

Fifth Sunday of Easter – 2024

Saturday, 4/27 at 4:00 | Sunday, 4/28 at 9:00



Text: Acts 8:26-40 NAS 1995

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: What can we say about the Holy Spirit? He ★ is the third Person of the Trinity, ★ gave us faith in Jesus, ★ enables us to understand the Bible, ★ keeps us trusting in Jesus, and ★ wants to use us to help others know God's saving truth.

This is **part 4 of 9** in our current series in the book of **Acts**. So far, we have focused on **chapters 3-4**. In **chapters 5-7**, you can read about ▶ Ananias and Sapphira, ▶ the believers becoming dead serious, ▶ the apostles being persecuted, ▶ Stephen being stoned to death, and ▶ the believers in Jerusalem being scattered. Now, later in **chapter 8**, we come to Philip's obedience to the Holy Spirit.

1. **God's Message to Philip:** <sup>26</sup> **...an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip** [one of 7 godly men chosen in chapter 6] **saying, "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.)** // Angels are messengers; God spoke to Philip through an angel.
2. **Philip's Obedience to God – He Went South:** <sup>27</sup> **So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch** [a man

who could not have relations with a woman], a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure [a very important man]; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship [by gathering in the Court of the Gentiles],<sup>28</sup> and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah [from the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT, the LXX].<sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go up and join this chariot.” // The man did believe and went to worship, but he needed help in learning much more!

- a. When God saved us through Jesus: He replaced our **sin and death** with **forgiveness and life**.
- b. Being forgiven and alive: God is calling us to *do the good works that He planned for us to do* (Eph. 2:10).
- c. When we understand God’s tremendous work to save us: *Then we desire to know and follow God’s plan!*
- d. Philip was all ears: He ▶obeyed the angel and ▶saw the court official; then the HS told him to **join this chariot**.

### 3. **Philip’s Obedience to God – He Joined the Chariot:**

<sup>30</sup> **Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet [out loud], and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?”**<sup>31</sup> And he said, “Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. // Philip was open to God’s plan, so he ran alongside the chariot, asked a question, and was welcomed to sit down. Apparently, a Cadillac-type chariot with ▶a driver and ▶seating for at least two people.

- a. A Very Important OT Passage about Jesus:<sup>32</sup> **Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this [from Isaiah, chapter 53]: “HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH. <sup>33</sup> IN HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY;**

## WHO WILL RELATE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS REMOVED FROM THE EARTH.”

- b. Very Important Questions from the Eunuch: <sup>34</sup> **The eunuch answered Philip and said, “Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?”** // Whenever we read the Bible, we should be asking questions: When did it happen? What does it mean? How does it apply to my life today?
- c. Philip Was Used By the Spirit to Teach about Jesus: <sup>35</sup> **Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture [Isaiah 53] he preached Jesus to him.**
- Jesus permitted Himself to be led to slaughter.
  - Jesus did not object to being put to death.
  - Jesus humbled Himself and bore our sins.
  - Jesus took the full wrath of God that we deserve.
  - Jesus did not have earthly children, but His finished work opened the way for all to be children of God.
4. **The Eunuch’s Desire to be Baptized:** <sup>36</sup> **As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?”** <sup>37</sup> **And Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”**
- a. Why Did He Desire to be Baptized? Philip must have told the eunuch about baptism. Maybe he said these words: **“Repent and be baptized, ...in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (2:38 NIV).** So, desiring forgiveness, *and learning that forgiveness was connected to baptism*, he saw the water and desired to receive God’s precious gift!

- b. What about V. 37? It is not included in early Greek manuscripts, so most believe it was added later. In the NAS-95, that is indicated with it being in *italics*.
5. **The Eunuch Was Baptized:** <sup>38</sup> **And [the eunuch] ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.**
- a. Down Into the Water: To baptize is to *wash with water*. They could have walked into knee-deep water, then Philip could have poured the water. We don't know.
- b. He Baptized Him: God worked by the HS to forgive his sins, clothe him with Christ, and gift him with the HS.
6. **Mission Accomplished:** <sup>39</sup> **When they came up out of the water [the depth being unknown], the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing.** // Philip obeyed, God's work was done, the eunuch rejoiced, and Philip moved on.
7. **Onto the Next Opportunity:** <sup>40</sup> **But Philip found himself at Azotus [a former city of the Philistines], and as he passed through [moving north up the coast] he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.** // Dr. Kretzmann wrote: "The exalted Christ fixes the course of the Gospel... Our task is to follow His hints and to be guided by the circumstances as He places them before us, for the end is the salvation of souls."

**Let Us Pray:** Father, *You have plans for us*; Jesus, *You did a finished work*; HS, *from grateful hearts*, make us and keep us  
♦ open and ♦ obedient to Your leading in our lives!

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