

# WEEKLY REFLECTION

This week's account of the Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-40) shows us what can happen as we remain obedient and responsive to the Holy Spirit. It involves Philip, who we last saw bringing the word to Samaria (v.6-8; 14-17), and an Ethiopian eunuch, who seems to be searching for spiritual satisfaction in life. The Ethiopian was an official at the royal court in charge of all the queen's treasure. (v.27) He likely castrated himself to reach his current level of power, as the royal family would not have trusted him otherwise.

Although he seemed to have everything—at least wealth and power—and had sacrificed much to get where he was, something was still missing. He still felt dissatisfied, so much so that he willingly journeyed from Ethiopia to Jerusalem. The journey would have been around five to six months, and he would have risked being replaced at the royal court whilst he was away. But all this would have been for nothing, as there was a huge possibility he would have been barred from entering the Temple due to his physical dismemberment. (Deut. 23:1)

So imagine how distraught and rejected he would have felt, as Philip encountered him on the road back to Ethiopia! Imagine, at the same time, how loved he would have felt when Philip was whisked away, when he realized that God had organized this surprise encounter specifically for him! (v.39) Although we struggle greatly with the logistics of how we can scatter, sometimes being paralyzed by fear and anxiety, Philip shows us that it's as simple and easy as being obedient to the Holy Spirit. The eunuch shows us that it's worth the cost. We go wherever He takes us, and we share whatever He puts in our mouths.

So, church: will you go? Will you practice being familiar with God and His Spirit? Will you follow the Spirit's guidance, and will you be obedient to speak as He works through you?

# QUESTIONS

## **QUESTION ONE:**

Have you ever had a surprise encounter, or heard about someone else's surprise encounter as they followed the Spirit's guidance and went along with what came next? How would you describe that moment of obedience, and what was the result?

## **QUESTION TWO:**

Take the time now to go through Isaiah 53. Why was it significant that the Ethiopian was reading this specific passage, and how did Philip use the Scriptures to share the good news about Jesus?

Share some specific ways that you might do so by pretending that you are Philip, and that you are using Isaiah 53 as a springboard to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

## **QUESTION THREE:**

How would you imitate Philip in remaining open and available to God's guidance and leading? How might you practice being familiar with Him and His Spirit in everyday situations, such that you can respond to His prompting when the opportunity arises?