

A Divine Appointment

(Series: Reimagining Church; Message Nineteen)

Acts 8:26-40

- A. A divine appointment is a God-intervention in our lives to orchestrate a spiritual meeting or connection that builds God's kingdom
 - 1. The Bible is filled with examples
 - 2. They still happen; they are not coincidences, accidents, or chance meetings
- B. Acts 8:26-40 is a classic divine appointment

THE CHARACTERS

- A. The story begins with the a visit from an angel...
- B. The angel tells Philip - one of seven table waiters - to go south toward Gaza
 - 1. ...to a desolate location at the most desolate time of the day
 - 2. Notice Philip's response: "*So he started out...*" (8:27)
- C. Then we meet the Ethiopian Eunuch
 - 1. The first word tells us he's from what is now northern Sudan
 - 2. A *eunuch* here refers to a court official

THE CHALLENGE

- A. The Spirit tells Philip: "*Go to that chariot [carriage] and stay near it*"
 - 1. To witness you have to be in close proximity to the person you're witnessing to
 - a. The longer one has been a Christian the fewer non-Christians they know
 - b. REVEAL notes over 84% of us don't have regular spiritual conversations
 - 2. God may ask us: "Who [what, where] *is your chariot?*"
- B. The chariot continues to move; Philip comes alongside and listens...
 - 1. The Ethiopian is reading out loud from Isaiah 53 - from the Greek Septuagint
 - a. He asks a natural question: "*Do you understand what you are reading?*"
 - b. Witnessing always starts with where people are
 - c. Witnessing is simply following the promptings of the Holy Spirit
 - 2. "*Who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?*"
 - a. Philip tells him all about Jesus (It's what Christ followers do)

- 1) Philip was ready when God called him to an appointed assignment
- 2) The Ethiopian Eunuch was ready to embrace Jesus; to step into faith...
 - b. God had orchestrated it; it was a divine appointment
- 3. Throughout Acts, Luke suggests conversion is quickly followed by baptism
 - a. It's the sign of belonging to Jesus and his family
 - b. It acknowledges the grace and forgiveness of Jesus Christ
 - c. It is a celebration of God's goodness and faithfulness
 - d. It's not about us - it's about Jesus; but it's our first step of obedience

THE CONCLUSION

- A. The story ends with the sudden removal of Philip
 - 1. Philip went on into "meanwhile ministry"
 - a. This "meanwhile ministry" is one of the reasons for the rapid expansion of Christianity in the first two centuries
 - b. They lived their Christianity 24-7; they were sold-out to Jesus
 - 2. The Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing - a sign of God's Spirit at work
- B. What if Philip had ignored God's prompting?
 - 1. If you make yourself available to God, you will be used; if you accept one, he'll give you another
 - 2. We have been given a mission from God!
 - a. Each assignment matters...because unbelievers matter to God
 - b. God longs to have us participating in life-changing divine appointments
 - 3. How long has it been since your last divine appointment assignment?