SEA CHANGE CHURCH

THE CURRENT

The Church Has Left the Building · S1E2

Church in a Chariot

A 7-Day Study

"Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' This is a desert place. And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over and join this chariot.' So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' And he said, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' And the eunuch said to Philip, 'About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?' And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea."

Acts 8:26–40 ESV

Pastor Harry Wilson · August 2, 2026

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?"

Acts 8:36

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each week, The Current walks through a piece of Sunday's passage: a short verse study, encouragement, journal questions, and a daily prayer.

Take one day at a time — there's no need to rush.

DAY 1

One Person Worth Leaving For

> **ACTS 8:26-27 ESV**
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> *"Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' … And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah."*

VERSE STUDY

Philip was in the middle of something significant. He had preached in Samaria, and the whole city was responding — real momentum, real spiritual fruit. That's the exact moment an angel interrupts him with a strange, seemingly inefficient assignment: leave the city, walk out to a desert road, for no stated reason at all.

There's a reason God would pull someone away from something fruitful for something that looks like nothing. Jesus told a parable about a shepherd with a hundred sheep — ninety-nine safe in the pen, one gone astray — and the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine for the one. That's not inefficiency. That's how God loves individuals: he goes out of his way to rescue just one.

William Temple once said the church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members. There is always someone, somewhere, on a desert road — hungry, in need, carrying a story that's heavy — who just needs someone to show up where they are.

Sometimes God interrupts something that looks important to send you toward something that looks small. If you've ever felt like the 'one person' assignment was a step down from the 'real' ministry, remember that Philip left a citywide movement for a single desert conversation — and that conversation is still changing nations today.

TAKE HEART

The math of the kingdom doesn't work like the math of scale. One faithful yes to one person, at the moment God asks for it, can matter more than you'll ever be able to measure.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. When has God interrupted something that felt significant to send you toward something that felt small?
2. Who might be the 'one' God is putting in front of you this week, even if it means stepping away from something that feels more important?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse — read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, give me the willingness to leave the ninety-nine for the one when You ask me to. Help me trust Your math even when it doesn't look efficient by mine. I don't want to miss the person right in front of me because I'm too focused on what looks more significant. Give me the same readiness Philip had to go where You send me, even to a desert road. Let me see interruptions as invitations, not distractions. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Set aside time this week to slow down for one specific person, even if it interrupts your regular plans.

NOTES

DAY 2

Faithful Before You're Famous

> **ACTS 8:27 ESV**
>
> *"And he rose and went."*

VERSE STUDY

Before Philip was known as an evangelist, he was one of seven ordinary men chosen back in Acts 6 to wait tables for widows who were being overlooked — an assignment with no spotlight at all. What we watch this week is what that hidden faithfulness eventually produced.

When persecution scattered the church, Philip didn't shrink back. He preached in Samaria, and a whole city responded. Then, right in the middle of that momentum, God asks him to leave it all for a solitary desert road — and Philip's response is four words: he rose and went. No negotiation, no hesitation.

That kind of prompt obedience isn't sourced from talent. It's sourced from three unglamorous habits: a humility to serve, a willingness to listen, and a faithfulness to follow. None of those require being gifted. They only require being willing.

Public ministry is only as trustworthy as the private faithfulness underneath it. Who you are in the room where everyone's watching should match who you are when you're alone with God and no one's applauding.

TAKE HEART

You don't need to be the most talented person in the room to be significantly used by God. You need to be willing, listening, and faithful in the small, unnoticed assignments — that's the resume God is actually building in you.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What 'waiting tables' season of hidden faithfulness might God be using right now to prepare you for something you can't yet see?
2. Is there a gap between who you are in public and who you are when no one's watching? What would it take to close it?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse — read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, build in me the humility to serve, the willingness to listen, and the faithfulness to follow — even when no one is watching or applauding. I don't want to wait for a platform to start being faithful. Let my private life with You match whatever public faithfulness You give me. When You ask

me to rise and go, give me a heart that responds quickly, without needing to understand everything first. Thank You for using ordinary willingness more than extraordinary talent. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Identify one unglamorous, unnoticed task this week and do it faithfully, as an act of obedience to God.

NOTES

DAY 3

Seen Beyond the Label

> **ACTS 8:27 ESV**
> *"And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship…"*

VERSE STUDY

This man was the highest-ranking treasury official for the queen of Ethiopia — trusted with everything, in part because eunuchs in royal courts had no spouse or children to divide their loyalty. Most eunuchs did not choose this path; it was forced on them, often as boys. And yet somewhere in his story, he had come to trust the God of Israel, devoted enough to travel thousands of miles to worship in Jerusalem.

But under the law in Deuteronomy 23:1, a eunuch was barred from entering the assembly of the Lord. That likely meant this man traveled all that distance only to be kept at the outer edges of temple worship — unable to go where he most wanted to go.

That law was never meant to shut out sincere worshippers; it was originally aimed at pagan practices of self-mutilation. But by this point in history, it was being applied by the letter rather than the spirit, and a man devoted to God found himself formally excluded by the very religious system he had crossed a continent to reach.

And that is exactly the kind of person God sends Philip to find. Not the safest, most obviously 'in' person, but someone currently standing on the outside of religious belonging — still reading Scripture in his chariot, still searching.

TAKE HEART

God is not limited by the labels a religious system, your past, or your own self-judgment might place on you. He sees devotion where others only see exclusion.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. Is there a label, past mistake, or sense of disqualification you've believed keeps you on the outside of full belonging with God?
2. Who do you know who might feel like this eunuch — devoted and searching, but standing at the edge because of how they've been labeled?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse — read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, thank You that You see past every label that's ever been put on me, including the ones I've put on myself. Where I've believed I'm disqualified, show me that's not how You see me. Give me the same eyes You gave Philip — eyes that notice the person standing at the edge, still searching, still devoted, even when a system has pushed them out. Help me be someone who moves toward people, not away from them, because of how they've been labeled. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Reach out to someone this week who might feel like an outsider in your church or community.

NOTES

DAY 4

The Gospel Must Be Carried

> **ACTS 8:34-35 ESV**
> *"And the eunuch said to Philip, 'About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus."*

VERSE STUDY

The eunuch was reading Isaiah 53 — one of the clearest Old Testament prophecies of the crucifixion — and he had a real, honest question, but no one to answer it. 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' He had access to the Scriptures but not yet the good news of what they meant.

Philip doesn't just quote a verse at him. He starts exactly where the man already is, in Isaiah 53, and walks forward into the story of Jesus: pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, punished so that we could be healed. The passage the eunuch was reading suddenly had a name and a face.

This moment lands specifically for this man. His whole life had been shaped by a disfigurement he never chose. Now he's hearing about a Servant King who was willingly disfigured in his place. The gospel doesn't just inform him — it speaks directly into his particular wound.

The gospel gives hope to the hopeless and credit to the discredited, but it must be carried before it can be received. Someone has to be willing to run up to the chariot.

TAKE HEART

You don't need a seminary degree to explain the gospel well. You need to know the story well enough to start where someone already is, and walk with them toward Jesus.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. If someone asked you today, 'Who is Jesus, and why did He die?' how would you answer? What would help you grow in that confidence?
2. Who in your life has a genuine question about faith that you could help answer this week, even imperfectly?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse — read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, give me confidence to explain the gospel simply and clearly when someone has a real question. Help me notice the questions people are already asking, instead of waiting for a perfect opening. Teach me to start where people are, the way Philip did, rather than where I wish they

already were. Give me courage to run toward the conversation instead of away from it. Let the good news of Jesus be as ready on my lips as it was on Philip's. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Write out, in a few sentences, how you'd explain the gospel to someone who asked — then look for a chance to use it.

NOTES

DAY 5

A Name That Will Not Be Cut Off

> **ISAIAH 56:4-5 ESV**
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> *"For thus says the Lord: 'To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.'"*

VERSE STUDY

Centuries before this eunuch ever stepped into his chariot, Isaiah had already written his story. In Isaiah 53, he read about a Servant disfigured for others; three chapters later, in Isaiah 56, God speaks directly to people exactly like him — eunuchs excluded by the letter of the law — and promises them something better than what they'd been told they could never have.

He could never have sons and daughters to carry his name forward. Scripture meets that specific loss with a specific promise: a name in God's house, a monument, an everlasting name that will not be cut off. Not despite his story, but because God had always planned to redeem it.

This is what real belonging in God's family looks like. It isn't measured by the categories a religious system uses to rank people in or out. It's measured by whether you belong to Him. Whatever this man's biography said about him, God had already written a different ending.

If God can reach back centuries to speak precisely into this man's specific wound, He is not vague or generic about yours either. The details of your story — the ones that make you feel disqualified — are not too specific for Him to redeem.

TAKE HEART

Whatever you feel you've lost or been denied, God's promise of belonging to those who come to Him is not a consolation prize. It's better than what you thought you needed.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What's a specific part of your story that you assume disqualifies you, that God might actually want to redeem?
2. How does it change things to know God was already planning your belonging before you ever needed it?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse — read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, thank You that Your promises are specific to my story, not generic. Where I've assumed a part of my life disqualifies me, help me see the promise You've already written over it instead. Give me a name and a belonging that don't depend on what I've lost or what I can't do. Help me trust that You planned my place in Your family long before I ever needed it. Let me walk in that security today. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Write down one specific way you've felt disqualified, and next to it, one promise of Scripture that speaks directly to it.

NOTES

DAY 6

No Barriers Between You and God

> **ACTS 8:36-38 ESV**
> *"And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?' And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him."*

VERSE STUDY

A man used to hearing 'that's far enough' — banned from the inner courts, kept at the edges — sees water and asks a completely different question: what could stop me? He's testing whether the old barriers still apply. The answer, finally, is nothing.

Baptism here isn't a formality tacked onto the end of a good conversation. It's the clearest possible statement that every barrier keeping this man on the outside has been torn down. Philip doesn't hesitate, doesn't add conditions, doesn't check credentials. He simply stops the chariot.

Baptism represents forgiveness, entry into the body of Christ, and a new, primary allegiance — a pledge of loyalty to Jesus above every other claim on your life. It's less a finish line and more a public 'yes' to a belonging that was already true the moment the gospel took hold.

The same question the eunuch asked is worth asking of your own life: what's stopping you from going one step deeper? Not necessarily baptism itself, but whatever the next honest step with Jesus actually is for you right now.

TAKE HEART

Jesus has already torn down the barriers. The only question left is whether you'll believe there's nothing left stopping you.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What barrier have you been assuming still stands between you and going deeper with Jesus?
2. What would it look like to take that next step this week, however small?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse — read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, thank You that You have already removed every barrier that once kept me at a distance from You. Show me where I'm still living as if those barriers are up, when You've already torn them down. Give me the same boldness the eunuch had to ask, 'What's stopping me?' and to act the

moment I hear the answer is nothing. Help me take my next step with You this week, whatever it is. Thank You for a belonging that doesn't depend on my performance. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Identify one concrete next step with Jesus — baptism, a conversation, joining a small group — and take it, or schedule it, this week.

NOTES

DAY 7

Church in a Chariot

> **ACTS 8:39-40 ESV**
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> *"And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea."*

VERSE STUDY

The scene ends almost as suddenly as it began. The eunuch comes up out of the water, and Philip is simply gone, carried off by the Spirit to preach town after town on his way to Caesarea. Meanwhile the eunuch keeps traveling — not deflated by the sudden goodbye, but rejoicing.

That eunuch is remembered as the first person to carry the gospel to Africa. Ethiopian Christians trace their heritage to this very encounter, and the church that grew from it is one of the oldest continuously existing churches in the world — all because one ordinary man was willing to leave a thriving city ministry for a single conversation on a desert road.

That's the pattern behind this whole passage, and behind this whole series. Church doesn't require a stage, a sound system, or a building. It happened in a chariot. It can happen on a walk, at a coffee shop, in a conversation you almost didn't have time for.

At some point, preparation has to become participation. You can take the gifts assessment, sit through every training, and listen to every sermon — but eventually the gospel has to become more than an idea. It has to become something you carry.

TAKE HEART

You don't know the chain reaction one obedient conversation can start. This eunuch's 'yes' is still being felt on a continent, two thousand years later.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. Looking back over this week, what's one place — your walk, your workplace, your street — where you could let church 'leave the building'?
2. Who is God putting on your heart to carry the gospel to this week, even in a small way?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse — read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, thank You for showing me this week that You can turn one ordinary conversation into something that outlasts me by generations. Give me the same joy the eunuch had — not deflated

by an abrupt ending, but rejoicing in what You've done. Help preparation become participation in my life, not just information I collect. Show me who You're sending me to this week, and give me the courage to actually go. Let the gospel be something I carry, not just something I know. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Have one gospel conversation this week, however small, with someone outside your church community, and trust God with what happens next.

NOTES

MEMORY VERSE

“See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?”

Acts 8:36

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