

Scripture Readings for May 2, 2021

Acts 8:26 – 40

²⁶ As for Philip, an angel of the Lord said to him, “Go south^[a] down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza.” ²⁷ So he started out, and he met the treasurer of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under the Kandake, the queen of Ethiopia. The eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and he was now returning. Seated in his carriage, he was reading aloud from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

²⁹ The Holy Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and walk along beside the carriage.”³⁰ Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹ The man replied, “How can I, unless someone instructs me?” And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him.

³² The passage of Scripture he had been reading was this:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
And as a lamb is silent before the shearers,
he did not open his mouth.

³³ He was humiliated and received no justice.
Who can speak of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth.”^[b]

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?” ³⁵ So beginning with this same Scripture, Philip told him the Good News about Jesus.

³⁶ As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There’s some water! Why can’t I be baptized?”^[c] ³⁸ He ordered the carriage to stop, and they 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 never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Meanwhile, Philip found himself farther north at the town of Azotus. He preached the Good News there and in every town along the way until he came to Caesarea.

1 John 4:1 – 11

⁴ Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world. ² This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet^[a] acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God. ³ But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here.

⁴ But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world. ⁵ Those people belong to this world, so they speak from the world’s viewpoint, and the world listens to them. ⁶ But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God, they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the Spirit of truth or the spirit of deception.

⁷ Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸ But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

⁹ God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. ¹⁰ This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

¹¹ Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other.

John 15:1 – 8

15 "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³ You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

⁵ "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. ⁷ But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! ⁸ When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.