

Sermon Big Idea

God calls us to unexpected obedience, success is saying yes to Him. The results belong to God.

Head: Grasping the Text

Goal: To grasp the theological concepts and historical context of the text.

1. Read Acts 8:1–8 and 8:26. Why were believers scattered, and what was Philip doing in Samaria when the angel spoke? Why would leaving seem like a strange command?
2. Read Acts 8:26–29. God gave Philip one step at a time: go south, then go to the chariot. What does this show about how God guides His people? Helpful cross references to consider: Genesis 12:1–4 (Abram goes without knowing where); Psalm 119:105 (a lamp for the next step); Proverbs 3:5–6. God often gives enough light for the next step, not the whole map).
3. Who was the Ethiopian eunuch, and why is it significant that he was reading Isaiah on his way home from Jerusalem? Helpful references: Deuteronomy 23:1 (a eunuch excluded from the assembly); Isaiah 56:3–5 (God promises eunuchs a place and a name); Psalm 68:31 (Cush will stretch out her hands to God). At this stage in Acts, who is the gospel now reaching?
4. Read Acts 8:32–35 and Isaiah 53:7–8. The eunuch asks, “Who is the prophet talking about?” How does Isaiah 53 point to Jesus, and why did Philip start *there*? Helpful references: Luke 24:27, 44–47 (Jesus explains Himself from all the Scriptures); 1 Peter 2:21–25; Romans 10:14–17.

Heart: Internal Transformation

Goal: Examine how the text reshapes our identity, affections, and motivations to bring about honest self-examination.

5. **Measuring success.** In a culture and society that values achievement and advancement, whether it be in our educational, vocational, or personal pursuits, how do you measure whether you're "succeeding" for God? What would change if you measured success by obedience instead of results? (Helpful passages: 1 Samuel 15:22 (to obey is better than sacrifice); 1 Corinthians 3:6–7 (one plants, one waters, God gives the growth); Matthew 25:21 ("well done, good and faithful servant", not "successful").
6. **Fear and inadequacy.** What keeps you quiet about Jesus: fear of rejection, of saying the wrong thing, of being labeled, or of not knowing enough? How does the gospel answer that fear? (Helpful verses: Romans 1:16; 2 Corinthians 4:5–7).

Hands: Living it Out

Goal: To move from hearing the Word to living it out as a disciple with specific, practical, and achievable steps for the coming week.

7. **Ready, gentle, and gracious.** Read 1 Peter 3:15 and Colossians 4:2–10. Think of a friend, classmate, coworker, or family member and imagine they ask, "Why do you believe in Jesus?" In one or two sentences, how would you answer? How can you make sure your tone shows gentleness and respect, and not an argument to win? What tone or manner would help engage and make them curious?
8. **Pray, Care, Share:** Pick one person in your life and walk Philip's path with them over the next month. What will you **pray** for them each day? What is one concrete way you will **care**: showing up, listening, or meeting a need? And when a door opens, the way the eunuch's question opened one in v. 34, how will you **share** what Jesus has done for you?