

Signs of Life: Readiness

Acts 8:26-40

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CUSTOM

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Intro:

Last week we began Acts 8 with a message entitled “**Signs of Life: Motivation.**” We looked at the striking contrast between Philip and Simon the sorcerer. Both men were around the work of God, both saw the power of God, but they were driven by completely different motives.

- Philip served because he loved Christ and loved people. Simon wanted the things of God because he saw an opportunity for himself.
- And we said that our motivation must come from a ***sincere love, a pure heart, and an obedient spirit***. We must love people enough to bring them the gospel. We must desire Christ's glory more than our own advancement. And ultimately, one of the clearest tests of our motivation is whether we are willing to obey God when obedience doesn't serve our own agenda.

Because it is easy to obey God when His plans happen to look like our plans.

It's easy when the opportunity is exciting. When the ministry is growing. When people notice. When obedience comes with encouragement, affirmation, or visible results.

- But what happens when God calls you somewhere nobody will applaud?
- What happens when obedience means leaving something successful for something that appears insignificant?

That is exactly where Philip finds himself.

He has just been part of an incredible work of God in Samaria. Crowds are hearing the gospel. People are being saved. Miracles are taking place. The entire city is filled with joy. Peter and John have arrived from Jerusalem. From every human measurement, Philip is standing in the middle of successful ministry.

And then God tells him to leave. Not for another city. Not for another crowd. For a desert road.

And that brings us to an important principle:

QUOTE

— Pastor Josh

We must not serve God in order to do great things. We must serve Him because He is a great God.

How many of us have prayed something like, ***“God, I want You to do great things through my life”***?

That's not necessarily a bad prayer. But sometimes what we really mean is, ***“God, I want You to do something through me that is monumental, noticeable, successful, and impressive.”***

Without realizing it, we begin measuring greatness the same way the world does. Bigger must mean better. More visible must mean more valuable. If thousands see it, God must really be using us. If nobody notices, maybe it doesn't matter.

But God's measurements are very different from ours.

ILLUSTRATION

Sometimes God's greatness is displayed when the Red Sea parts and an entire nation watches.

And sometimes God's greatness is displayed when one obedient Christian walks down a lonely desert road to speak to one searching man.

Martin Luther once made this poignant point:

QUOTE

— Martin Luther

“The works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone.”

That is an important reminder for us.

God is not impressed with ***visibility, applause, platforms, or size***. He delights in faithful obedience.

So perhaps instead of constantly praying, ***“Lord, let me do something great,”*** we should pray, ***“Lord, make me faithful in whatever You ask me to do.”***

Because Philip teaches us that God's greatness may be revealed through a citywide revival in Samaria, or through the salvation of one man on a desert road.

The issue is not whether the assignment looks great. The issue is whether we are **ready** when God calls.

And Acts 8 shows us four marks of that kind of readiness:

1. **Ears to hear God's voice.**
2. **Feet to go God's direction.**
3. **Eyes to see a person.**
4. **And a mouth to speak God's message.**

MAIN POINT 1

Ears to hear God's voice

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:26-40 NKJV - "Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, 'Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' This is desert."

The first mark of a Christian who is ready to be used by God is that he has **ears to hear God's voice**.

Think again about where Philip is when this command comes. He has just been preaching in Samaria, and God is doing an incredible work. Multitudes are hearing the gospel. People are being healed. Simon the sorcerer has been exposed. Peter and John have arrived from Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit is moving, and the entire city has been filled with joy.

It sounds like the kind of place you would want to stay for a while!

But right in the middle of that fruitful ministry, God gives Philip a completely different assignment: **"Arise and go toward the south... This is desert."**

Compared to Samaria, that doesn't sound nearly as exciting.

There is no promise of another crowd. No explanation of what is waiting for him. No indication that anyone will even be there. God simply points Philip toward a long, barren stretch of road leading from Jerusalem toward Gaza and tells him to go.

We can read the story so quickly that we almost imagine Philip walking around the corner and finding the Ethiopian eunuch waiting for him. **But this was a real journey through difficult country.** Philip may have traveled for a significant amount of time before he saw any evidence whatsoever of why God had sent him there.

You can imagine the questions that could have begun running through his mind.

Lord, are You sure about this? Why would You pull me away from what was happening in Samaria for this? There were people everywhere back there. There was visible fruit. There was momentum. Now I'm walking through the wilderness and I don't even know why I'm here.

And yet Philip keeps going.

Why? Because before Philip had **feet willing to go**, he had developed **ears willing to hear**.

Verse 26 says, “An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip.”

Philip was living with an awareness that God had the right to interrupt his plans, redirect his steps, and give him a new assignment.

That becomes one of the striking features of this entire passage. God is directing people throughout the story, but He does so in several different ways.

- *In verse 26, an angel speaks to Philip.*
- *In verse 29, the Holy Spirit directs him.*
- *In verses 32–33, God speaks through the written Word as the Ethiopian reads Isaiah.*
- *Then in verse 35, God uses Philip to explain that Word and proclaim Jesus.*

God is not silent. And learning to recognize His leading is an important part of growing in the Christian life.

Jesus repeatedly told the churches in Revelation:

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says...”

APPLICATION

There ought to be a spiritual attentiveness in the life of a believer. We should live with our hearts open to the possibility that God may redirect us, convict us, burden us for someone, bring a Scripture to our attention, or place an opportunity in front of us that we did not plan for ourselves.

Now, in Philip's case, God sent an angel. The Greek word *angelos* simply means “messenger,” and throughout Scripture angels are servants of God who carry out His purposes and deliver His messages. They do not exist to draw attention to themselves; faithful angels always direct attention toward God and His purposes.

Can God still use angels? Of course He can.

APPLICATION

But Scripture does not teach us to spend our lives looking for angels, waiting for visions, or seeking some spectacular supernatural experience before we obey God. Even in the Bible, angelic appearances are exceptional events surrounding particular moments in God's redemptive plan.

For us, the ordinary pattern is much simpler and much more dependable.

God has given us **His Word**, **His Spirit**, and **His people**.

Regarding the Holy Spirit, Jesus tells us in John 16:13–14 NKJV

SCRIPTURE

John 16:13-14 (NKJV) [13] However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. [14] He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth. He guides. He speaks. He glorifies Christ.

And this is where we need both expectation and discernment.

- I believe the Holy Spirit is actively involved in the everyday life of the believer. He convicts us. He reminds us of truth. He gives wisdom. He burdens our hearts. He brings people across our path. He can prompt us to speak, to pray, to encourage, to give, to go, or sometimes simply to stop and pay attention.

But the Spirit of God will never contradict the Word of God.

The same Spirit who leads us is the Spirit who inspired Scripture. So we don't judge the Bible by our impressions; **we judge our impressions by the Bible.**

There are times when you are reading Scripture and suddenly a truth you have read many times becomes intensely clear and directly applicable to something you are facing.

- There are times when another mature believer speaks wisdom into your life and you realize God is using them to address exactly what you needed to hear.
- There are times when you are going about an ordinary day and a particular person keeps coming to your mind, and you sense that you should call them, pray for them, encourage them, or talk with them about Christ.

We should not become mystical about every passing thought. Not every feeling is the Holy Spirit. Not every idea that enters our mind is a message from God. But neither should we become so skeptical that we live as though the Holy Spirit no longer leads His people.

There is a biblical balance.

We know God's voice most clearly by knowing God's Word. And the better we know His Word, the more equipped we become to recognize His leading.

Jesus said:

SCRIPTURE

John 10:27 (NKJV) [27] My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Notice that *hearing* and *following* belong together.

APPLICATION

The goal is not simply to become fascinated with hearing from God. The goal is to become obedient to what He says.

Sometimes Christians say, "I just wish God would speak to me."

- And I wonder sometimes if the problem is not that God has failed to speak, but that we have become poor listeners.

ILLUSTRATION

How many of you have ever tuned out someone's voice because you were focused on something else or distracted? I'm ashamed to admit it, but I've sat through parts of conversations where I couldn't tell you a word the person said in the last five minutes.

Sometimes we do the same thing to God. We allow the cares of this life, the busyness of our pursuits, and our own personal plans for our lives to drown out the voice of Him whom we need to hear the most.

ILLUSTRATION

Elijah discovered something similar. He stood before the Lord as a mighty wind tore into the mountain, then came an earthquake, and then a fire. But the Lord was not in those things. Afterward came what Scripture describes as a "**still small voice.**"

Sometimes we are so focused on looking for the spectacular that we miss God in the ordinary.

The question is: **Are we listening?**

A ready Christian has ears to hear God's voice. And once you hear Him, the next question becomes:

Are you willing to go where He tells you to go?

MAIN POINT 2

Feet to go God's direction

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:27 NKJV - "So he arose and went."

I love how simple that statement is: ***God spoke. Philip went.***

There is no recorded argument, no negotiation, no request for more information. Philip was told where to go, but he was not told why he was going. God gave him a direction without giving him an explanation.

And that is often where obedience becomes difficult.

- Most of us would like God to give us the entire itinerary before we take the first step. *Lord, where are we going? What is going to happen when I get there? How long will this take? What is the purpose? How is this going to turn out?*
- But God often gives us enough light for the next step without illuminating the entire road.

God was directing him toward a barren wilderness. From Philip's perspective, it probably didn't make much sense. If I were Philip, I would have had some questions. But Philip did not require an explanation before offering his obedience.

"So he arose and went."

Why? Because Philip understood that his life no longer belonged to him.

APPLICATION

Scripture says that we have been bought with a price. When Jesus becomes Lord of our lives, we are surrendering more than our sins to Him. We are surrendering our rights, our plans, our ambitions, our schedules, and our preferred direction.

That is what the word Lord means.

We sometimes like Jesus as Savior more than we like Jesus as Lord. We gladly receive the forgiveness, grace, mercy, and eternal life He gives us. But lordship means that He also has the right to say, “Go,” and we go. “Stay,” and we stay. “Leave this,” and we leave it. “Walk into that,” and we walk into it.

Obedience says,

QUOTE

— Pastor Josh

“Lord, You do not have to explain Yourself to me before I trust You.”

APPLICATION

There may be times when God directs you into what feels like a wilderness season. God told him, quite literally, “This is desert.”

This could be a place in life where the fruit is not obvious. A season where you cannot see what He is accomplishing. You knew what God was doing in the last season, but you have no idea what He is doing in this one.

Philip could see what God was doing in Samaria. He could not yet see what God was doing in the desert. But God could.

QUOTE

— Pastor Josh

What looked empty to Philip was already occupied by the providence of God.

We trust God's direction because we trust God's knowledge. He sees what we cannot see. He knows what is around the corner while we can only see the road immediately in front of us.

I've used this phrase before, and I think it is worth remembering:

QUOTE

“For every season, God has His reason.”

Then look at what happens next.

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:27-31 NKJV - "And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go near and overtake this chariot.' So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' And he said, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him."

Now Philip begins to see why God sent him there. But notice something about his response. The Spirit says, **"Go near and overtake this chariot."**

Phillip has feet to go: And Philip doesn't walk. **Philip runs.**

I love that picture. He ran toward the will of God. Like a child running into the arms of his father, like a servant responding to the command of his king, like a runner charging toward the finish line, Philip ran.

There is an eagerness in his obedience. He isn't dragging his feet. He isn't saying, *Lord, I already walked all the way out here. Now You want me to chase down a chariot?* He runs.

And that has often been one of my prayers:

APPLICATION

"Lord, let me be a man that is willing to run to do your will, without second thought or hesitation, but with full obedience and faith." May you and I be those who have feet that run to do His will.

Not reluctantly. Not after exhausting every other possibility. Not only when I understand everything You are doing.

What could God do with a church full of Christians whose instinct was to run toward His will?

And look at what happens when Philip's feet move in obedience. He encounters a divine appointment that he never could have arranged for himself.

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- The Ethiopian was an influential man from a distant land, entrusted with the queen's treasury, spiritually hungry enough to travel to Jerusalem to worship, and yet still searching for understanding. As a eunuch, he likely knew something of religious exclusion, but God had already been working in his heart and arranging every detail of this encounter.
- He was exactly the kind of man who could carry the gospel far beyond Jerusalem and into places of significant influence. He was sincere, he was seeking, but he was still lost, and God sent Philip to show him Jesus.

From Philip's perspective, this meeting must have seemed almost unbelievable.

- But God had been preparing the messenger.
- God had been preparing the man.
- God had been preparing the moment.
- And obedience brought them together in God's perfect timing.

That is one of the beautiful realities of walking with God:

QUOTE

— Pastor Josh

you never know what is waiting on the other side of obedience.

Philip could not see the Ethiopian from Samaria. He only saw him after he went.

APPLICATION

Sometimes we ask God to show us what He is going to do before we obey, while God says, **“Obey Me, and you will see what I am doing.”**

And what happens as his feet move? He encounters a divine appointment that, unbeknownst to him, will light the edge of a fuse that will cause the gospel to explode into the uttermost parts of the world, thus fulfilling the third phase of Christ's commission.

QUOTE

— Wiersbe

“The Ethiopian represents many people today who are religious, read the scriptures, and seek the truth, yet do not have saving faith in Jesus Christ. They are sincere, but they are lost! They need someone to show them the way.”

This man from Ethiopia was reading the scripture, but he had no understanding of its greater meaning. But notice what Philip does: he is proactive in pursuing this man!

MAIN POINT

Eyes to see

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:30-31 NKJV - "So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' And he said, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him."

Philip had ears to hear and feet to go, but now we see something else in him: **he had eyes to see a person.**

That may sound obvious, but it really isn't. It is possible to be around people all day and never really see them.

APPLICATION

We see the cashier, the waiter, the coworker, the neighbor, the person sitting across the sanctuary, the family member who seems distant, the stranger standing beside us in line. We notice people, but we don't always stop long enough to consider what may actually be happening in their lives.

Philip could have seen an important government official surrounded by servants and thought, *That man probably doesn't need anything from me.* Instead, he saw a man who was searching.

- The Ethiopian had wealth. He had authority. He had influence. He had traveled all the way to Jerusalem to worship. He possessed a scroll of Isaiah, something that would have been incredibly valuable in that day.
- But for everything he had, there was still something he lacked: Understanding.

He was reading the Word of God, but he did not yet know the God revealed in the Word.

APPLICATION

Sometimes we see people for what they have externally rather than where they are spiritually.

God has always been concerned about people

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 3:7 NKJV - "And the LORD said: 'I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.'"

Notice the language: God **saw** them. He **heard** them. He **knew** what they were experiencing.

Everything that followed—the calling of Moses, the plagues in Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, the pillar of fire and cloud, the manna, the water from the rock—flowed out of the heart of a God who saw His people in their suffering.

And when Jesus walked this earth, He continually saw people differently than everyone around Him.

- ***The Pharisees saw an adulterous woman worthy of condemnation; Jesus saw a broken woman who needed mercy and forgiveness.***
- ***The disciples saw a Samaritan woman they would rather avoid; Jesus saw a thirsty soul who needed living water.***
- ***Judas saw expensive perfume being wasted; Jesus saw a woman pouring out an act of worship.***
- ***The crowds saw a criminal dying beside Jesus; Jesus saw a repentant sinner and said, "Today you will be with Me in Paradise."***

And here, some may have seen a powerful Ethiopian official who seemed to have everything together.

Philip saw a man who needed Jesus.

QUOTE

— Pastor Josh

"It is only when you see a person the way Christ sees them that you can bring Christ to them."

Sometimes we are so intimidated by the thought of sharing our faith because we imagine that we have to walk up to a complete stranger and immediately deliver a theological presentation.

But Philip begins with a question. **"Do you understand what you are reading?"**

He simply enters the man's world. He listens. He notices what the man is already thinking about, and he asks a question that opens the door.

APPLICATION

There are times when sharing Christ requires us to lovingly step into someone's life. Not intrusively. Not obnoxiously. Not as though they are merely a project to complete. But with enough genuine concern to ask a question, start a conversation, or show interest in what is happening beneath the surface.

We often talk ourselves out of those moments before they ever begin.

They probably don't want to talk.

I don't want to make them uncomfortable.

And certainly, we should be wise and respectful. But sometimes the person we are afraid of bothering may actually be waiting for someone to care enough to ask.

Philip did not know how the Ethiopian would respond. He asked anyway. And the response was remarkable:

"How can I, unless someone guides me?"

Then the man invited Philip into the chariot.

The opportunity Philip could never have arranged was opened simply because he was willing to notice the person God had placed in front of him.

I believe this event shows us that Philip was not interested merely in **doing ministry**. He was interested in **people**. And there is a difference.

- It is possible to love preaching and fail to love people.
- It is possible to love leadership and fail to love people.
- It is possible to love building programs, organizing events, leading worship, teaching classes, or serving in ministry and still lose sight of the individual souls those things are supposed to reach.

But Jesus never lost sight of the person. Neither should we.

ILLUSTRATION

D.L. Moody once asked a man about his soul, and the man replied, "It's none of your business!" "Oh, yes, it is my business!" Moody said, and the man immediately exclaimed, "Then you must be D.L. Moody!"

Readiness means we have **ears to hear God's voice**, **feet to go God's direction**, and **eyes to see the person He has put in front of us**.

And when we see them, we must finally be willing to do the hardest thing of all: **open our mouths and tell them about Jesus.**

MAIN POINT

Mouths to speak God's message

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:32-34 NKJV - "The place in the Scripture which he read was this: 'He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth.' So the eunuch answered Philip and said, 'I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?'"

We find the eunuch reading out of the scroll of Isaiah, chapter 53, verses 7-8, a beautiful prophetic message regarding the Messiah and His atoning death. Could there have been a more perfect passage for the moment? Here he is reading of a man who was led to his death. Though it was a death void of justice and full of humiliation, this innocent man, like a lamb before its shearers, remained silent, not offering a defense but willingly laying down his life.

There was something about this man in Isaiah that captivated the attention of the Ethiopian. Who would go through such a thing? Was it Isaiah, or was Isaiah speaking of someone who would come after?

Well, this passage, written 700 years before Christ was born, is actually a perfect description of Christ's trials and march up to Calvary. Though He could have called ten thousand angels to His rescue, the innocent Lamb of God remained silent up to the cross, willingly taking the death that we deserved upon Himself.

In response, we see Phillip at the ready:

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:35 NKJV - "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him."

Three elements here that are worth observing and applying:

1. **Opened his mouth**
2. **Used the Scripture**

3. Stayed focused on Jesus

Philip had listened for God's voice. He had gone where God directed him. He had seen the man God placed in front of him. But all of that brought him to one final moment: **He had to open his mouth.**

And many times, that is the hardest part. We can care about people. We can pray for them. We can build relationships with them. We can even sense that God has given us an opportunity. But eventually, if someone is going to hear the gospel, somebody has to actually say something.

Philip did. And notice where he began. The Ethiopian was reading Isaiah 53, one of the clearest prophetic pictures of the suffering Messiah in all the Old Testament. Isaiah had written these words centuries before Jesus was born, describing One who would be rejected, humiliated, led like a lamb to slaughter, and willingly suffer on behalf of others.

The Ethiopian is captivated by the passage. "Who is Isaiah talking about? Himself? Someone else?" What an opening! Philip does not change the subject. He does not overcomplicate the moment. Verse 35 simply says:

"Beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him."

The word translated "preached" carries the idea of announcing good news, bringing glad tidings. And if there has ever been a world in need of some good news, it is ours. The gospel is not primarily good advice about how to improve your life. It is not a political philosophy, a moral program, or a collection of religious principles.

QUOTE

Some Christians are like an Arctic river: frozen over at the mouth.

The gospel is the good news of what God has done for sinners through Jesus Christ.

Philip would have been able to begin right there in Isaiah and explain the suffering Servant. He could show this man that Jesus was the innocent Lamb who willingly went to the cross, bearing our sin and judgment upon Himself. He could explain that the One Isaiah described had come, had died, and had risen again.

APPLICATION

Philip knew the Word well enough to point a searching man to Christ. That is part of being ready.

SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 3:15 (NKJV) [15] But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

APPLICATION

You do not have to know every answer to every theological question before you can share Christ. You do not need a seminary degree. You do not need to memorize fifty arguments.

But every Christian should be growing in the ability to open the Scriptures and explain who Jesus is, what He has done, why we need Him, and how a person can be saved.

And the more we know the Word, the more prepared we become.

- ***You see His birth anticipated in passages like Isaiah 7 and Micah 5. You see His mission described in Isaiah 61. You see His suffering and death throughout Isaiah 52–53 and Psalm 22. You see the hope of resurrection in Psalm 16.***
- Jesus is not an afterthought added to the Bible.
- He is the fulfillment toward which the whole story is moving.

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:36-38 NKJV - "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."

Somewhere in Philip's explanation of Jesus, he had apparently taught this man what it meant not only to believe in Christ but to identify with Him.

- The Ethiopian wanted to be baptized.
- I love the simplicity of it. He believed, and he wanted to obey.

Baptism did not save him; baptism was the outward expression of what God had already done within him. He had come to faith in Christ, and now he wanted to publicly identify himself with Christ.

But please note that Philip put a prerequisite on baptism. Baptism should not precede genuine and personal belief: "If you believe with all your heart, you may."

- This is one of the problems I have with infant baptism. A small child cannot be free to believe for themselves; therefore, the act of water baptism accomplishes nothing other than a religious

ceremony.

- But on the other end, we tend to add more hoops than are biblical to baptism. Go through a baptism class, fill out a form, schedule a date... hey, if you've been born again, you should be baptized! We can do it at your pool, in the river, in a kids' pool behind the sanctuary.

And also notice that it doesn't take anyone special to baptize. Philip doesn't say, "Well, let me go get one of the apostles." Philip was a faithful servant of Christ who had preached the gospel to this man, and now he baptized him.

And on a side note, have you noticed God's sovereign hand in this story?

- Philip is sent to a desert. There just so happens to be an influential man from a far country traveling. He just so happens to be interested in God and reading Isaiah. He just so happens to want an explanation of a messianic prophecy. Philip just so happens to know the answer. The man just so happens to believe. There just so happens to be a spring of water in the middle of the desert for him to get baptized in.

Here we see a balance found throughout Scripture: **God's sovereignty working through men's obedience.**

QUOTE

— Kent Hughes

"God's sovereign work plus man's obedience brings the touch of God to needy human lives."

I found a poem that paints an accurate picture of this concept:

Moses said, "Oh come on now! Be sensible! Not me! I'm a terrible speaker. They'd never listen to me." And God said, "Oh for crying out loud! OK, I'll use your brother to help with the speaking." And Moses led God's people out of disintegration. Jonah said, "Oh come on now! Be sensible! Not me! I'm not the type." And after a rather unexpected vacation in a fish, just thinking things over, he talked to God's people and led them God's way—even though he wasn't happy about it. Zacharias said, "Oh come on now! Be sensible! Not me! My wife and I are too old to have any kids." And God said, "Oh shut up!" And he did shut up for nine months. And then John was born, and the way for the Christ opened up. I heard a child say, "I can't serve God, I'm too young." And I heard a boy say, "I can't serve God, I'm not good enough." And I heard a woman say, "I can't serve God, I'm not skilled enough." I wonder if God ever gets any new problems.

SCRIPTURE

Acts 8:39-40 NKJV - "Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea."

The Ethiopian goes on his way rejoicing. That sounds familiar.

Earlier in Acts 8, when the gospel came to Samaria, the whole city was filled with joy.

Now one man in the middle of the desert is filled with joy.

- A city mattered to God.
- And one man mattered to God.
- Philip had been faithful in both places. He was willing to preach to the multitude, and he was willing to sit beside one searching man in a chariot.

That is readiness.

It is not saying, **"God, give me something great to do."** It is saying, **"God, whatever You put in front of me, make me faithful enough to do it."**