



WEEK 3

The Mustard Seed Revolution

Into the Chariot

Pastor Jared Herd

Oct 28 & 29, 2017

LEADER'S GUIDE

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “not at all,” and 10 being “bring it on,” how much do you welcome disruptions in your life? How do disruptions make you feel?

This opener will help lay the groundwork for accepting the fact that disruptions are how God often initiates transformation. It's okay to be honest about how we feel about disruptions but then to look at the bigger picture. We have been given the Great Commission (to make disciples) not the Great Personal Agenda.

2. In comparing His kingdom to a mustard seed, Jesus chose an image of something that needs to grow and not something that needs to be protected. How do we sometimes fall into the habit of protecting the kingdom in place of making it grow?

Talk about how sometimes the church (in broad terms, not CRB) has operated in preservation mode. Why do you think that has happened in times past?

3. Take a look at Acts 8:26-38.

Acts 8:26-38 (NIV)

26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” 27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

31 “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth.”

34 The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” 35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” [37] 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

What do we know about the Ethiopian man?

- He was in service to the Nubian queen; an honor.
- Had been born a male – but had undergone castration to render him powerless
- He was a social outcast.
- He was curious about the God of the Jewish people.
- He made a pilgrimage from Africa to Jerusalem where somehow he’d gotten a scroll.

What is remarkable about Philip’s response?

Philip had grown up under traditional Jewish law. There was clean and there was unclean. There was Jew and there was Gentile. He’d been raised to view God as a security guard: *Eat this, don’t eat this; don’t work on these days, don’t associate with these people.* He’d been brought up knowing a eunuch was forbidden by God to enter a synagogue; he’d probably never met a eunuch before and yet now God has directed him into this situation. Was Philip going to continue to see God as security guard? Jesus had talked of God as a gardener. Which one is He? Philip believed Jesus. He did the unconventional thing and climbed up into the chariot to talk to the eunuch and explain the gospel.

4. Pastor Jared said that growth is always a disruption to what we’re used to, and also that faith will invite us into uncomfortable places. What did mean? Can you relate to either or both statements?

Talk about each one individually. 1. Growth is always a disruption. (unpack that one first) Then 2. Faith will invite us into uncomfortable places.

Give people a chance to think back to times where maybe they'd been placed in a situation similar (however vaguely) to what happened to Philip.

5. Have you ever said: "If God wanted me to do this I would have peace; I don't have peace." What do you think is the difference between God inviting you out of your comfort zone and you making a foolish decision?

How often do we use that phrase: "If God wanted me to do this I would have peace; I don't have peace" as a way of avoiding doing some outside our comfort zone?

When do we know it's God nudging us to do something outside the box? How do we decide whether to do it? Talk about that. (Does it line up with what He's commanded us to do in Word? Does it line up with what Jesus did? Does it extend grace and mercy?, etc.)

"We must be willing to do His will, whatever it is... Search His Word, the Bible, for guidance; God never guides us to do anything that is contrary to His Word. Seek also the advice of people who can help you—people who know God and have spiritual discernment. When we truly seek God's will in this way, He has promised to guide us." – Billy Graham

6. We learned in this weekend's message that God will use us and our life experiences in different ways to accomplish His kingdom purposes. What were some of the ways that were mentioned?

Spiritual disciplines of prayer and meditation and reading the Word – these are daily disruptions of your personal agenda that outfit you for service. They prepare you for divine appointments like the one Philip had with the eunuch. They help you "hear" God's directions.

Personal ministry God will use the contributions (disruptions) of time and resources you make. "On the other side of fear, is a story that begins with, 'God used me.'"

Significant relationships – You are in significant relationships for a reason. You don't have to plant a plant, you have to plant a seed. God's spirit waters it.

Pivotal circumstances – Your own personal faith story is your mustard seed.

Which way are you most comfortable with? Which way is least comfortable? Why?

7. What does the story of Philip and the Ethiopian reveal about the Word of God, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and the willingness to be used by God?

The Word of God:

- The eunuch was reading the Word and it was having a transformational effect on Him even before Philip got there.
- Philip shared the gospel from the Word and the eunuch found faith.

The Leading of the Holy Spirit:

- Philip was in such close relationship with God that he could sense His Spirit speaking to him
- The Holy Spirit was directing this event. Both men were responding to the Spirit's work inside them.

Philip's willingness:

- Philip didn't ask why he was being sent to the middle of nowhere; he just went.
- He followed the Spirit's leading to the eunuch and did not hesitate to engage him in conversation when he heard the man reading from the scriptures.
- He kindly asked him if he understood what he was reading.
- When he was invited into the chariot, he stepped in without hesitation.
- He started explaining the gospel from where the eunuch was at.
- He baptized him into the family of God that very moment.

As your group wraps up this study on the Mustard Seed Revolution, talk for a few minutes about what you will all remember most from this 3-week study. What concept was a new one for you? How have you been changed or challenged?

MEMORIZE Philippians 15:5 – “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

MEDITATE: When was the last time you felt the Holy Spirit nudging you to reach out in truth and love to someone who needed to hear the good news of Jesus? If it has been a while, pray this week to be fully available for God to use you like He used Philip, and then be ready and willing to see Him answer that prayer.