

The Source of True Joy

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. 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 and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. 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.
In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth.”

And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. 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?” And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. 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. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Sermon Outline:

- I. Clearly
 - A. Preached: God uses people to help us understand His word.
 - B. Personal: God sends people into our lives to share His word with us.
 - C. Proactive: God pursues people “to the ends of the earth” with His word.
- II. Repeatedly
 - A. From Beginning to End: The entire Bible points to Jesus, the source of true joy.
 - B. In Isaiah: God used Isaiah to convert the Ethiopian in this passage.
 - C. For you: God makes us enjoyable to Himself through Christ’s death and resurrection.
- III. Visibly
 - A. Immediate Confirmation: God gives us visible signs to remind us of our salvation.
 - B. Qualitative Confirmation: God gives us worship and the sacraments to remind us of the true source of joy.

Discussion Questions

1. How has God used people to make His word plain to you?

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2. What person or people has God used to bring you to Himself?

 3. How has God pursued you to make you His and show you true joy?

 4. Do you make it a habit to see Jesus in every passage of scripture?

 5. Do you truly believe you are enjoyable to God? Why or why not?

Going Deeper

1. Do you prioritize weekly worship as the most important thing you can do to find true joy? Why or why not? If not, what practical steps can you take to make sure you gather with your fellow believers every week to be encouraged both by God's word and the fact that others are pursuing the same thing?

2. How can you be a personal "preacher" (that is, help them understand God's Word) to someone? Who in your life needs to hear the message of joy found in the Bible?