

SURPRISED BY GOD

Acts 8:26-40

Introduction

Last week we saw the young Christian church come under sudden and severe persecution. Fleeing for their lives, they shared the Gospel message with people they met along the way. Philip fled to Samaria, where our story begins. There are four places in the narrative where the characters find themselves in places you might be today: in difficult, frustrating, or confusing circumstances, only to be surprised by God.

Scripture for study

Message text: Acts 8:26-40

But God... Genesis 50:20, I Sam. 16:7, Psalm 73:26, Eph. 2:1-6

Message Outline

Here are four confusing circumstances...

1. "God just sent me to the desert"
2. "I'm wasting my time"
3. "God is out of my reach"
4. "There's nothing else for me to do"

Discussion Questions

1. What difficult circumstances have you or your family been facing over the past few weeks? How involved has God *seemed to be*?
2. God sent Philip into the desert. Describe what that might feel like or seem like in today's terms. What are some "deserts" we find ourselves in today?

3. Some Christians adopt the position that God will give them a good, happy life if they love Him and behave. Do you agree with this position? Has this proven to be true in your experience?
4. Share with your group a time in your life when you felt like the things God had you doing were just a waste of your time. Was it really a waste in the end?
5. What are some reasons why people might think God is out of their reach?
6. What are some contributions to our church and to the Kingdom that seniors are uniquely qualified to make?
7. Share with your group a “but God...” story from your life.

Review and Reflection

Difficult circumstance can cause us to misinterpret what God is doing in our lives. If you believe God is distant, inaccessible, or uncaring, then look for God to surprise you with the truth. Remember, if you are living for God, your circumstances don't control your life. Your circumstances are under God's control. God is present, engaged, involved, and firmly in control of your life and your circumstances!