

*Acts 8:1-8 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. v2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. v3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison. v4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. v5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. v6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. v7 With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. v8 So there was great joy in that city.*

*Acts 8:26-40 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road--the desert road--that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." v27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, v28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. v29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." v30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. v31 "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. v32 The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. v33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth." v34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" v35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. v36 As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" v37 v38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. v39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. v40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and travelled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.*

## **WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE**

After the coming of the Holy Spirit in Chapter 2 of Acts, the early church grew very quickly. 3000 on the day of Pentecost and after that people were added daily. There was some resistance to the early church, but the Apostles dealt with these matters quickly and very well.

When some internal problems arose, the Early church appointed seven deacons to help with the running of the church. Then one of these deacons started doing many of the things that the Apostles were doing. I believe the Jewish religious leaders started getting concerned when ordinary men also started doing miracles.

Then the persecution of the church, under Saul, who later became Paul, really started to hurt. In Acts 6 and 7 we have the story of the stoning of Steven in the presence of Saul. So, after the initial success of the early church, it then felt like the whole world was against them. Soon many were leaving Jerusalem for fear of being killed.

Life very often is just like that! One minute everything is great, then all of a sudden, everything turns upside-down. Perhaps disease, or financial or relationship troubles, or even death.

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

## 1. GOD HAS A PLAN

### 1.1 To spread the Gospel.

*v4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. v5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there.*

Back in Acts chapter 1 Jesus had explained God's plan. He said in verse 8 "***But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.***"

Now we see that plan being put into action. FROM THIS TIME ON THE GOSPEL WAS SPREAD TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

We don't always understand the ways of God. Most of the time, I think we think of God as some Vending Machine. As long as we are paying our Christian Dues, God will send us nice and good things.

Friends, God's ways are not our ways, and sometimes he has to turn our worlds upside-down, to do what HE wants to do.

### 1.2 To bring the Kingdom.

*v6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. v7 With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. v8 So there was great joy in that city.*

The story of the start of Jesus' earthly ministry is recorded in Luke 4. It reads like this:

*Luke 4:16-21 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. v17 The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: v18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, v19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." v20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, v21 and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."*

THE WORK OF JESUS WAS TO BEGIN TO ANSWER THAT PART OF "THE LORDS PRAYER" WHICH SAYS "THY KINGDOM COME ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."

So, what began with Jesus, then was passed on to the Disciples, **IS NOW BEING DONE BY JESUS' FOLLOWERS**

THE KINGDOM OF GOD WAS BEING DISPLAYED

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

## 1. **GOD HAS A PLAN**

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

## 2. **GOD HAS A MAN OR WO-MAN**

*v4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. v5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria.*

### 2.1 **Philip was a CHOSEN man.**

The story of Philips calling is found in Acts 6

*Acts 6:3-5 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them v4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." v5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.*

If Stephen was the new churches first choice, Philip was their second choice. We must distinguish this Philip with the disciple also named Philip, although they both had the name nature.

We find the name of this Philip later in the book of Acts, in chapter 21:8, which says this: *Acts 21:8 "Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the **house of Philip the evangelist**, one of the Seven."*

Both this Philip, and the Disciple Philip "BROUGHT PEOPLE TO JESUS". We read the story of the Disciple Philip in John Gospel

*John 1:43-45 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." v44 Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. v45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*

*John 12:20-21 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. v21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "**Sir, they said, "we would like to see Jesus."***

**God has chosen you to do a special work for Him. Are you willing to be used by HIM?**

### 2.2 **Philip was an obedient SPIRIT-LED man.**

*Acts 8:26-40 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road--the desert road--that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." v27 So he started out, .... v29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."*

**Philip was sensitive to the Spirits leading.**

How do we know when God is leading by his SPIRIT?

WHENEVER YOU SENSE THAT YOU ARE SHOULD DO SOMETHING THAT IS BIBLICAL – YOU ARE BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT.

The “natural man” would never choose to follow God commands.

**Philip obeyed without Questioning.**

Being led is one thing – being obedient is quite something else.

To OBEY is better than SACRIFICE

Our natural instinct as humans is DISOBEDIENCE.

For example: You tell a child that they are not allowed to do something, --- and ---- the next thing they are testing you to see if you meant what you said. AND WE ADULTS ARE NO DIFFERENT.

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

1. **GOD HAS A PLAN**
2. **GOD HAS A MAN OR WO-MAN**

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

3. **GOD HAS A PLACE**

3.1 **Every place is a MISSIONARY place.**

*v4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. v5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there*

Samaria was not a friendly place to Jewish people. You will recall the incident between Jesus and the Samaritan women in John 4. The women was quite aggressive toward Jesus at first, because although her life was a mess, she still thought she was better than Jesus, because according to her, her religious beliefs were superior to those of Jesus.

The Samaritans were a mixed-race people, made up of those who remained behind in Israel, when the leaders were taken into captivity, who married other nations leaders who were brought into Israel at the time of captivity.

Friends, wherever we go, PEOPLE NEED THE GOSPEL

3.2 **Every place is a place of DIVINE ENCOUNTER.**

*v27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship.*

God had begun to plant the seed of this encounter almost 1000 years before it occurred. For during the time of King Solomon, about 950 BC, we have in recorded in 1 Kings 10:1-13 the story of a visit from a certain Queen Sheba. God had planted in the heart of the Ethiopian people a hunger for God. Now, almost 980 years later, an official from Ethiopia comes to Jerusalem to WORSHIP God.

Where has God put you to do his work? Many people ask us why we live in Qonce (King Williams Town) when we could have gone almost anywhere in SA, and all we say is, “God has not told us to move!!”

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

1. **GOD HAS A PLAN**
2. **GOD HAS A MAN OR WO-MAN**
3. **GOD HAS A PLACE**

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

#### 4. **GOD GIVES SOME GRACE**

##### 4.1 **PEOPLE are pointed to JESUS.**

*v30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. v31 "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. v32 The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. v33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth." v34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" v35 **Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.***

There can be nothing more important than point people to Jesus.

Recently, our grandchildren visited us, and on the they were with us went to Sunday School. After church, Emma asked Paul what the lesson was all about. His answer, much to my joy was, “Pwobably Jesus, ..... and God”.

Whatever we do must point to Jesus.

##### 4.2 **PEOPLE respond to JESUS.**

*v36 As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" v37 v38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. v39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip.*

The evidence of grace is obedience. The man heard the Gospel message and obeyed by fulfilling the first command of the call. Repent, and be baptised.

WHEN IT APPEARS THAT LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

1. **GOD HAS A PLAN**
2. **GOD HAS A MAN OR WO-MAN**
3. **GOD HAS A PLACE**
4. **GOD GIVES SOME GRACE**