

The Gospel Heads South

Acts 8:26-40

We saw earlier in Acts 8 how God used persecution and 'mass evangelism' to spread the gospel. In this story it spreads by one person telling another about Jesus.

At the Top, but Empty

Whilst it can be lonely at the top, it can also be empty, because of all that has been sacrificed to get to the top. The eunuch is at the top, the CFO of a nation. But he had to make a great sacrifice to get there. He was a eunuch in a culture where family mattered.

So why has such a man been to Jerusalem to worship? Probably because he is searching for something deeper, for something more, because success and money and position can never ultimately satisfy. And yet when he got to the temple he would have been turned away: eunuchs were not allowed to enter.

Which was why he was reading from the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah talks of the Lord promising that one day foreigners and eunuchs will become full members of the people of God, and this will all happen through a Servant of the Lord, who will suffer. The eunuch was reading this and wanting to know, who is this Servant?

Crossing the Divide

Philip and the eunuch were very different. Which is why it required God to push Philip across the divide that separated them, which He does, multiple times. It's God's clear desire to get us out of our comfort zones, sharing the gospel with others. But the Ethiopian also had to have the humility to admit that he didn't understand, which is why he asks Philip up into the chariot.

The One Who Makes it Possible

The eunuch wants to know who this Servant of the Lord is who will suffer and die for the sins of others. So Philip tells him the good news about Jesus. About a king who will become a servant, and take the lowest place, and at the cross take upon himself all that would separate the eunuch and us from God.

Which is why Christ is the One who makes it all possible:

- He makes it possible that our emptiness and inner longing for meaning and significance can be filled, with a deep, lasting joy.
- He makes it possible for all of us (who have as just as many reasons as the eunuch to be sent away by God) to be included and brought near.
- He makes it possible for us to cross the divide and reach out across the barriers of colour and culture. In the shadow of the cross there is no place for racial or national pride.
- He makes it possible for us to tell the good news to others, because we realize it is good news!