

Lutheran Vespers, Sometime during 1947-1948
Recording #5
KVNU, 610, Logan, Utah
Rev. Harold Brauer, speaker

To Thee, Oh Lord, do we come, knowing that thou careth for us. As we look into the darkly shrouded future, we are often afraid, we often become anxious and worried. But do Thou in this brief hour of worship teach us that in Thee all our ways are secure. For Thou wilt watch over every one of us. Above all, give each of us the assurance that Thy love in Jesus Christ our Savior includes us, too. And in that assurance, let us rejoice all our days. For his sake, we ask Thy blessing upon this radio service, Amen.

Dear friends of Lutheran Vespers. With God there is no forgotten man. God never gets so busy that he overlooks anyone. God's thoroughness in giving attention not only to every individual but also to the smallest detail in the life of every individual is emphasized by Jesus when he reminds us that the very hairs of our head are all numbered. That with God there is no forgotten man is beautifully illustrated in the account of how Philip was sent by the Lord to minister to the Ethiopian who was traveling from Jerusalem to Gaza. This account is recorded in the eighth chapter of the book of Acts and reads as follows:

And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, arise and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship. Was returning, and sitting in his chariot reading Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

In this account we see a beautiful portrayal of God's interest in the individual. God knows everything about every one of us because he knows all things, even the secret thoughts of our hearts. Philip was busy preaching the gospel in Samaria. The angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said, arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. God knew that along that dusty road, a man from Ethiopia was returning home after having worshiped the true God at Jerusalem. At Jerusalem that Ethiopian may have received little attention being a foreigner. He may have felt very much alone. But God knew he was there. God knew all about him.

God knows all about you nevertheless. Your name may not be listed in Who's Who. What you do and say may not be reported in the papers or over the radio. God knows all about you. Nevertheless, he knows your name. He knows where you live. He knows your every need. And God not only knows us all, he is interested in every one of us,

God not only knew where the Ethiopian was, not only knew his need. He was interested in doing something about it. So he called Philip away from his labors in Samaria to find that Ethiopian and to minister to his needs.

What are your problems? Are you perhaps in poor health? Are you surrounded by danger? Does it seem to you as though nobody cared what happened to you? There is one who does care. It is your God. Continue to take your troubles to him in prayer and you can rest assured that sooner or later God will find a Philip somewhere whom He will send to you to bring you the help you need.

God is no respecter of persons True, God had permitted his Son to be born to the race of the Jews. But that did not mean he was interested only in the Jews. The man to whom he sent Philip was an Ethiopian, a colored man. To God it mattered not who that man was. Because he needed help, God sent a helper.

Do you feel that you are being discriminated against because of who or what you are? Do you perhaps belong to the colored race? Are you being denied privileges because of that? Or if you belong to the white race, are you coping with other disadvantages? Are you poor? Are you less educated than others? Are you less popular than others? Do people pass you by because of such inferiorities on your part? Remember the God who befriended the Ethiopian through Philip is deeply interested also in you regardless of who you may be. And God will find a way to help you or make one

There seems to have been no messenger of the gospel near the place where the Ethiopian was at that time. There were no telephones or radios, no trains, buses or airplanes that might be employed in bringing a messenger of the Gospel to the Ethiopian's side. But God is Almighty, he employed one of his angels to bring the message to Philip to come to that Gaza road at once and Philip made that long trip of 50 miles or more to bring the Ethiopian the message he needed.

Down the centuries God has lost none of his power, none of his ability to help. You may feel that no one can help you. Perhaps it is true that man cannot help you. But God is Almighty. Call upon him in prayer. He can find a way or make one to help you.

Have you perhaps a loved one who is far away whom you would like to help, but circumstances will not permit you to go there in person. Talk to your God about it. He will see to it that someone will come to the rescue of your loved one and will render that service which is needed. And God will reveal himself and his mercy to those who seek him with all their heart.

That Ethiopian was a sincere seeker after God. He had procured a book of the prophet Isaiah and was reading that chapter in which the prophet foretold the suffering and death of Christ for the sins of the world. He was eager to know what the prophet meant, but he had no one to give him the directions he needed. God brought Philip to the Ethiopian's side. Philip explained to him what the prophet Isaiah meant by him who was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and who like a lamb dumb before his shearers opened not his mouth. Philip, we are told, opened his mouth and began at that same Scripture and preached unto him Jesus, explaining to him that in Jesus Christ and his suffering and death this prophecy had been fulfilled. He showed him from the Old Testament

Scriptures that this Jesus was true and did die on the cross to save him and all men from their sins.

The Ethiopian accepted with joy the Gospel Philip preached to him. He requested and received holy baptism and he went on his way rejoicing.

Do you have difficulty at times to understand God's word as clearly as you would like to. Ask God to grant you the help of his Holy Spirit to give you the understanding you need. Sooner or later God will send some Philip also to your side to answer for you the questions that are puzzling you. Or in some other way God will help you find the peace of mind for which you are hungering and thirsting. True, God does not answer for us all the questions we would like to have answered. Many things we would like to know but do not have to know. So let us be content when God answers for us that question which he answered of the Ethiopian: What must I do to be saved?

If you will make prayerful use of the Bible, God will leave no uncertainty in your mind about that question. He gives you the clear-cut answer: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Believe that Christ came to save also you, for God will have all men to be saved. The Lord is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. Talk to God daily in penitent prayer. Confess to him your sins. Plead for mercy and forgiveness in the name of Christ. And through his Word God will say also to you: Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. That will enable also you to go on your way rejoicing and some day through faith in Christ you will inherit that home where you will rejoice in God's presence forevermore.

So may Christ and His Word assure you too that God is interested in and does watch over you. Then the darkness and uncertainty that hangs over the future will not disturb your peace and tranquility of mind and heart, or you will know that God loves you and cares for you, just as he does for everyone else

Let us pray. Gracious God and Father, in Thy love for us, Thou dost watch over even the hairs of our head. Thou hast promised that Thy holy angels will have charge over us and keep us in all our ways that they shall bear us up in their powerful hands, lest at any time we should dash our foot against a stone. Thou hast provided a full and complete salvation for us in the redemptive work of Thy Son Jesus Christ. We pray Thee, give us the blessed and comforting assurance that in Thy gracious care we are always safe from harm of body or soul and help us in childlike faith and trust to entrust our lives for time and eternity to Thee and to Thy loving protection. Hear us in these and all our requests for Jesus sake. Amen.