

Some Other Man

Acts 8:26-39

- Followers of Christ are often provided divine appointments by God
- When we make ourselves available to Him, He can do extraordinary things
- That's what happened in the account we'll be discussing today
- God was drawing one man to Himself and allowing another to be a part of that process
- He revealed Himself through scripture and used one of His chosen servants to explain it

- Today, the account of Philip and the Ethiopian of great authority
- We find it in Acts 8:26-39 and take from it the theme "Some Other Man"

- Philip is a man appointed by the church at Jerusalem (in Acts 6) as one of the first deacons
- The Lord speaks to this man in our text today, providing Him with a unique assignment
- That's where we join our text...

Acts 8:26-28

26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

- Philip's task is to go into the desert outside Jerusalem
- There was a person there that had already been prepared by God
- In fact, he had in his possession, Isaiah 53

- This is a man who had come to Jerusalem to worship
- And he was reading from the Hebrew scriptures about Israel's messiah

- He was a man of a certain stature
- It says he had great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians
- And that he had charge of all her treasure

- He seemed to be an admirer of Judaism and to have an interest in the One True God
- But struggled to understand this Old Testament text...

Acts 8:29-31

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

- The omniscience of God is seen in this interaction
- As the mind of one man struggles with a passage of scripture, another - having fully come to grips with the passage - is called to his side
- Both of their minds and hearts are known by the Lord
- Philip asks if this man understands what he is reading
- But, as so many of us often do, the Ethiopian needs a guide
- Someone to care enough to explain the text
- And Philip is asked to take up a position that calls to mind the definition of a common command in the New Testament: to exhort or to come alongside
- Philip, literally and figuratively, does exactly that
- Here we have a deacon, servant of Christ and His church
- And a man who is curious, trying to work things through, but still unsure
- Sitting together in this chariot, looking over Isaiah 53:7-8...

Acts 8:32-34

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

- God brought this man to an ideal passage of scripture
- Speaking of the One who was "stricken for the transgression" of His people (as the text says)
- If we know anything of this section of Isaiah, we know that it indeed speaks of "some other man"
- And that man is Jesus
- This is the Messiah that can forgive this Ethiopian's sin and reconcile Him with God
- It is the Savior who paid the penalty for this man's sin on the cross
- Who rose from the dead and who is the Savior of mankind
- And this man of great authority was sitting next to the right man
- For this was a divine appointment...

Acts 8:35

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

- It is wonderful to have a friend who knows the truth
- Philip understood Isaiah 53
- And he was able to explain the prophecy of the messiah
- He did so in a way that helped the Ethiopian to understand
- Isn't it wonderful that God allows His servants to be involved in this way?

- God was at work in both men
- And He chose to do something amazing as a result of this interaction
- We know this is definitely the case as we continue in the text...

Acts 8:36-37

36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

- That which has taken place is made clear here
- This Ethiopian has come to faith in Christ - he believes
- And now that he does, he seeks to take this step of obedience and be baptized
- As it should be, he is asked to confirm his belief before he is baptized, and he does
- He believes with all of his heart
- This is the pattern through Acts
- As we know, baptism does not save
- Christ saves
- But baptism is a demonstration of what has already taken place in us
- The account continues...

Acts 8:38-39

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

- When Philip's assignment was complete, God caught him away
- But this Ethiopian went his way rejoicing
- Not only did he understand the scripture in Isaiah
- He knew the Savior described in chapter 53
- And he could move forward with confidence
- Having been freed from the chains of sin
- No more an observer and admirer of Israel
- No more without God in the world
- But made nigh to God by Christ
- God provided this divine appointment
- Using His servant
- Preparing another servant
- And doing something wonderful