

FOR GOD SO HATED THE WORLD??



THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

What about those who never heard the gospel?

BIG IDEA

If people recognize that there is a Creator through nature and through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, God will find a way—whether through missionaries, miracles or some other means—to reveal the gospel message to them.

SCRIPTURE USED

John 3:16-17: *“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.”*

Romans 1:19-20: *For the truth about God is known to them instinctively. God has put this knowledge in their hearts. From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God.*

John 16:8: *“And when he [the Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God’s righteousness, and of the coming judgment.”*

Revelation 5:9: *“For you [Christ] were killed, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.”*

Acts 8:28-38: *As for Philip, an angel of the Lord said to him, “Go south down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza.” 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, and he was now returning. Seated in his carriage, he was reading aloud from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

The Holy Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and walk along beside the carriage.”

Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

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

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.
He was humiliated and received no justice.
Who can speak of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth.”*

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

As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There’s some water! Why can’t I be baptized?” He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

OPENER

For the opener you will need:

- Movie clip from *Shrek*
- Video projection equipment

Show the *Shrek* scene found in Chapter 10, from 45:37 - 48:30. This is the scene where Donkey and Shrek are talking under the stars. Donkey and Shrek argue about how Shrek tries to shut everyone out of his life, and Shrek explains how he feels judged by everyone before they even get a chance to know him.

ASK

- **Why did Shrek want to build a wall around the swamp?**
- **What does it feel like to be judged by others before they even get a chance to know you?**
- **Do you think people who aren’t Christians sometimes feel harshly judged by Christians?**
- **Do you think people who aren’t Christians sometimes feel harshly judged by the God of the Bible?**
- **Do you think most non-Christians view our God as being intolerant and/or judgmental, or as being loving and merciful? Why or why not?**
- **Does God love everyone? Explain your thinking.**
- **Turn to someone next to you and respond to this question: What about those who have never heard the name of Jesus? Does the God of the Bible love them, too? Explain your thinking.**