***Acts 8:35-38 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36Now 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?” 37Then 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.” 38So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.***

This morning, we have been blessed again with the opportunity to baptize. God has been so good to us. Baptisms and new members, faithful members pressing forward in God’s Kingdom, and starting tomorrow, Vacation Bible School. It’s a blessed time.

Our scripture this morning speaks of a baptism. Philip is spoken to by an angel. The angel says words very familiar to us. He says – Arise and go. God says Arise and go to all of us. Arise and go, be about My purpose for your life. Philip finds an Ethiopian, riding in a chariot, reading the Book of Isaiah. A conversation takes place. Verse 35 - *Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.*Philip opened his mouth, he discipled this man. He didn’t expect someone else to do it. He did it. He cared enough to discuss Jesus, preach, meaning to explain the Gospel. Priorities – Philip made telling this man the Truth priority. We’re all called to disciple, as believers in Jesus. Imagine the difference we could make if 10% of the time we complain about politics, wonder about current events, criticize others decisions, and scroll through Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, and TV was redirected to discipling others. We’d change the world.

Verse 36 - *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?”* Philip is in the chariot, explaining the prophecy of Isaiah. The Ethiopian gains understanding. He asks – here’s water, what hinders, meaning what is to stop me from being baptized? He understands the Truth of Jesus as Messiah and Lord. How did he come to understand? A faithful disciple, having had the Truth revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, arises, goes, makes the time to explain, sets the priority. Many know that we study much of the Old Testament in Evening Service. We literally take the prophecies laid out and connect them. No one can study Daniel, Isaiah, Malachi, or any Old Testament prophet and miss the flashing pointer to Jesus Christ. It all points to Him.

Listen to Philip’s answer in verse 37 – *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.”* Only one thing can hinder – unbelief. Only one thing can save – belief. Notice Philip doesn’t say, “Well, you’re life’s a mess… that’s a hindrance.” No. What hinders me? Unbelief. If you believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, come to save us from our sins, able to pay our debt that we may stand in righteousness, you know the Truth and the Truth will set you free. The Ethiopian, convicted in his heart, utters the most beautiful, soul saving words, available to us all – I BELIEVE. I believe – that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” Boom – salvation has come to the house of that Ethiopian. Too often, we make excuses – I’m too old, too young, too dirty, too busy to come to Jesus. Jesus says, “You’re not too anything that I can’t change you and make you my own.” The only thing that hinders, that stops, is the refusal to start… start the journey with Jesus.

Verse 38 - *So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.* The Ethiopian eunuch, busy on a trip, heading somewhere to do something, orders the chariot to stop. We have no indication that he changed clothes, explained himself to the servants, or made his driver turn his head. No. He knew the Truth and he was desperate to make it public for all to see. He and Philip went down into the water and he, Philip, baptized him. Who knew he’d been baptized? All who saw. If there was a woman doing laundry across the way, she knew. A child playing in the water – he knew. A traveler heading the opposite direction – he knew. A public profession of Faith in Jesus. Verse 39 says that the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing. Rejoicing – the Greek word means calmly happy, having a peace and joy in heart.

Have you believed on the Savior? I’d ask – what hinders you? Is it what your family might think? Is it what your friends might think? Is it your past? Surely, no one could love a sinner like me?! Jesus came to save all that believe and call on His name. If you’ve never made that decision… make it today. Come as we sing.