

(P. outline -)
April 8, 84 A.M.

WAYSIDE WITNESSING

Acts 8

We might title this sermon also "When The Bible Becomes A Living Book". This is a most important chapter in the history of the church. You must remember that the church began as a purely Jewish institution. In the 6th chapter we saw the murmurings and the great debate about the needs of the church. And then in chapter 7 the great debate that Stephen carried on that transcended all national ideas and ideals. The stoning of Stephen ushered in the first general persecution. The church had grown extensively - it was to grow more than ever. Because it was going to be spread abroad. Luke figures that there was an estimate of 25,000 believers in and near Jerusalem at the time of Stephen's martyrdom.

Now the persecution was aimed at destroying the infant church. What a contrast. In the early movements in the Old Testament, they took the prophets to death. They persecuted them. And now coming to the New Testament - they put Jesus to death. And they tried to put him to death as an infant. And now when the church is on the move, the persecution is aimed at destroying it. But the providence of God, it did the very opposite.

Old Testament idea Numbers - Not going to consume eat broken about crowd celebration of Fall of H.S. - altar be full of people - Every time - that time not so, you remember Stephen He was full of H.S. + he was stoned to death!

The persecution started a great number of new congregations all over Palestine. There were various centers, and they took in new territory. And as they left Jerusalem they went to all Judea and in Samaria. Acts. 1:8.

The great persecution broke loose in Jerusalem apparently under the leadership of Saul. At least he is mentioned as being very prominent in it.

The persecution resulted in the scattering of Christians, except the Apostles. And wherever they went, they preached the Gospel. And this is an interesting chapter as it tells us about the influence of the Holy Spirit. Moving the message from

Jerusalem and the Gospel beginnings as it flows out toward the end of the earth. Jesus had said, go ye into all the world. Mark 16:15, again he said, ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, Judea, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth, and in Samaria.

So Acts 8 shows the church reaching out. And as they go abroad, they are going to take the Gospel with them. Philip comes on the scene and he is going to preach to the Samaritans. And then he is going to preach to the Ethiopians. And as the steps move out into a wider circle, yet the church at that time perhaps did not have the world-wide mission as becoming a church throughout the world. But somehow, the church moves toward a destiny and toward her task of becoming just that.

There are three things in this chapter that we want to note - The Scattered Church - V. 1-5. The Sourcer Simon - V. 8-25. And The Seeking Eunuch - V. 26-40.

We tie our thoughts around these ideas to help us to remember it and to fix it in mind.

I. THE SCATTERED CHURCH - V. 1-5

V. 1 - Saul was consenting unto the death of Stephen. And at that time, great persecution came against the church which was located at Jerusalem. Here is our key word - they were all scattered abroad. Through Judea, Samaria, except the Apostles.

The Christians had great joy in Jerusalem. They had accepted Jesus as Saviour. The Holy Spirit had descended upon them at Pentecost. And they had a sweet, wonderful fellowship.

The loss of Stephen, who was a good man, and a blessing to the church and a

power to the work had just been stoned.

V. 2 - They had carried Stephen to his burial and there was tremendous lament. And heavy hearts of sadness.

The world is always poorer when a good man dies. Some men die and no one takes note of it.

I remember attending - or conducting the funeral service of a man one day, and there was no one present. Just the preacher and the undertaker. Such men who live for themselves and make no contribution and leave the world no better off.

Here is a statement that is very important to us. If you want to live in the hearts of people and others, after you are dead, you must live for Christ. You must live for others. You must work for others. Your work will follow you.

Jesus died but his work lived on in the hearts of men. Dr. Truitt died, but his great spirit lives on in his church in Dallas. Stephen died, but his spirit lives on.

When a great tree falls, the whole forest is shaken. When a good man dies, the world feels it. The community feels it. Think a moment, how will it be when you pass on. Will anyone miss you in the world. Will others be sad.

V. 1 - The Bible statement gives us an important connection with Saul. To be sure he agreed with full approval with the murder and the death of this man. He was the prime mover in this persecution. He was a tremendous man of logic and energy.

It seems to say that persecution began that very day. With that first victim

Luke begins to report - no details. Only a historical statement - they were scattered abroad, in Judea and Samaria. Samaria became attractive for the Christians for some reason. One, it was probably close at hand. And maybe they didn't have a lot of authority to go there. But the Christians went there to remain until the Lord should direct them elsewhere.

V. 2 - These devout men buried Stephen. The Jews always buried on the day of the death if possible. And in Stephen's case, no delay of any kind was necessary. As soon as the crowd about the dead martyr dispersed, there were some men like Joseph and Nicodemus, who with their own hands took this battered and bloody body to burial. The very act showed that they were devout men. Sincere, and honest in heart. And deeply deploring what had been done, on that same day. And there was great mourning, which means they had love one for another.

V. 3 - As for Saul, he made havoc of the church. It says he entered into every house haling men and women and committing them to prison. The verb indicates here that this was a devastating thing - it was like a wild beast. Did you ever see a wild animal. And here he refers to the synagogue with the beating were administered in different cities. And it seems that Saul went after his victims and committed them to prison. He traveled into private homes, indicating that Christians might be living, and even these homes were invaded.

Many had suffered. And Luke is careful to say that even the women were not spared. Haling them, it means dragging them with violence.

He kept giving them over to the prison. It shows that Saul had been given a force - something of the police by the Sanhedrin. He had orders to execute. And he had orders to arrest in Jerusalem. And Saul must have been the chief agent of the Sanhedrin. And he was seeking out wherever he might find these Christians.

We all ought to be careful how we live. We must die someday. Stephen's death brought sorrow. But Saul directed his organized group and carried them off to prison. I can imagine a little Christian family - father and mother. Perhaps reading the Scriptures, talking about Jesus, praying - and suddenly the door is thrust in and strong men come in. And carry them off to prison and made havoc of the church. That was a tragic thing to do.

In our modern age, it is still a very tragic thing to do. The Devil uses people in an effort to destroy the work of the church.

*Plains Co - ch - full day -
Vote on Intergovernmental - member -
President elects church -*

Did you know there are some members not content to see the work going well in the church. There are some people that are never happy and serving God, they always want to try to hurt the church.

Now I have one word to say to you - God will take care of you. I'll tell you, I do not want to be in your shoes because it is easier to tear down than it is to build up. I want to be a builder. Now this man Saul was destroying and he was scattering.

V. 4 - It says therefore, they were scattered abroad. And wherever they went, they went preaching the word. As he dispersed the Christians, God was turning the persecution to his own end. Stephen died at the enemies of the Gospel and they said we have killed one of their leaders and now lets go get the other Christians and put them to death. And we will get rid of Christianity.

There are lots of people today who would like to get the church out of the community. Put them to death. They believe like many people today that Christianity is a human thing. They think that if you can destroy one of the leaders of Christianity or you can kill one of the people, that you are going to kill the Gospel.

Christianity is Christ. And no one is able to destroy Him. Now Christians may die. But Christ lives on.

What happened here is, you kill the Christian, you just plant another seed for another church. Faith goes on. And every Christian was hunted down in Jerusalem but they would go to Samaria. And the other parts. They were laymen - they were not Apostles that were going.

Why did the Apostles stay in Jerusalem, maybe to keep the home base strong to send out missionaries. How can we send out the message around the world today. By keeping our church strong and being faithful in our church, and sending the Gospel out. In the territory they went through they took the good news of the word. They were ordinary Christians and they did not set themselves up as preachers. They fulfilled the duty that is on every Christian.

Why did God allow this suffering. It is the time for the Gospel to move.

And the first stop was Samaria. But God is saying to these Christians who are following Christ, that when they arrive in their new home - they told people about Jesus in the neighborhood. They told about something that happened in their hearts, how they loved Jesus. They told this message.

You know that puts some people to shame today. Do you know there are some husbands and wives that live together for many many years. And no one will say to the other anything about Christianity. Do you know that I have even talked to wives and husbands at different times, and they did not know whether their husband or wife was a Christian - whether they were Baptist or Methodist, or whatever. They did not know whether they had ever professed faith in Jesus Christ.

A boy was converted on Sunday night. He said to the preacher, I am afraid of what

the boys in the shop will say to me when they learn that I have become a Christian. The Preacher said, well, go right ahead and live for Christ. And we will pray for you. The next Sunday night the preacher asked him how he made out. Oh, he said, fine. They never even suspected that I was a Christian.

It will not be that way if you have a vital experience. When these folks left Jerusalem, they took their Christianity with them. Many people move away from home and leave their Christianity back there. And thousands of un-churched people are in our city. There are people who have left their church in the little cemetery or the country - just think of it - how the church of the Lord Jesus Christ would be strengthened if all the people who had moved into our city would line up with the work in the churches here.

I remember a story about a family who moved to the city. And they said, well, we like the pastor in the church and the people. We haven't placed our membership in the church yet. Because we are waiting to find out how long we will be living here - whether it will be permanent. And asked how long they had been there, they said, we've been here for 20 years. Twenty years wasted. Think of what these people could have meant to the church. If they had lined up with the church and spent those 20 years as laymen.

Everybody is under obligation to witness. Every convert, every man, every woman - so these Christians were scattered.

V. 5 - Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. *Half-breed area - intermarriage of the Jews & Pagans. Temple on Mt. Gerizim. Deep seated prejudice, hatred between Jews & Samaritans.*

Now here is another figure coming to the fore-front. Philip is taking the place of Stephen. He became a preacher and he died for the cause. But Philip's name was next.

He steps into this man's place and went on to carry the Gospel. Where did he go. He went to Samaria. The Apostles remained in Jerusalem - Luke says the Deacon Philip. The congregation of Jerusalem was sadly disrupted. And Philip was thust free to go and went to Samaria, the place that was attractive to the Christians. And so this territory, he went bearing the name of Jesus Christ.

Jesus had been preached there before. And Philip was next to do it.

What did he preach - I imagine he began to preach Christ unto them. And here was a man from Jerusalem, but he preaches Christ. The thing that every Christian ought to do. And this is the thing that challenges the attendance of any church. In our church, so long as we are faithful to the Gospel, our theme ought to be no other theme except Christ. Who said, if I be lifted up, I will draw them unto me. Now this never grows old and this in Acts, we discover brings great joy in the hearts of people. Jesus had passed through this community on his way to Galilee. He paused here at Jacob's well. He sent his Disciples to the city. While he rested, a woman came to the village for water. This was his opportunity. He talked to her about life. She was a social out-cast. She had heard about the prophets. A Messiah was going to come. And he would tell her great things. Jesus told her that he was the Messiah. And he convinced her. She then went to the city, and you must never forget that the faithful work done for Christ will never fail. Now if you have labored for Christ faithfully in a Sunday School Class, or in some cause in the church, there is a promise in God's Word that your work will not return void. It will accomplish everything where unto he said it. Let us not be weary in well doing, in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

Philip went down to the same city of Samaria. For years before Christ had talked to the woman, and preached Christ. And it caught fire just like you set a fire in a grass field. And there was great joy in this city. Because of His preaching - his preaching accomplished miracles. Unclean spirits were cast out. Sick and lame

were healed. And God gave him these special powers - and Philip told them that God loved them. That he died for them.

V.8 Yes, there was great joy that came to the people in the midst of his preaching.

History has a way of repeating itself. It took place in Jerusalem many years ago, and it should take place today as many laymen are scattered all over this world. Businessmen travel for companies. Sometimes I wonder as these businessmen, soldiers, sailors, and our people go across this world - they could preach as they go. And a church cannot bear to drift in selfishness. And Philip went down to the place to preach. He was a deacon - he was one of the seven chosen by the church. Deacons should be carefully chosen - they ought to be the right kind of men. Choose from among you - men of wisdom, full of the Holy Spirit to point over this business. And he was a man who took his place in the church and every Christian ought to be a witness. Now he was a messenger. He didn't go preaching ethics, or education.

John Wesley didn't preach formalism - he preached for people to come back to God. Martin Luther didn't preach ritualism. Not by works but that a man should live by faith. And Christ said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. Now there was great joy in the city because of this kind of preaching. Lives were changed - homes were made over again.

Now suppose I had the power to go into every home of our city. And where there was a drinking father, a sinful son, a worthy daughter - and suppose I could take Jesus and introduce him in such a way that they would come to love him. All the power of sin would be cast out. These lives would be transferred and transformed into active lives. And what joy would be in this city. Happiness, joy, and hope.

Someone asked an old man once if he had lost anything when he became a Christian. He replied, yes, before I was saved I had an old hat. A ragged suit, holes in my shoes.

I lost all of them long ago. I drank to excess. I quarrelled with my wife. I lost all of that. I had a wicked heart and a bad conscience. I lost that. I had a thousand guilty fears and I lost them. I had an aching heart and I spent sleepless nights worrying about me - and I lost all of that. I lost many bad things when I accepted Christ. Now these Samaritans lost these things and there was great joy in that city.

As you note in V. 6 and 7, there were tremendous things that took place in that city. Multitudes were giving heed to the message. Demon-possessed people were being cleansed. Those who were paralyzed, lame, and broken in body - there was joy in abundance in the city.

II. THE SOURCER, SIMON - V. 6 - 25

V. 9 - But there was a certain man called Simon. Which before time in the city used sorcery. Now here was a man who performed some great things - he was like a star-gazing worshipper. Demons were loose in his body. As he thought he was a charmer, a healer. You will notice the thing is that he himself was great.

V. 10 - Simon achieved what he wanted - all the small and the great gave heed to him. We should say, both the high and the low. Hinting that his imagination had declared him no less than the power of God - the one called the great God. So among these pagans who had many Gods, Simon is declared to have the power of the supreme. There were lots of people who believed in him. Tragic indeed it is when a man feels his personality does this sort of thing. People esteemed him as God's great instrument. And that he was God himself was hinted at here in this.

You will remember when Jesus was there, he told the woman, and the woman told him that they worshipped the Gods up there in the mountains. And we see here that this man is a man in bondage to evil magicians. And his name is Simon, the sorcer. He told all the people that he was a great man and they believed it. This man had great power. He had thousands of followers in the city, when Philip came.

Now Philip talked to him not about himself - but he talked to him about Christ. Now people immediately saw the difference. Here was Philip teaching Christ and here was Simon preaching himself. And soon the crowds left Simon.

→ V. 13 - And they began to follow and become interested in Christ. And about this time the Apostles of Jerusalem heard that there was a great revival in Samaria going on.

V. 14 - And they prayed with many and many received the Holy Spirit. Now possibly those people who saw what was happening said, that is what I want.

V. 11 - What made the case so difficult for Philip's work was the fact that by the means of his arts, Simon had held people a long time.

And now they came to believe in Philip - men and women came to believe. V. 12. And Luke tells us they were being baptized - both men and women. And that this accounts for what happened in that great city among the Samaritans.

V. 13 - Simon himself came also to believe and having been baptized continued to hold Philip because he held the signs, the wonders, and the power that he was amazed. Now he had amazed others with his magical art. Now he knew within himself that he didn't have any super powers but it was through demons. And on that basis he had carried on his work. All this Luke intimates regarding this man.

Simon was by no means an unusual type, in the ancient world. But he made a very comfortable living out of his fortune telling. And every once in awhile you will hear somebody over the radio or over the T. V. telling people - you send your money and buy an apron that has been prayed over, and it will heal your body. And thereby you might be healed. There are people that buy crosses or charms to wear around their necks.

Some people have a Bible on the table or some sign hanging on the wall. That says, God bless our home. And they think because of the presence of that Bible or that sign, it will ward off all the evil in that house. Now, do not misunderstand me - I think any sign that will help us in the matter of prayer, etc. is helpful.

But what I am saying is, that it is doubtful that men today can perform miracles as Philip did. The answer is no. This is not to discount God's power. But God chooses to work and God is able to perform the same miracles anywhere and at any time. We should pray for the sick that God will heal them. And pray for the lost that God will save them. The fact is that the power to work divine miracles by word of mouth or by work of the hand, was a gift of the Holy Spirit confined to that time.

V. 18 - Simon said, as he watched them lay their hands upon them - which was a custom at the ordination of deacons or ministers. The factor was that it conveyed and set apart a very common practice in that time. But if somehow he could get this touch of a deep spiritual experience - that he would be a most unusual person.

I remember reading how William Barclay said when he was a young man - a very old gentleman came to him and he says, I was with him for a couple of moments. And this old man layed his hands upon my head and blessed me. And he said to this day, and it was 30 years later, I can still feel the thrill of that moment. This was something like the early church - putting their hand upon somebody's head - saying, the Lord bless you. And offering a prayer for them. Simon was impressed with this

visible effect of laying on of hands.

And he was willing to buy this power. There is danger in trying to sell enthusiastic offices. He was really not interested in bringing the Holy Spirit to others. But he wanted the power and the prestige to bring it to himself. There are still men who want this power to show they are clever - not that Christ is wonderful. Now Simon forgot there are certain gifts that are dependent upon character - that money cannot buy them. I think this is a truth that preachers have to realize. That here is a power they cannot buy - it cannot be purchased. And yet he says, this is what I want. I'll purchase it with money. And he says here is the money - sell me the power.

asking for Power to confer the H.S. on persons of his own choice.

The Apostles said your money will perish with you. You are a fool to think that you can buy this gift with your money. Repent and ask God to forgive you. Did Simon admit his guilt - no. It was simply a theory for him instead of praying for himself, he asked Peter to pray for him.

V. 20 - Peter told him that his money would perish with him. Your heart is not right.

To give a man Power when his will is not thoroughly committed to the will of God is unthinkable -

V. 22 - Peter suggested to him that he repent of his wickedness and pray that

God would forgive him of this.

V. 24 - Simon would not pray for himself but he asked Peter to pray for him.

And that is where he made a mistake. Simon was still thinking about himself. He was too lazy to pray for his own forgiveness.

In this regard, if a rich man could buy this power - he could buy a ticket to Heaven. A lazy man could buy the spiritual power - but he cannot. A sinful man could buy forgiveness - but he cannot. In the olden days the Catholic Church sold indulgences. If a man committed a certain sin was all he had to do was to buy and to

pay and go right ahead. And would be free by the blessings of God. But a check will not do this for us.

V. 26 - An unusual thing happens. The revival is going in Samaria and the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip. Arise, and go towards the South, from Jerusalem unto Gaza - which is a desert.

Here is a man who is working. He is attracting great crowds. Many people are being saved. And then one day, the Spirit of God, sent him to go outside the city and to go to the desert. I imagine that puzzled Philip - being obedient unto God. Most men would have said, Lord, look here - crowds are now picking up. I am doing a great work here. Why should I go to the desert. But this is God's voice and God's authority. And he has orders. And Philip left that day and headed for the desert.

III. SEEKING EUNUCH - V. 26-40

We have talked about the scattered church. The first five verses. We talked about the sorcerer Simon. And now we ^{ARE} talking about the seeking eunuch. In these next few verses.

V. 27 - Tells us, as he rose and went down into the desert, there was a man of Ethiopia. A eunuch. He had great authority - he worked for the queen. He was in charge of her treasures. Now the key note of this section is right here. He had come to Jerusalem to worship.

The Bible was being read by a seeker - and he was hunting after truth.

On the desert road, Philip met this bright chariot, and here was an outstanding man. He was the treasurer of the queen of Ethiopia. And what is he doing here - why is he on the desert today. It is just not happen so. The Bible tells us, he had been to Jerusalem to worship. But he was hungry for the bread of life as he rides along. He opens his Bible and he reads the words - how can I feed my hungry soul.

With his determination, he had gone to Jerusalem. We are not told what happened that day in the worship service. We are not told what the preacher's topic was. We are not told what the choir sang that day. We are not told what the amount of collection or offering was that day. Whether it was posted as up or down. I think many times we get hung up on these specifics. We look at this great thing that is being done in numbers.

But we do know this, that that worship service was of immeasurable value. For it did for one man what worship ought to do for all of us. It helped to clarify his needs. It sharpened his hunger for God. And his interests in the Holy Scripture.

Vr 28
On his way home from worship he was searching the Scriptures. Now he had not pocket-sized edition of the Old Testament. He didn't have any version from modern man. He didn't even have the good news translation. Now I know it bothers some people to ride and to read at the same time. But it did not bother this man. He could not sit idle in his chariot. And as the chariot jogged along, he had a cumbersome scroll spread out over his lap. And he was reading the word for some personal message.

He did not hide it. He read it in the spirit of an explorer. Searching for a priceless treasure.

But you know something - religion becomes rewarding when a man seeks with his whole heart. The unsearchable riches of the Gospel. It is never rewarding for the

timid, luke-warm person. The Ethiopian read the Scripture. He was lost in his search that he might find God.

He was seeking some truth about life. He was just not thumbing through his Bible - looking at some references. He was searching, for something that he could believe. Now another thing to note, he was not thumbing through the Bible for ammunition - that he might give a bigger blast when the next religious argument came up. But he was reading the Scriptures for his own personal welfare. He was dealing with God of the universe.

And the passage that he had fixed his mind on, revealed that the Scripture was fascinating to him. But suddenly, the majestic words of Isaiah 53:7-8 - he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before the shears is dumb - so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgement. And who shall declare his generation. For he was cut off out of the land of the living. For the transgression of my people will be stricken. >

He was held captive by that passage. He felt it had a message for his soul. But there was no immediate revelation.

I think the eunuch was watching and waiting like the group of worshippers on Easter Morning. Waiting for the sunrise.

V. 29 - The Holy Spirit now says to Philip, you go - join yourself. And now he knows why he has been sent to the desert. Here is a man who needs salvation. Here is a man who has been to worship. And here is a man who has - who God has planned for him. And here is a man that needs to get the right message.

You know something, if you all look around. There is somebody that God has

prepared in the same way as he has this eunuch. God is waiting for you to say something to him.

Notice the approach - Begins where the hearer is - does not ask "Are you saved?"

V. 30 - Now Philip did not ask this man if he was rich or poor. He goes right ahead with his burning heart. Here he is reading about the land. And Philip says to him, do you understand the Scriptures. No, I don't understand it unless somebody guides me. He says, the Bible was interpreted by a willing servant, of the Spirit here. It is amazing how the lines of our lives converge at some golden moment. We need somebody. We know not whom. And behold that person is on the scene. The angel had directed him to the desert. The spirit had moved a man thoroughly committed and the slightest suggestion was sufficient. As he looked upon the Ethiopian - his face was a map of perplexities. His eyes were questioning a large familiar scroll. And as he joins that chariot.

There is the companion of the Holy Spirit. Along with the Holy Scriptures as Philip asked him the question - understandest thou what thou redest.

If the Bible is to find its proper place in our lives, let me say it must be read.

It must be read!

I heard about a Sunday School teacher who related her experience - she had begun her task of teaching third graders. She wanted them to have some idea of what they knew. Children, she said, who is Matthew. Not a hand went up. She drew a blank expression. Who was Mark, Luke, and John. Well, does anyone know Peter. A little boy raised his hand in hesitation - he said, I am not sure teacher but I think he was a rabbit.

Now we might excuse the confusion in a child. We have a heritage through the

open Bible and a faith that is very important. And we need to return again unto the Lord. We need to turn to the Bible and return to Him through the Bible.

Now the Bible is not going to disclose it's truth and riches, under dust. Until they are read - the understanding and the Spirit inspired, the question I think - understand thou what thou readest.

Paul wrote in Romans - there are people who have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge.

How can I accept some man to guide me.

There are those who would say the Bible is enough. But let me tell you, God has not finished the revelation of his will for your life when you purchase the Bible. The Bible has to be read and applied.

Now it is dangerous to interpret the Bible according to your own independent ways. You can prove anything by the Bible. The Bible commandssuicide somebody says. You can take and find a verse - which said Judas went and hanged himself. And then you can find another verse which says, go thou and do likewise. Another that says, what thou doeth, do quickly. And you can go to another, and the Lord said, it was good. Now we do not have liberty as some people do - of hopping all through the Scriptures and proving what we want to prove. But this poor man who was seeking, lingering on one passage of Scripture here in Isaiah.

And V. 35 - Philip opened his mouth and began the same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus. Jesus is the grand fulfillment of the prophesy of Isaiah. The time was right - Jesus came. He told how he died on the cross. And those that would believe in him would be saved.

I think we ought to say, God bless that faithful Philip. Who found a seeking soul - seeking for happiness, and knew how to tell him how to be saved. God bless the dear Christian people tonight who take the time to study and to get the knowledge and the wisdom they can share with seeking souls when it comes your turn.

He filled him with the thoughts of Jesus Christ.

V. 36 - They came to a body of water and the eunuch wanted to know about baptism.

V. 37 - Philip told him how to be saved. You must first believe. And after obedience - there is baptism. I do believe, he says. I am ready to be baptized.

V. 38 - They commanded the chariot to stop. And the man being born again was ready to be baptized. And they went down in the water and that Philip was caught away. And the eunuch saw him no more, as he went away rejoicing.

v. 39
Here is a man who has his name written in the lamb's book of life. Going on his way rejoicing.

The Bible always prompts a glad, immediate surrender. The eunuch declared his faith in those words - I believe in Jesus Christ, the son of God. And the Bible played an important part in his conversion.

Harry Fostik once told about a woman of Africa who heard her first Christian sermon. She remarked to her neighbor, there - I always told you that there ought to be a God like that.

→ The eunuch was struggling with the passage of Isaiah - with a great faith.

Ready to be born and Philip pointed out that it was the Lord. And with all the message - the Bible message found its mark. It became a living book and guided its soul to the Saviour. And there was rejoicing. And what was out in the future for the eunuch. Well, he still had his tensions, his problems, his sickness. But he went on his way with a song in his heart. If we take care, and take Christ into our hearts - we too will find joy. Something that the world cannot give us, can never be taken away. I marvel at the work of Philip. His faithfulness in witnessing.

Dr. Harold Ford tells a story

There was a story of a ship-wreck not far from shore. A man, his wife, and little girl were thrown into the water. The man was a good swimmer. And he started toward the shore with his wife clinging to one arm, and the little girl to the other. Soon he felt his strength ebbing away. And he could not make the shore with both of them. Which one should he leave behind. He must do that or all three would go down. It was a heart-breaking decision to make. But finally he shook off the little girl and swam away with her mother. Away from the little girl's pitiful, dying cries they swam.

We ought to thank God that Jesus never had to make such a choice like that. He can save everyone who comes to him by faith. He saved Philip and he saved a man that Philip preached too. He can save you - and you can bring happiness in your life.

The world is full of people who are weary of many Gods. Here is symbolized a man who made a clear break in life. There was a real union with Jesus Christ. And this is the sure thing - he went on his way rejoicing. New found joy in himself. Philip struck while the iron was hot. I wonder tonight, if this might not be the opportune moment for someone who has debated the question, about giving your life to Jesus Christ. That you might go on your way rejoicing.