> operating through the gospel transforms people. God intercedes for us, we intercede for others and for ourselves. We have the word of God to know who He is and how he works in history and through people and we can share that in the language that is understood by others.
- Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- Romans 9:22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,
- 1 Corinthians 1:24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 pray without ceasing,
- Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. 27 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.
- Romans 8:34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.
- There is a system that God has created



- There are supporting systems for believers and there are opposing systems. God is sovereign over all of it. There is nothing outside of His control.
 - Supporting: Church and the holy angels orchestrated by God
 - Opposing: The world and its systems and structures and the demons that are organized by Satan yet under God's control

Acts 8: Parallels of Gehazi and Namaan -> 2 Kings 5

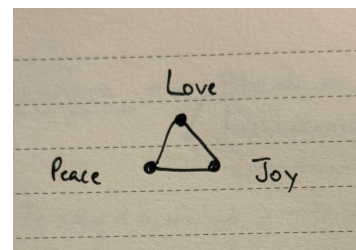
- Phillip the persecuted, the proclaimer, the miracle worker, the apologist, the church planter, the discipler.
- Simon the sorcerer
 - Who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria
 - Saying that he himself was somebody great.
 - They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great."
 - Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.
 - Focus was the "signs and great miracles"
 - Sought this new "power", thought Peter and John could give in exchange for the money he offered.
 - Shows the shallow depth of thought and his operation in the old man.
 - Peter's assessment was that his heart was not right before God!
 - Peter saw that Simon was still in the hall of bitterness and the bond of inquiry, in short, unsaved.

- Prayer of fear and not of faith.
- The sad thing is it is an abrupt ending without a conclusion of what happened.
- Receiving the Holy Spirit was a life-changing powerful experience.
- The Ethiopian Eunuch's story is of hope and promise and love of God. Race, Ineligible, Outcast, Esteemed, Gentile, Humble.
- The characteristics of the Eunuch
 - He was a gentile and man of African descent, black man.
 - He was a Eunuch and a servant of a high position for the queen of Candace, her treasurer (All treasures).
 - Trust worthy and faithful
 - Diligent
 - Focused
 - Searching for the truth
 - Rich (Chariot)
 - Well educated and able to read
- He had come to Jerusalem from Ethiopia (3 week journey one way) -> Seeking God, His house and His people, to worship.
- Was returning. He had take the road south of Jerusalem to go to Gaza -> Possible many routes, but he took this one, to spend time reading and avoiding company
- Reading the prophet Isaiah, and it is interesting to see that Isaiah 53 was part of the scriptures.
 - Had bought the prophet of Isaiah
 - Knew how to read Hebrew
 - Read it though he did not understand it
- Phillip was commanded by an angel of God to meet with him. We see what the Lord promised Abraham. The picture is of the church where Christ unites the Jew and the Gentile through His sacrifice. We see how the trinity through the church and its loving and obedient disciples bringing the



unity in the diversity and fulfilling the Abrahamic promise. Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” 4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

- The dialog between Philip and Eunuch
 - Acts 8:29 And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.”
 - Acts 8:30 So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”
 - Acts 8:31 And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.
 - Acts 8:34 And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”
 - Acts 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.
 - Acts 8:36 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?”
 - Acts 8:38 And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.
 - Acts 8:39 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.
 - Acts 8:40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.
- We don’t see Philip for a while in Acts, but there is a wonderful story of his connection with Paul and the expansion of the kingdom of God. After approximately 25-30 years (Acts 8 and Acts 21) there is a meeting of the people of God, Philip <> Agabus <> Paul in the house of Philip in Caesarea.



- Acts 21:8 On the next day we departed and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. 9 He had four unmarried daughters, who prophesied. 10 While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11 And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

Verse by verse

- VS 1-3 —> Context -> Church is moving out witnesses to the ends of the world as the Lord promised it would and the circumstances are not as we would imagine it to be. Stephen, Phillip, Simon the sorcerer, Ethiopian Eunuch, Paul.
- Saul approved of his execution -> There was a glee in the approval of Stephen's stoning
- "And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem" -> "there arose on that day" -> Who was in control? Acts 1:8 "Judea and Samaria", "a great persecution", Lord did not reveal the means of the moving out of Jerusalem, "against the *church* in Jerusalem" -> "ekklesia" -> His body was being persecuted, Acts 9:4. It was Stephen a spiritual man's death that brought about the spread of the gospel, we owe him due honor for the life he sacrificed for us. "and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles" -> the believers other than Apostles were scattered. They were scattered in the areas that the Lord said they would be His witnesses. The Lord kept the Apostles in Jerusalem, the church was being carried beyond the Apostles' efforts, it was folks like Phillip and others that were now spreading the gospel to the Jews and the Gentiles. <**BOLTING**>
- "Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him." -> devout men that were courageous to claim the body of Stephen, mourning for him. The great friendships that the Lord had provided that mourned for him. These men had to dig through the stones and the rubble, I am sure Stephen's death affected them. Stephen's prayers were answered immediately. <**BURYING**>
- "But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison." Paul had not yet caught up to the conversation that God was having with his people and with Paul, he would in

Acts 9:4. -> Saul was ravaging the body of Christ -> he went to the privacy now of their homes, it was no more public spaces where our brothers and sisters were hunted, but in their own homes -> Paul was committing them from their homes to prisons, it did not matter it was just men, even women were committed, which meant that the kids were now orphaned. He destroyed the families that trusted in Christ. <**BULLYING**>

- 1 Timothy 1:15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.
<**BROTHER**>

Acts 8

Stephen's deed, was sown as a seed

Saul the savage, The church he did ravage

Phillip, while bolting, the gospel he was molting

Simon was debunked and Eunuch was dunked

All for His glory, revealed is the story

How He makes good, only if would

Die like the seed, which is our deed

- Acts 8:4-8 the spread of the good news to Samaritans brings joy!
 - "Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word." -> though they were scattered because of the persecution, planned and sovereignly executed by Christ through His promise, they did not hold back, but "spread the good news to Samaritans". The sovereignty of God does not excuse man's evil culpability. How they work is a mystery -> Acts 2:23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
 - Phillip "proclaimed to them Christ" -> "the crowds with one accord paid attention", -> they heard him and saw the signs he did" -> "unclean spirits came out, paralyzed, lame" -> "there was much joy" <**GOSPEL & JOY**>

- John 15:11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. <**SPOKEN** <> **JOY** <> **FULL**>
- John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
<**PEACE**>