

# “Go Drive Your Car”

## **Acts 8:26-27**

*Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian.*

I was a young pastor in my first church in Clymer, Pennsylvania. I had specific disciplines I used to help me learn how to do ministry. I had always made it my point to ask other pastors what their disciplines were and how they found time for prayer and preparing for messages. Out of those interviews I learned a few things and began to incorporate them into my own life as my spiritual disciplines. One of those disciplines was that from 8 o'clock in the morning until noon every day I was to be in my office praying, studying and preparing my heart for the messages on Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday, and Sunday school and all the other speaking engagements that I had.

Since my study was connected to our house I instructed Marilyn that the children were not to barge into my office during those hours. My door was closed and the phone was turned off, so I would not be disturbed. When I am listening to God I am not to listen to any other voices. I only allow interruptions for emergencies.

One morning I was sitting in my office praying and studying. I was preparing a message for a Wednesday night Bible study. As I was intently looking into the word of God, writing an outline and making notes for myself, I suddenly got an impression that I needed to get in the car and drive. My immediate response was to resist that temptation. I was studying. I was before the Lord. I was in my time of prayer. I was not going to interrupt it with some emotional temptation to go for a drive in my car. A few minutes later the impression came again, but this time it seemed more like an inner voice. My immediate response was to resist the temptation as a distraction from the enemy. .

I said to myself, “No Lord, that's not You. You can't be telling me to get in the car and drive because You told me to be in my study and to give myself to prayer.”

The third time the voice came it was very clear that I was to get in the car and drive. At this point I said, “Okay Lord, I don't understand this, but I will obey. Did I not just hear You say get in the car and drive? The voice came again and said, “Yes, get in the car and drive. You know my voice.”

I obeyed. I got in the car and started driving not knowing where to go. I remember saying to myself as I drove away, “What am I doing? Why am I

listening to this voice telling me to drive? There's no reason for me to go driving at this time of day.”

But the voice kept assuring me I was doing the right thing, so I kept driving. I got to the next town, which was Indiana, a much larger town than our little village of Clymer. I got to the first traffic light and the car stalled. Now I was really frustrated. Here I was in the middle of a morning, when I was supposed to be studying, and I was driving nine miles to the next town and trouble struck. I was mad at myself for listening to that voice. I told myself to never again listen to a voice telling me to do something contrary what God has already instructed me to do.

There were honking horns and cars moving around me. I tried to figure out what to do about the car. It wouldn't start, so I got out of the car and lifted the hood. As I looked at it I realized there was a gas station on the opposite corner. Evidently one of the mechanics saw this happening and came over to help to me. He helped me push the car into the gas station to get it started. He introduced himself, told me his name and I told him mine. He asked where I lived and where I worked. I told him Clymer, Pennsylvania and shared that I was pastor of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in Clymer.

He looked up surprised and told me that was his granddad's church. He had grown up in that church. As we continued to converse he shared with me that he had given his life to Christ at some point in a Vacation Bible School a long time before but he was no longer walking with God.

That gave me the opportunity to witness and share Christ with him, I encouraged him to come back to church. I invited him to visit us and allow God to work in his heart. The end of that story is that eventually he did come to church with his family, got right with God and began to live for the Lord.

So once again I had to evaluate: Was God speaking at that moment or was it another voice? My answer to that is that it was clearly God's voice because God leads his dear children along.

The Word of God says, *“And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.”* — Isaiah 30:21