

God's Kingdom knows no boundaries!

When I was a lad (I love saying that), I was fascinated by making ripples in our local brook. Such a simple thing to drop a pebble into still water and watch it cascade outwards. At times I was mesmerised by it without really knowing why. There was one part of 'the brook', which was like a mini lake to me, where the ripples would last for ages. Or so it seemed to a ten year old. Looking back it seems almost a parable of life. How what we say and do can trickle outwards, having unforeseen effects on other people.

This week we hear again the well-known New Testament story of Philip's encounter with an Ethiopian Eunuch. How, led by the Holy Spirit, Philip meets a traveller returning from Jerusalem who is reading aloud (as was the norm then) from the Book of Isaiah. Philip goes on to explain that what he was reading had pointed ahead to a coming Messiah, and this had now reached fruition in the person of Jesus. As a point of interest, what was called Ethiopia at that time, was more likely the land of Cush south of Egypt. What is now called Sudan. Indeed it may well have referred more generally to Africa! We have quite a lot of records in the New Testament of the Gospel message moving westwards and northwards into Europe and near Asia. We know much less of how it was communicated in Africa, except that it began on a desert road with this enigmatic encounter. The story then rippled outwards!

The telling afresh of the Christian message is a challenge for each and every generation. What does the life, teaching and Resurrection of Jesus have to say to a modern world? Plenty I suggest! For each one of us that means we have our small part to play. Every word or action, suggestive of faith in Christ, can ripple where it will. Part of our calling is simply to bear witness to the faith we hold dear. Any rippling is God's responsibility, and the work of the Holy Spirit.
Go well.

