

On The Chasing Of Chariots

Acts 8:26-39

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. 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.” ³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹ And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. 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.” 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.

There are two people in the story—a deacon named Philip* and an official in the court of the Ethiopian Queen. Those two people are in two categories which comprise the only two kinds of people in the world - - - one is a Missionary and the other is a Mission Field.

1. The glory of instant obedience.

The angel said, “Get up and go,” so Philip “got up and went.” There is no calculating the devastation of disobedience, and there is no calculating the glory to God as a result of obedience.

2. The necessity of closing.

Close the deal. Engage. Chase down the chariot.

3. The utterance of the Name.

The Ethiopian had just left the festival in Jerusalem and he is studying God’s word. He wanted to hear what he didn’t understand. Philip preached Jesus.

4. The importance of the question – which question?

“What prevents me from being baptized?” ...what prevents me from doing what Jesus commanded? Maybe you. Because you didn’t go. Because you didn’t “close.” Because you didn’t utter the Name. The offense of the Gospel is that Jesus is the only Savior. Will you tell others...for Him?

Discussion Questions

- 1) If we do not view these two categories as airtight black and white compartments, but as two boundaries across a broad spectrum, where would you fall? On a scale of one to ten (one being an absolute Mission Field and 10 being a consistently faithful Missionary) what number would you assign yourself?
- 2) What concrete steps could you take which could move you further toward a ten?
- 3) What did Philip model which could help us make that advance?
- 4) What characteristics about the eunuch made evangelism easier?
- 5) What circumstances would have rendered witnessing harder?
- 6) The man was reading from the Isaiah scroll. What specifics in the passage (vv. 32-33) would be essential for sharing with a potential convert?
- 7) From the starting point in Isaiah Philip proceeded to teach other things from other places as He preached Jesus. What else would you point out to an unbeliever from truths not found in that place in Isaiah?

*There are two Christians named Philip. One is the disciple who became an Apostle and the other is the servant named in Acts 6:5 who waited on tables. There is a consensus that it is this second Philip in view here. Even though the word ‘deacon’ is not mentioned in Acts 6 those seven who waited tables and distributed food among the widows are usually regarded as the first deacons.

Memory Verses

FOR THIS WEEK

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

Colossians 3:23-24

Helpful Resources

BOOKS

[A Chance to Die](#)
by Elisabeth Elliott

[Spiritual Secret](#)
by Hudson Taylor

[The Unlisted Legion](#)
by Jock Purves

[George Whitefield](#)
by Arnold Dallimore