

Sunday Scripture, Easter 5B

- [Acts 8:26-40](#) • [Psalm 22:25-31](#) • [1 John 4:7-21](#) • [John 15:1-8](#)

These readings are a kind of food or medicine that needs to be preserved and used while still fresh and alive. They invite us to a kind of stereophonic reading – what did they mean for the people who first heard them? And, what do they mean for us, today? We can do that kind of reading by paying close attention to even just a few of the details that call out to us. For example, “Do we really understand what we are reading?” (Acts 8:30) Are we seeking God, and praising God? (Ps 22:26). Do we “love one another?” (1 John 4:7) How can we tell that we are branches? John 15:5

Reflection Questions:

1. Which 2-3 phrases cry out to you for attention and response?
2. Which parts cause you to wonder or struggle? about what?
3. “Do you really understand what you are reading?” (Acts 8:30)
4. How are you seeking God and praising God? (Ps 22:26).
5. How do we “love one another?” (1 John 4:7)
6. How are we who are branches connected to Jesus the vine? John 15:5
7. What is your prayer this week?

[Acts 8:26-40](#) Common English Bible

26 An angel from the Lord spoke to Philip, “At noon, take the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is **a desert road.**) 27 So he did. Meanwhile, an Ethiopian man was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship. He was a eunuch and an official responsible for the entire treasury of Candace. (Candace is the title given to the Ethiopian queen.) 28 He was reading the prophet Isaiah while sitting in his carriage. 29 The Spirit told Philip, “**Approach this carriage and stay with it.**” 30 Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “**Do you really understand what you are reading?**” 31 The man replied, “**Without someone to guide me, how could I?**” Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him. 32 This was the passage of scripture he was reading:

Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent
so he didn't open his mouth.

**33 In his humiliation justice was taken away from him.
Who can tell the story of his descendants
because his life was taken from the earth?**

34 The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, **about whom does the prophet say this?** Is he talking about himself or someone else?” 35 Starting with that passage, Philip proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him. 36 As they went down the road, they came to some water. The eunuch said, “Look! Water! What would keep me from being baptized?” 38 He ordered that the carriage halt. Both Philip and the eunuch went down to the water, where Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water, the Lord's Spirit suddenly took Philip away. The **eunuch never saw him again, but went on his way rejoicing.** 40 Philip found

himself in Azotus. He traveled through that area, preaching the good news in all the cities until he reached Caesarea.

Psalm 22:26-31

26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
and those who seek you shall praise
you. "May your heart live forever!"

27 All the ends of the earth shall
remember and turn to you; & all the
families of the nations shall worship
before you.

28 For yours is the royal power, O God:
you rule over the nations.

29 To you alone all who sleep in the

earth bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust fall before
you.

30 My soul shall live for you,
my descendants shall serve you;
they shall be known as yours forever.

31 They shall come and make known
in people yet unborn
the saving deeds that you have done.

1 John 4:7-21 Common English Bible, adapted

7-8 To you whom I love I say, let us go on loving one another, for love comes from God. Every man who truly loves is God's son and has some knowledge of him. But the one who does not love cannot know God at all, for God is love.

9-10 To us, the greatest demonstration of God's love for us has been his sending his only Son into the world to give us life through him. We see real love, not in that fact that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to make personal atonement for our sins.

11 If God loved us as much as that, surely we, in our turn, should love each other!

12-13 It is true that no human being has ever had a direct vision of God. Yet if we love each other God does actually live within us, and his love grows in us towards perfection. And, as I wrote above, the guarantee of our living in him and his living in us is the share of his own Spirit which he gives us.

14-a We ourselves are eye-witnesses able and willing to testify to the fact that the Father did send the Son to save the world. Everyone who acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God lives in him, and he lives in God. So we have come to know and trust the love God has for us.

16b-18 God is love, and the one whose life is lived in love does, in fact, live in God, and God does, in fact, live in God. So our love for him grows more and more, filling us with complete confidence for the day when God shall judge all men—for we realise that our life in this world is actually God's life lived in us. Love contains no fear—indeed fully-developed love expels every particle of fear, for fear always contains some of the torture of feeling guilty. This means that the one who lives in fear has not yet had God's love perfected.

19-21 Yes, we love God because God first loved us. If a someone says, "I love God" and hates a brother or sister, (s)he is a liar. For if (s)he does not love those before her/his eyes how can (s)he love the ones beyond sight? And in any case, it is God's explicit command that the ones who loves God must love their brothers and sisters too.

John 15:1-8

15 Yo soy la vid verdadera, y mi Padre es el viñador. 2 Todo sarmiento que en mí no da fruto, lo quita; y todo el que da fruto, lo poda para que dé más fruto. 3 Vosotros ya estáis limpios por la palabra que os he hablado. 4 Permaneced en mí, y yo en vosotros. Como el sarmiento no puede dar fruto por sí mismo si no permanece en la vid, así tampoco vosotros

si no permanecéis en mí. **5 Yo soy la vid, vosotros los sarmientos;** [los] que permanece[en] mí y yo en ellos], ese da mucho fruto, porque separados de mí nada podéis hacer. 6 Si alguno no permanece en mí, es echado fuera como un sarmiento y se seca; y los recogen, los echan al fuego y se queman. 7 Si permanecéis en mí, y mis palabras permanecen en vosotros, pedid lo que queráis y os será hecho. 8 En esto es glorificado mi Padre, en que deis mucho fruto, y así probéis que sois mis discípulos.