

An Insufficient Ministry

by G.W. North

Philip's ministry was insufficient for the Gentiles because he did not have the keys to the Kingdom, and God had ordained Peter to minister the Holy Ghost to them.

Scripture: Acts 8:26

Topics: "The Holy Spirit", "Ministry"

Description

G.W. North discusses the ministry of Philip, who, despite faithfully preaching Jesus to the eunuch in Gaza, encountered limitations in his ministry due to the absence of the Holy Spirit's involvement in the eunuch's experience. While Philip's obedience and dedication were commendable, the sermon highlights that God's plan for the Gentiles required the unique ministry of Peter, who was appointed to introduce the Holy Spirit to them. This situation illustrates that even sincere efforts can fall short of God's full blessing when not aligned with His ordained purposes. Ultimately, the sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing the roles and gifts God has assigned to different individuals in the ministry.

Transcript

From Samaria Philip was directed by the Spirit to go down to Gaza where he ministered to a Gentile. There again we observe something somewhat similar to that which took place earlier at Samaria. From the scripture which the eunuch was reading Philip 'preached unto him Jesus', with the result that the eunuch believed and sought water baptism at a convenient wayside pool. Naming but one condition as his ground for the administration of baptism to the eunuch, Philip immersed him in water, and having done so, was caught away of the Spirit to continue his itinerant ministry of the word elsewhere.

There is no mention of the Holy Spirit in connection with the eunuch at all, although like those who earlier believed on Jesus in Samaria under Philip's preaching, he was filled with joy. There was nothing wrong with Philip; he was obeying God and fulfilling his ministry as directed of the Spirit, but something was missing, for lack of which those to whom he ministered came short of the fullest blessing of God. Philip was not to be blamed for that; God had not given him the keys to the Kingdom. He did his work thoroughly; there was no character deficiency in him; he ministered to the full extent of his gifts and calling within the will of God. But the eunuch was a Gentile, and God's will for the Gentiles as a whole is revealed in chapters 9 & 10. Philip's ministry was insufficient for this, even though his heart was willing to serve God to the utmost of his ability.

Peter was the man chosen and equipped to initially minister the person of the Holy Ghost as a gift to the Gentile world and open the Kingdom to them. The Kingdom is the Lord's and He had ordained it thus, and He abode by His ordination. What the limits of Philip's ministry were, or the extent of the eunuch's experience of grace under it cannot be precisely stated, but in His all-wise, all-loving, all-righteous, all-gracious will the Lord both kept His promise to Peter and fulfilled His purposes for men also.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/gw-north/an-insufficient-ministry/>

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