

KEEP JESUS WEIRD

An 8-Part Study of the Book of Acts - **Part 8: Nothing** - Sermon Study Guide 5|26|19

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Study Questions:

What kind of people “belonged” in the earliest form of Christianity, and who didn’t?

What can we surmise about the Ethiopian man from verse 27?

What do we know about 1st Century eunuchs?

Why would a eunuch be put in charge of the queen’s treasury?

Why would this Ethiopian gentile (non-Jew) have gone to worship with the Jews in Jerusalem?

“The Spirit told Philip...” How does the Holy Spirit speak to believers? Have you ever “heard” the Spirit telling you to go somewhere or to talk to someone is specific?

Do you know the Bible well enough to explain it to someone who is less familiar with it? When it comes to your biblical literacy, what are your blind spots? (ex: *I don’t know much about the Old Testament. I struggle to make sense of the violence/wrath in the Bible. I’m not sure what the Bible’s message really is.*)

How might this passage from Isaiah have spoken straight to the heart of someone like a eunuch?

Bible References:

Acts 8:26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” 27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

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

32 This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”

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“Philip...told him the good news about Jesus.” Why was the coming of the Jewish messiah good news for gentile outsiders like this eunuch?

Have you ever shared the gospel with someone, one-on-one? If so, what happened? What, if anything, would you do differently?

If not, why not? And if given the opportunity, what would you say?

Why did the Ethiopian assume there may be something standing in the way of his baptism? *See Deuteronomy 23:1*

2nd Century Christian leaders like Irenaeus of Lyons recorded that the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 was later identified by name in Acts 13:1. Why was his nickname significant?

In spite of his sexual status, his foreign nationality, and the blackness of his skin, when Simeon asked Philip what could prevent him from being baptized, what did Philip do? And what was the significance of that moment?

What does early Christian tradition say about Simeon’s life after he was baptized? What did he do, and what was the impact of his actions?

Have you ever felt like you didn’t belong around other Christians? Or is there someone you love who believes they don’t belong at Church? What does the story of Simeon and Philip say to people who feel ostracized by religion?

34 The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” 35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

Deuteronomy 23:1 No one who has been emasculated by crushing or cutting may enter the assembly of the LORD.

Acts 13:1-3 1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, **Simeon called Niger**, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.