

Acts 8:26-40 The Story of One

A man went for a walk along the beach one morning before the sun had fully come up. In the distance he spotted a man throwing something into the sea. As he got closer to the man he saw he was throwing starfish into the sea. He stopped and asked the man what he was doing. He said if these starfish stay here they'll die when the sun comes up. Looking up along the shore you could see the starfish lined the shore for hundreds of metres. He said look at all of them how are you going to make a difference. The man responded as he threw another starfish into the sea by saying:- **It makes a difference to this one**

Luke moves from the city of Samaria where we were told about the whole city. Or that Samaria has accepted the word of God. The whole is on view. The unstoppable message is having an impact on the whole. BUT the whole is made up of individuals. God is personal and comes to individuals. We see this in Jesus. He had crowds following. Crowds that grew and grew. But along the way he stops and took time with individuals. People who had names and who are named in the Gospels about Jesus.

God spreads the message of Jesus in the world through one Christian explaining the gospel to another . One sharing with one.

1. This is God's work

Read: 26

God said to Philip: - 'Go.' God determines what happens next. He sends him from a fruitful mission in Samaria. From a big city to one. From successful public witness to a deserted road. 'South' in v.26 could be better translated 'midday'. So God is sending Philip down a desert in the middle of the day. You'd have to think this is the most unlikely time and place to find anyone let alone some one who is willing to hear about Jesus.

Look at v.27 to see what happens next. So Philip started and went. He obeyed. He went. No asking why should I go there? Are you kidding God? What did he discover? Or who did he discover? Because discovered a person. See vv. 27-28

Not just any person. A Eunuch from Ethiopia. Not just any man but a leader in this nation. A person of influence. Who knows who he'll reach if he turns to Jesus. Not only someone from a far off nation. He has been prepared by God. He is a worshipper. More than that he takes it seriously beyond the worship gathering. He is reading God's Word. Philip comes across a man who God has prepared to hear about Jesus.

This is the sort of thing here where God finds and focuses on individuals.

Maybe he is coming to you this morning? Don't be mistaken each and everyone of us is here by God's appointment. Maybe as we gone on looking at this passage you might find yourself thinking that God is coming to you. That as you here about Jesus you think God is speaking to you and asking you to make a response. Or to ask a question like this man does.

I was visiting Marj this week. We had been chatting for a while when there was a knock at her back door. Her neighbour came in. Marj introduced him to me. Marj prompted me to speak about Jesus with him.

I had turned up to Marj's place without calling or knowing if she was going to be home and she was. I didn't expect to meet her neighbour. I didn't expect to be prompted by Marj to talk about Jesus. But God had planned this all to happen.

Don't be in any doubt. God is the one at work bringing people to himself. This is how it happened for you if you believe. So as one came to you so you can be one to another one. Who is the one for you?

3. The message must be shared

Read: 30- 35

The message has a messenger. Philip is the messenger for this man. One to one. He is invited to sit and explain so he sits and explains. He starts where the man is. He starts from the passage the man is reading.

Who is the passage about? Jesus. It was Jesus who led like a sheep to the slaughter; like a lamb who is silent before the killer is silent so was Jesus. It was Jesus who in humiliation was denied justice and his life was taken. And all this so that we the sinners can have peace with God. We who lived as if God doesn't exist and who deserve God's judgement can escape it because Jesus death took it for us.

I read of a Muslim priest who was asked to do a series of character studies on great people from the Koran: Abraham, Joseph, David, and the prophet Jesus. When he came to prepare his talk on Jesus, he wanted more background information, so he borrowed a Bible and began to read the gospels. As he realized that Jesus was more than a prophet, his Muslim friends were appalled and excommunicated him. He continued to read and on his own trusted Christ as Savior. He went to a local Christian and asked if he could be baptized. He now works with Operation Mobilization doing evangelism among his own people

This is what happens when you are prepared to not only read the Bible but read willing to learn. Read it willing to submit to its teaching when you see it to be true.

This maybe a question you have? Who or what is this about?

4. The response to the message

Read it: 36-38

You see the faith of this man. He had come to faith and now he wanted to identify himself with Jesus publicly. That is one indicator of your faith in Jesus. You're not ashamed to publicly profess Jesus.

The other indicator is JOY. This man had joy.

See v.39

He has just heard the Jesus had his sins placed on him. That he carried his sin and took it away.

No wonder he had joy.

Joy is a mark of genuine faith. An evidence of God's grace. A deep seated sense of joy.

Philip gets taken away but the joy of knowing Jesus stays.

Philip has played his part.

John Chapman that as the preacher of the good news of Jesus that he is like the fat cow that brushes past the fruit and the right time and knocks the fruit off. God does the work to bring people to himself through the faithful sharing of the news of Jesus

You maybe the one today who is hearing about Jesus and you need to come to Jesus.

Or you may know Jesus but are being reminded that you are told by Jesus to be one to another.

Do you begin the day expecting divine appointments will occur in the day?

Who will I meet today? Who will God bring across my path?

Who will I serve today? Who can I speak to today?

We are to change our thinking from seeing life as a series of coincidences but divine appointments.

Who is God's person for you? We can be the same for others.

Each one with bring one.

Let's resolve to be like Philip and bring the message to one.

God spreads the message of Jesus in the world through one Christian explaining the gospel to another . One sharing with one.