

Embracing Your Circumstances

i-design series

- made in image of God, distinct in role, equal in value
- God's design needs to be understood
- our reality seldom perfect or without challenge
- God is in the business of transformation
 - your heart, life, desires, pursuits
 - taking what Satan means for destruction, using it for His Glory

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- Gen 3 – Adam & Eve
- Gen 9 – Noah
- Gen 12, 16, 20 – Abraham & Sarah
- Job 2 – Job & Wife
- Gen 25,31 – Jacob, Rachel
- Gen 35 - Reuben
- Judges 16 – Samson
- 1 Sam 2,4 – Eli & Sons
- 2 Samuel – King David

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Story of Acts 8:26-40

1. Condition of the Eunuch

- castrated – take away distractions, submissive, servant
- trained & trusted to perform certain duties – treasurer
- not able to have biological family, unmarried
- “Royalty could safely promote them to higher levels of responsibility because they posed no threat of having children who might later attempt to usurp the throne. But this was small consolation for being emasculated. Insult was added to injury, because eunuchs were despised and derided in the ancient world as effeminate, forever betrayed by their beardless faces and high-pitched voices.” (“Flawed Families of the Bible”, by David and Diana Garland, p. 217)

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- Greek satirist Lucian – “freaks”, historian Josephus dubbed them “monstrosities”
 - isolated, humiliated, shame, loneliness, regardless of rank or work position.
 - traveled a great distance – Ethiopia to Jerusalem 500 miles
 - quite possibly barred from worship at temple – Deut. 23:1
“No one who has been emasculated by crushing or cutting may enter the assembly of the LORD”
 - reading scroll of Isaiah – costly to obtain

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2. God's Care and Call

- sends his servant Philip to meet him on the road
- heard him reading – initiates conversation
- Isaiah 53:7-8 , presume he has just read 2-4 *“He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.”*

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- *“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. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.” The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.”*

3. Invitation into New Family

- baptism & disappearing teacher

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- further on in the scroll – *“Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.” And let not any eunuch complain, “I am only a dry tree.” For this is what the LORD says: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant- to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off.” Isaiah 56:3-5*

- made part of a family, name – everlasting