



CHAPTER FIVE

Conversing about the Story

ACTS 8:26-40

Chapter 5: Conversing about the Story

Acts 8:26-40 (NRSVue)

²⁶ Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷ So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” ³⁰ So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹ He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³² Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. ³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”

³⁵ Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ As they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” ³⁸ He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Discussion Questions from the Biblical Text:

1. Philip gets step-by-step directions from an angel, with no certainty of what is to come. How have you discerned that guidance of the Spirit? Was it that easy?
2. How does Philip shape his conversation with the Ethiopian?
3. What do you notice in this story? What wonderings are stirred for you?

Discussion Questions from *Bearing Witness in Acts and Today* by Troy M. Troftgruben:

1. Think about some of the best conversations you have had with people about God, faith, and things of lasting significance. What traits characterize those conversations? What makes them so memorable and beneficial? (page 90)
2. This chapter frames bearing witness through conversation in general and listening in particular. What is your reaction to thinking about faithful witness in the context of conversations with other? (page 90)

Discussion Questions from *Opening Space: A vision for Fresh Expressions of Church and Creative Mission* by Shannon Kiser:

1. Fresh Expressions begin with listening (pages 44-47). How have you already been listening in your community? How might you engage in more listening? (page 59)