

### III. What is the key element of conversion?

The eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and he was now returning. Acts 8:27,28

Three clues to the Ethiopians search for God:

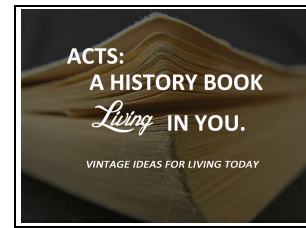
- He's a cabinet minister. He's a man of great power and wealth.
- He's paid quite a price to become Prime Minister of Ethiopia (the Greek word for *eunuch* and for *prime minister* is the same word)
- He's spiritually empty but he's read something that has given him hope

"Don't let foreigners who commit themselves to the Lord say, 'The Lord will never let me be part of his people.' And don't let the eunuchs say, 'I'm a dried-up tree with no children and no future.' 4 For this is what the Lord says: I will bless those eunuchs who keep my Sabbath days holy and who choose to do what pleases me and commit their lives to me. 5 I will give them—within the walls of my house— a memorial and a name far greater than sons and daughters could give. For the name I give them is an everlasting one. It will never disappear! Isaiah 56:3–5

He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. 4 Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! 5 But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. ...Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream.

Isaiah 53:3-5,8

His epiphany? God paid the price; He substituted Himself, in Is. 53, so the Eunuch could see the promise of Is. 56



Sierra Community Church March 23, 2014  
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### Part 12: Acts Chapter 8 How Conversion Happens

#### The Message

<sup>1</sup> ... That very day, the *whole* church in Jerusalem began experiencing severe persecution. All of the followers of Jesus—except for the leaders themselves—fled to the countryside of Judea and Samaria. ...<sup>4</sup> All those who had been scattered *by the persecution* moved from place to place; *and wherever they went, they weren't afraid or silent. Instead*, they spread the message of Jesus.

...<sup>26</sup> A heavenly messenger brought this *short* message from the Lord to Philip *during his time preaching in Samaria*: "Leave Samaria. Go south to the Jerusalem-Gaza road."<sup>27</sup> *The message was especially unusual because* this road runs through the middle of uninhabited desert. <sup>27</sup> But Philip got up, *left the excitement of Samaria*, and did as he was told to do. *Along this road, Philip saw a chariot in the distance. In the chariot was a dignitary from Ethiopia (the treasurer for Queen Candace), an African man* who had been castrated. He had gone north to Jerusalem to worship *at the Jewish temple*,<sup>28</sup> and he was now *heading southwest* on his way home. He was seated in the chariot and was reading aloud from a scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

### **I. What God wants us to know in the Ethiopian's conversion.**

A heavenly messenger brought this *short* message from the Lord to Philip *during his time preaching in Samaria*: "Leave Samaria. Go south to the Jerusalem-Gaza road."<sup>27</sup> *The message was especially unusual because this road runs through the middle of uninhabited desert.* vs. 26

<sup>29</sup>The Holy Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and walk along beside the carriage." vs.29

1. God is sovereign over salvation.
2. God wants all barriers, racial and otherwise, conquered.
3. God works as well in one culture as another.

### **II. The picture of a heart compatible with conversion.**

Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"<sup>31</sup> The man replied, "How can I, unless someone instructs me?" And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him. Acts 8:30,31

<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?" Acts 8:34

<sup>36</sup> As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?" Acts 8:35

Three Facts about this man:

- He's powerful official from Ethiopia/ \_\_\_\_\_
- He can \_\_\_\_\_
- He owns a \_\_\_\_\_

### **Philip's three part investment.**

- *So he started running until he was even with the chariot.* Philip heard the Ethiopian reading aloud and recognized the words from the prophet Isaiah.
- *Do you understand the meaning of what you're reading?*  
Acts 8:30
- *So beginning with this same Scripture, Philip told him the Good News about Jesus.*  
Acts 8:35

### **The Ethiopian Eunuch's Heart**

**Philip:** *Do you understand the meaning of what you're reading?*

**The Ethiopian:** *31 How can I understand it unless I have a mentor?*

Then he invited Philip to sit in the chariot. Acts 8:30,31

He is \_\_\_\_\_.

Eventually the chariot passed a body of water beside the road.

**The Ethiopian:** *"Since there is water here, is there anything that might prevent me from being ceremonially washed through baptism and identified as a disciple of Jesus?"*  
Acts 8:36

He is looking for another to \_\_\_\_\_.