Acts 8:26-40

“A Meeting with a Eunuch!”

1. Intro:
   1.1. Story: When I was a boy, my grandma Dear worked in Hunting Park as a seamstress. Sometimes she took us to work (upstairs, wooden floors, full of pins)
      1.1.1. One thing we got to do was go around with a large magnet on a string & pick up all the pins/needles the seamstresses had dropped.
      
      1.1.2. But there were always some items it wouldn’t pick up (not magnetized)
      1.1.2.1. There was nothing in their nature to respond to the magnet.
      1.1.2.2. Jesus said, “if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” Jn.12:32
      1.1.2.3. Jesus also said, “These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” Jn.5:39,40

   1.1.3. Let’s watch one more come to the magnetic draw of Christ!

1.2. After Philip’s public ministry in Samaria, we now have his private ministry in Gaza.

2. HIS MESSAGE FROM AN ANGEL! (26)
   2.1. From ministering to multitudes (vs.6,7) to now, the gospel to one.
      2.1.1. Philip was the kind of evangelist who was willing to leave the public meeting (with its excitement) to help one soul find peace in a private place, where only God could see.

   2.2. Philip was obedient to the Spirit, going where God led him.

   2.3. God’s method for winning others does not use organizational machinery, worldly attractions, or high-powered promotion.
      2.3.1. God uses people, dedicated men/women who will simply obey the Spirit

   2.4. This is Philip’s story…how will your story read?
      2.4.1. This time of year we read the Nativity story.
      2.4.1.1. A compilation of: Josephs story, Mary’s, the Wise Men’s story, the shepherd’s story, the angels story, ultimately God’s story.
      2.4.2. How will your story read? – You’re writing a chapter today!
      2.4.2.1. More like a BLOG (a running online diary)

      2.4.3. If you think, “life is boring”. Understand, Life is Exciting…it’s just your story that’s boring!
      2.4.4. Your life can be a page turner! - It can have a Gripping Plot; be an Adventure story; a Thriller; a Whodunit!
      2.4.4.1. It all starts with vs.27 “so he arose & went!” (obedient to God’s bidding)
3. HIS MEETING WITH A EUNUCH! (27-39)

3.1. (27) Ethiopian - from 2 Greek words meaning “to burn” & “face” (a burnt-face)
   3.1.1. The NT takes special note of this prominent black man.

3.2. Eunuch - Because he was a eunuch he was prohibited from worshipping in the congregation of God’s people (Deut 23:1 He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the Lord) (see ESV for graphic details)
   3.2.1. But note: He travels so far to worship, even though debarred.
       It attests to his godliness! 😊
   3.2.2. In later Scriptures God took special note of godly eunuchs:
       3.2.2.1. Read Isaiah 56:4,5

3.3. Candace – The name was not a proper name of an individual, but that of a dynasty of Ethiopian queens.¹ [Lie Pharaoh, or Caesar]

3.4. Jerusalem to worship – Why the interest in worshipping at the Temple all the way down in Ethiopia?
   3.4.1. The monarchy of Ethiopia claims to trace its genealogy from King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (1 Kg 10) through their son Menelik I to King Haile Selassie, who was deposed in 1974 some 3000 yrs later²
   3.4.2. In those days some people who were weary of the many gods and the loose morals of the nations.
   3.4.3. They came to Judaism and there found the one God & the strict moral standards which gave life meaning.
   3.4.4. If they accepted Judaism & were circumcised they were called proselytes;
   3.4.5. If they didn’t go that length, but continued to attend the Jewish synagogues, & to read the Jewish scriptures they were called God-fearers.
       3.4.5.1. This Ethiopian must have been one of these searchers who came to rest in Judaism either as a proselyte or a God-fearer.³

3.5. (31) How can I unless I have someone guides me, or, explains it to me.
   3.5.1. My purpose for doing what I do on Sun mornings, Wed nights.
   3.5.2. Neh.8:8 So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; & they gave the sense, & helped them to understand the reading.
       3.5.2.1. Observation; Interpretation; Application. [What does it say; What does it mean; How do I apply it to me]

3.6. (32-34) God is having this man read from one of the key Messianic prophecies pointing to Yeshua.

3.6.2. Isaiah 53 was the chapter Philip used, that wonderful picture of the Lamb of God.

3.6.3. Look at the question in 33b – He died, so who will pass on his name & heritage? [Philip probably said, “It’s a lament, but unwarranted, because Messiah came back from the dead!”]

3.7. (35) Philip is called an evangelist (21:8), & like any wise evangelist, he began communicating the Good News about Jesus at the point of interest and concern of his hearer!

3.7.1. Unwise evangelists, like unwise salespeople, sometimes use a prepared “pitch” that does not speak to the concerns of their “customer”; their message proves irritating, like scratching where it doesn’t itch.

3.8. (36) The Holy Spirit is the Lord of the Harvest, and it’s through Him that we have the power to witness (Acts 1:8).

3.8.1. The Spirit opened the way for Philip to come to the man;
3.8.2. The Spirit opened the Scriptures to the seeking sinner;
3.8.3. The Spirit opened the sinner’s heart to the Savior.
3.8.3.1. A man can’t be saved who doesn’t understand what he’s doin
3.8.3.2. And only the Spirit can teach the sinner the truths of the Gospel
3.8.4. When the Spirit brings a prepared servant and a contrite sinner together, there will be a harvest! ☺ (Warren Wiersbe)

3.9. The Ethiopian proved his faith by his baptism.

3.9.1. It was by baptism and circumcision that the Gentile entered the Jewish faith.
3.9.2. In New Testament times baptism was largely adult baptism.
3.9.2.1. The 1st record of “infant baptism” was when the Roman Emperor Valens insisted his dying son be baptized in AD 370.
3.9.2.2. The Catholic Council of Mela made infant baptism law in AD 416.
3.9.2.3. Infant Baptism is sometimes referred to as paedobaptism from the Greek pais meaning "child."
3.9.2.4. It’s contrasted with what is called "believer's baptism," or credobaptism, from the Latin word credo meaning "I believe", (i.e. only baptizing individuals who personally confess faith in Jesus, therefore excluding small children)

3.9.3. It symbolized 3 things:
[1] It symbolized cleansing. As a man’s body was cleansed by the water, so his soul was bathed in the grace of Christ.
[2] It marked a clean break. We are told how 1 missionary when he baptized his converts made them enter the river by one bank and sent them out on the other, as if at the moment of baptism a line was drawn in their lives which sent them out to a new world. [we should incorp]
[3] Baptism was a real union with Christ. As the waters closed over a man’s head he seemed to die with Christ and as he emerged he rose with Christ.4

3.9.3.1. Q: Have you been baptized…if not, why not?

3.10. (39) Philip was caught away for a ministry elsewhere (his mini-Rapture); but the treasurer went on his way rejoicing!

3.10.1. When Philip preached Jesus in Samaria, there was great joy (8).

3.10.2. And when he presented Jesus in the desert, he sent the new believer on his way rejoicing.

3.10.2.1. Joy is one of the evidences of true conversion.

3.10.3. It was said of the Rich Young Ruler, that he went away sad; It is said about this Eunuch he went away rejoicing!

3.10.4. Lk.15:4,5 – It was said of a shepherd who finds his lost sheep, “when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.”

3.10.5. Lk.15:9,10 - The woman who found the lost coin said, “Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!

3.10.6. Lk.15:23,24 – The father of his lost prodigal son said, “bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry.”

3.11. C. S. Lewis said it best regarding Joy, “Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition, when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

3.11.1. In Your presence is fullness of joy! – Ps.16:11

4. HIS MINISTRY IN AZOTUS! (40)

4.1. (40) Azotus/Ashdod today (of the Gaza Strip), is 1 of 3 port cities (Haifa & Elat) & is 25 miles south of Tel Aviv.

4.2. Until he came to Caesarea – some 40 miles north of Tel Aviv.

4.2.1. There he married & settled down (21:8,9).

4.3. What did we learn from Philip? Philip was not a man to act on his own authority; Nor one who sought to carry out a mission in his own power; He was a God-sent servant; And a spirit controlled worker; When the "Spirit of the Lord" directed Philip to go to a certain place he arose and went; When the "Spirit of the Lord" told Philip to speak to a certain person, he obeyed with a cheerful willingness.

4.4.  This is Philips story…how will your story read?

4.4.1.  Throw your mind-windows wide open…it can be an awesome story!

4.4.2.  Now that you’ve “discovered God” you’ll find out it’s a continuous discovery.

4.4.2.1.  Each day is rich with new aspects of Him & His working.

4.4.3.  God wants to write a good story…of your life!

4.4.3.1.  Bad decisions make bad stories!

4.4.3.2.  You mess up, God says, “ok” “let’s make a story out of this.”

4.4.3.3.  Decisions come into your life like Joseph & Potiphar’s wife & he decides, “I don’t want this to be my story, or my wife’s, or my kids.”

4.4.4.  God is still love-hungry.

4.4.4.1.  And desiring to pour out His love upon new “Philips”.

4.4.5.  Find souls dead to God, looking sadly out of hungry eyes. [Frank Laubach]

4.4.5.1.  And bring them to Jesus!