

The Spirit of the House - Part 3

We have been speaking about the ‘spirit of the house’. In the first message we looked at 6 things that define the spirit of the house. Last week we saw 3 very important values of the house. One of those was ‘the value of others’. Please do keep that in mind as we look into today’s passage.

Opening text: Acts 8:25-40

This is the story of a man on a journey. He was on a long journey: in those days, Ethiopia was considered the southern edge of the world, a very distant place. Although he was the Minister of Finance of the kingdom of Ethiopia, the reason for his journey to Jerusalem was not economic, political or diplomatic – he went to seek God.

1. It took great effort, but also great humility for this man to come to Jerusalem:

- As a Eunuch he wasn’t allowed in the temple,
- Being a man from Ethiopia, he was a gentile.
- He was important in his country but here he was an outsider. He didn’t fit in.
- Being a Minister of Finance of another country didn’t give him automatic access or some special benefit like a ‘diplomatic lounge’ or a ‘VIP channel’. His credentials as a foreign dignitary were of no consequence in the temple.

He had great humility. He had to stand with all the other gentiles with no access to the inner courts of the temple. However, he still came.

2. He came to worship but in fact, he hardly knew the God he worshipped. He was seeking Him but not yet fully knowing Him.

People don’t always know Who they worship:

a) Jesus once said to the Samaritan woman: *“You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews (John 4:22).*

b) In Acts 17:23b Paul also found Greeks who worshiped the God they didn’t know. He told them: *“Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you”*

People don’t always know Who they worship but God knows about them and He reaches out to them because they are important. “Others” are important: not just those who know but also those who don’t know and don’t believe yet.

John 6:29b - ... *“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”*

3. He not only worshipped a God he didn’t know but read scriptures he didn’t understand.

He had a copy of the book of Isaiah – most likely a 9-meter roll like one found in the caves of Qumran. Only a person of great substance in those days could afford a book

like that. He must have also been educated in the Hebrew language because he was able to read it out loud. However, he had no understanding of its meaning.

The fact that he had gone to worship and that he was reading, show a man who is searching. He is on a journey to find the God he worshipped.

Of the 4 statements he made in this text, 3 were questions. People have questions. He had questions and was seeking answers.

He asked Phillip in v. 34, ... *“whom does the prophet say this, of himself, or another man?”*

The manuscript was valuable but of greater value was knowing Who the manuscript talked about.

V.35 - *Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.*

He preached Jesus. It is all about Jesus. Our message is simply a Person!

This is the work of God – that people may believe in Jesus (John 6:29).

As I said, of the 4 statements the Eunuch made, 3 were questions. Phillip preached the answer: Jesus. After that, the Eunuch 's last statement is *“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”!* (v. 37b)

Being religious was not enough. He needed to know Jesus. No one else can connect us with the Father (**John 14:6, 1 Timothy 2:5**).

4. This is not only the story of a man looking for God, but it is also the story of another man, Philip, looking for a soul!

We find him running to find the man, on an urgent mission to let this one man know about Jesus. We find the angel urging him and giving him the co-ordinates of where the man was. We hear the Holy Spirit saying, *“Go near, overtake this chariot”*.

The Holy Spirit is still prompting us to sprint, run, to go near, to overtake so people can believe in Jesus.

Conclusion

It is so urgent for people to hear about Jesus!

V.38-40 - *38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 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. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.*

Talking about urgency! Phillip comes out of the water and suddenly finds himself 50 kms away, still dripping with water to preach at Azotus and from there in all the cities, all the way to Caesarea. The Holy Spirit took him with great urgency to the next assignment.

This is the work of God, that people may believe in Jesus!

Run, go near, overtake! – The angel spoke about the Ethiopian man, the Holy Spirit also. He was in the heart of God.

Do you know what heaven talks about? Souls!
Do you know what angels talk about? Souls!
Do you know what kept the early church busy? Souls!

The spirit of the house is to seek and save the lost.