



Grain

“Baptism is the great equalizer.” Reverend Ruben Durand

Field

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?" 37 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. Acts 8:34-39

Thoughts

How often do you think about your baptism? Do you reflect on it during your anniversary of being baptized, or when you witness a baptism, or when reading certain Biblical texts, or when facing an identity crisis, or when your moral standards related to equity and justice are challenged?

There have been great debates over the Ethiopian eunuch and the meaning of his baptism. Was he actually castrated or not, and if so, was he so from birth. There are reasons to believe he might not have been drawn to women, but rather to men. If he was oriented to men, by the way, we don't see scripture pointing toward any ex-eunuch (like ex-gay) groups after he was baptized. Ambiguity surrounds the Ethiopian eunuch's identity. However, we know he was far removed from being part of any in-crowd of those who had been initially baptized. God's welcome to him did not mean he had to lose all dimensions of who he was to become a part of the people that followed Jesus.

Rev. Rubin Duran talks about baptism as a platform of equity. Maybe that is challenging to recall when we prefer to rely solely on what we can organize for ourselves or when we want to be justified only by the family to which we belong. At other times, remembering our baptism lifts us out of the sense of fatalism we can attach to our mistakes or identities over which we have no control. I remember hearing a faith-based advocate talk about how devastating it was when she discovered that one of her relatives had belonged to the KKK. She struggled and grieved but said she finally took respite engaging in her identity as a baptized Christian. Baptism is the great equalizer and where we return to have confidence in loving our neighbor and breaking cycles of injustice. Happy Monday!

Prayer

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy