

You've Been Called to Share the Scriptures

Acts 8:26–38

September 13, 2026

Rev Joe Sanders

First Baptist Church Coshocton, Ohio

This past week was eventful. Our nation remembered the twenty-fifth anniversary of 9/11. This is still very real for many people. This attack had many people questioning what God was doing. Many asked why God would allow this attack to happen. This past week as a family we experienced an unplanned event. A medical emergency brought us to a hospital while we were out of town. There was that brief moment of asking why now? This past week I was confronted with a decision about my future. In all of it I had the opportunity to speak about Jesus. I was able to share how Jesus saved me. I was in a position to talk about what Jesus is doing in my life every day. I was given the opportunity to help others see their need to trust in Jesus.

But this wasn't about me. This was about the Lord, God Almighty putting together the circumstances. This was about the Holy Spirit prompting me to take action and to speak the truth. In all that happened Jesus was Lord. God was good. He was and is good all the time.

Acts 8:26–28 (NIV) Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet.

God has a unique calling for each one of us, the mission is the same: share the Gospel. I admit that not everyone gets a visit from an angel of the Lord. I cannot say with certainty that I have ever had the occasion to meet an angel of the Lord. I believe they exist and that they visit people and they bring God's message. You may have had a conversation with an angel. An angel may have appeared to you in a dream or a vision. It's possible that in the midst of some situation an angel appeared and helped you. That is their purpose and their reason for existence.

Philip was selected by the believers in Jerusalem along with Stephen to serve the people. The apostles were busy preaching, teaching, providing miracles and also serving people. They asked the Lord for people to assist them in their ministry. Stephen was one of those individuals who was full of faith and the Holy Spirit. His preaching was so bold that the enemies of God picked up stones and throw them at Stephen. He died.

Philip was another disciple of Jesus who was full of faith and the Holy Spirit. He was under the leadership of the apostles. He was speaking the truth, sharing the scriptures, and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let's consider a phrase that I borrowed from Scripture, full of faith and the Holy Spirit. It's the words used to describe each person that was selected to assist the apostles in the ministry. My first thought is that this description is not limited to those seven men who were selected. Throughout God's Kingdom there are people who are full of faith and the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts and the letters written by the apostles makes this clear.

My second thought is concerned with you and I being full of faith and the Holy Spirit. I want to know that you that this is a decision on our part. Scripture teaches that God has poured out His Holy Spirit on all who call upon the name of Jesus. Furthermore, God provides all of us what we need to do His

will, carry out His plans and purposes. So, it's a choice on my part to be full of faith and to allow the Holy Spirit to work through me. That leaves me with the question, since God is providing, are we receiving? Ponder your life as a disciple of Jesus. Are you receiving and allowing the Holy Spirit to fill you fully?

Let's move on, God is always preparing people to hear the gospel. The Holy Spirit is working in the minds of sinners so that they will turn to Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Jesus told His disciples that His Holy Spirit would convict people of their sin. It's more than just your conscience that is speaking about right and wrong, trusting God or doing your own thing. This is God's Holy Spirit that is moving in the lives of sinners so that they will call upon the name of Jesus.

The man from Ethiopia was not your typical person. This man is one example of the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. He was leaving Jerusalem, the center of Jewish worship of the Living God. He was on his way back home reading from the Jewish scriptures. This leads us to believe that he was practicing the Jewish faith. He believed in the One True God. He was centering his life around faithfulness and obedience to the Lord, God Almighty. He didn't know Jesus of Nazareth. He had not met Jesus. He had not experienced the grace, mercy, and love of God. He was not born again, saved, redeemed, delivered, or being renewed by Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit was working on him. The Holy Spirit was raising questions in his mind and heart. The Holy Spirit was prompting Him to a next step in faith. This man was ready to hear the Good News and give His life to Jesus.

Acts 8:29–31 (NIV) The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.” Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked. “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

Regardless of they who are, everyone needs the gospel explained. Most of us do not possess the boldness to speak to strangers. It requires a supernatural, Holy Spirit power for most of us to talk with strangers about the Bible or Jesus, or God. Remember the biblical phrase full of faith and the Holy Spirit. They are together like they belong to together. They mean when we allow the Holy Spirit to work through us we have the faith needed to speak and act in the name of Jesus. When we are full of faith we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us and through us speaking and acting with supernatural power: God's power. God's power, the power Jesus used to heal the sick, cast out demons, raise the dead is available to us. This is spiritual power. This power is given to every believer through the Holy Spirit. Do I have this power? YES! Do you have this power? YES! Do you have faith that you have this power? That is the question.

Philip believed he had this power. He had the faith to believe an angel of the Lord had spoken to Him. He had the faith to believe the Holy Spirit was telling him to go talk to a stranger. He didn't rehearse a speech. He didn't fret about what to say. He had the full faith that the Holy Spirit would empower him.

There are more people than we think who are open to hearing the gospel. Let's go back to the man from Ethiopia. It's fair to say that he was practicing the Jewish faith. His departure from Jerusalem after worshiping God there is a clear sign. Then we know that he is reading from the prophet Isaiah. This is not light reading. To read this book is a sign that he was searching for God's answers.

So, this brings up the idea of how are people inspired? What is it that sets a fire in a person's soul and spirit and heart? What causes an individual to stop looking at themselves and to start looking at God? It's hard for me to comprehend that inspiration is simply random. I mean, poof and there's an idea that I never thought before. I look at the sunset and sunrise and it's inspiring. I stare out over the

hilltops and it's inspiring. I hear a word or a melody and I'm inspired. Throughout my life there have been many different inspiring moments. They are like a light bulb coming on. In the flash of light I have received clarity, insight, the truth. Call me whatever you want, but that inspiration came from the Holy Spirit every time. If the Lord, God Almighty can say let there be light and there is light, then the Holy Spirit can speak to me and inspire me. Since our Creator Lord spoke all of creation into existence, and breathed life into your lungs, then the Holy Spirit will speak to you and inspire you. Are you asking the Lord and Savior of the world to inspire you? Are you asking the Holy Spirit to inspire others, to call others to Jesus?

Acts 8:32–38 (NIV) The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.” The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?” And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

The Holy Spirit speaks to you and through you while calling people to believe the Good News.

Jesus is the suffering servant identified from the Old Testament book of Isaiah. The Ethiopian is reading to Philip this passage that clearly describes Jesus once you see Jesus. But nearly every Jew and those practicing the Jewish faith hadn't looked at Jesus. Their understanding was clearly that someone was going to suffer and die. It made no sense before Jesus to think this would be Jesus. Many Jews thought this might be the prophet Isaiah becoming a martyr. Others felt that this was fulfilled by the Jews in a symbolic way through all other suffering generation after generation.

God was planning on the Ethiopian seeking clarity and understanding. Then God could place into his life someone who could share the truth. He put Philip on the road to meet him. His search for understanding was inspired by the Holy Spirit. His need to be baptized was inspired by the Holy Spirit. His salvation, redemption, deliverance, and renewal are the work of the Holy Spirit calling him to Jesus. When we start paying attention to the Holy Spirit, we start to get inspired. We look for God's answers. We hear the truth. We believe with all our heart, soul, mind and body.

Inspiration from the Holy Spirit isn't always fun. The Holy Spirit will point out one or two sins in our lives. The Holy Spirit will need to retrain our thinking. The Holy Spirit will need to push us out of our comfort zone. I can open my mouth, but the Holy Spirit is doing the work. I can ask for God's words to be my words, but unless I am willing, I'm keeping the Holy Spirit from working. You and I need to be willing to let the Holy Spirit do the work.

What passages from the Bible can you turn into a presentation of the Gospel? Philip turned the suffering servant of Isaiah chapter fifty-three into a gospel message. He could do this because it is the gospel in the Old Testament of the Bible. You know a lot of scripture. You've read the Bible over and over again. You've given your life to Jesus. So you know the gospel message. First, identify your favorite verse of scripture. It's probably a life verse, those words from the Bible that you turn to frequently. Dig into your life verse recognizing how Jesus personally helps you. Think about times in your life when your verse met the need of the moment. There you have the presentation of the gospel.

Second, look for verses in scripture that connect with your scripture. Pinpoint how Jesus has helped you through that verse. In so doing you will build your way to a couple of verses: John 3:16 and Romans 5:8. All you need to add to that is the truth that everyone needs to confess and repent, be baptized and they will be forgiven receiving the Holy Spirit. Now, when the Holy Spirit says go over to that stranger you will run because you are full of faith and the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:39–40 (NIV) When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Wherever the Holy Spirit takes you talk about Jesus. Regardless of where you are somebody needs the grace of Jesus Christ. I can't think of anybody that doesn't need the blessings of God. Everybody I know, there isn't one of us who is worthy to receive any of God's blessings. God's grace is every blessing from heaven that is given without earning it.

My dad got up everyday and worked hard. Every two weeks he got a check for working hard. He earned that money. It put a roof over our heads, food on the table and shoes on our feet. He didn't earn salvation. He didn't earn eternal life. God's grace gave my dad life in heaven for eternity through faith in Jesus as his Savior and Lord.

How many people do you encounter who can get through their day without the grace of God? The answer is zero. Zero people can make it through the day without God's grace. Most people don't even think about God providing for them, or helping them, or working in their lives. Sinners don't see the grace of God, but it's there. Otherwise they would be in hell before they could take their next breath. Christians don't see the grace of God, but it's there. God is lifting us up every day, empowering us to make it through the day. God is giving us everything we need to glorify His name. God is providing for us every word that we need to share. When you encounter sinners during your day be filled with faith and the Holy Spirit. Believe that the Holy Spirit is leading you. Believe that the Holy Spirit is speaking through you.

Jesus alone can provide your salvation. The Ethiopian discovered God's grace. He was looking for something. The Holy Spirit prompted him to read from the prophet Isaiah about God's Suffering Servant. The Holy Spirit moved Philip to be there at the side of the Ethiopian. The Holy Spirit provide Philip with the words to say. In receiving God's salvation the Ethiopian was filled with joy. He entered a new life marked by peace. He lives forever in heaven with Jesus.

God is calling out to you through His Holy Spirit to leave behind your life of sin. You and I have been corrupted by the power of sin. All of us have only one way out of that corruption: faith in Jesus. God is calling you by the work of the Holy Spirit to find in Him forgiveness. To be set free from the weight of sin and it's punishment which is death. God is calling you to live every day fueled by His Word in your life. God is calling you.

Will you choose Jesus as your Savior and Lord? I have to ask or I'm not following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Confess your sins to Jesus. Tell Him that you have not honored God, or obeyed God, but have been selfish, thinking only of yourself. Repent, turn away from those sins and turn to Jesus. Give Him thanks for His salvation. Praise Him for redeeming you from the power of sin. Rejoice that He has delivered you to a new life now and forever. When you give your life to Jesus you will rejoice. You will be at peace. You will have hope. You will receive God's grace.