

The Ethiopian Worshipper  
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*Do not let the son of the foreigner Who has joined himself to the LORD Speak, saying, "The LORD has utterly separated me from His people"; Nor let the eunuch say, "Here I am, a dry tree." For thus says the LORD: "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me, And hold fast My covenant, Even to them I will give in My house And within My walls a place and a name Better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name That shall not be cut off.* Isaiah 56:3-5

The account of the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch is an important part of the history of the New Testament church. His conversion reveals a number of principles we need to know. When he understood what he needed to do to be saved, it is made clear that his confession needed to come first (Romans 10:9). As well, his conversion gives an excellent demonstration of the physical characteristic of baptism (Romans 6:2-4). Finally, we often point out that angels do not bring the gospel, but men do (Romans 10:14).

But underlying the story is a big question: why this man? Why send the evangelist away from the crowds where he has had success to seek out a lowly foreigner travelling on a desert road? Perhaps this is the most important lesson that is taught here: the Ethiopian Eunuch is the type of person that God seeks.

*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him* Hebrews 11:6

Why is this man so interesting? Putting together some passages from Scripture, we realize his presence in Jerusalem is remarkable. Deuteronomy 23:1-3 is a list of those excluded from the assembly; they were not able to participate in the worship of Israel. In this list is the eunuch. He had gone to Jerusalem, but he was not permitted to join them in their worship. This begs an important question: why go?

This is a question most believers ask at some point of their walk of Faith. Why bother with assembling to worship if you are not getting anything out of it? There are too many distractions with children, or we are in pain or cannot hear or see. Why join if you are not allowed to participate; there are limitations on who can lead in the assembly of the church (1 Cor. 14:34). Jesus said that there would be some that when it became difficult to serve God, they would quite (Mark 4:16-17).

This is why the Ethiopian is such an interesting story. He was forbidden to participate in the assembly of worship of Israel (i.e. the feast days), and perhaps doubly so if he was genuinely an Ethiopian. But he came anyway. He came to be closer to God, even if he was held back from coming all the way. He was a diligent seeker of God.

This is the lesson: God loves people who seek Him diligently especially when they have everyone against them. Rahab is an excellent example of this seeker. The centurion in Matthew 8 or the Canaanite woman of Matthew 15 were people who were not necessarily welcomed to come to Christ, but did so anyway, a sign of their desperate devotion to God.

Some seekers are easily dissuaded from seeking God. They are discouraged by circumstances or by brethren. They lose interest or desire to pursue the Way. But God rewards those who, like the Ethiopian Eunuch, seek Him regardless of the obstacles in the path. The people who will get to heaven are those who determine that nothing will prevent them from doing so.