

June 28th – The One Requirement for Baptism

“Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’ Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.”

(Acts 8:36-38)

In Acts 8 we find the amazing story of Philip’s encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch. Philip was one of the first deacons selected by the early church to serve the needs of the congregation (Acts 6:5-6). In addition to serving tables, he also did the work of an evangelist. The Bible tells us that “an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip” and instructed him to travel down the road that runs between Jerusalem and Gaza (modern-day Egypt). Philip obeyed the instruction and thereafter he had a divine appointment.

A eunuch was someone who had been castrated, usually so they could work in service to kings and queens. This particular eunuch served the queen of Ethiopia, and he was returning to his country after worshiping in Jerusalem. When Philip encountered the eunuch, he was reading the Scripture and he had just come to the Suffering Servant passage in Isaiah 52-53. When the eunuch asked Philip about the identity of the man Isaiah wrote about, Philip was happy to explain that Jesus was the man.

As Philip continued to preach to the eunuch, he came under conviction and placed his faith in Jesus. The eunuch was ready to declare his faith publicly – “What hinders me from being baptized?”. While there are many different ideas about baptism, Philip set the record straight – the only requirement for Christian baptism is faith in Jesus Christ. The eunuch believed and so he was baptized. That’s why it’s called “believer’s baptism.” Do you believe in Jesus? Have you been publicly declared your faith through Christian baptism?