



Philip Tells the Ethiopian About Jesus

Acts 8:26-40

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS



Philip Obeyed God's Leading

According to Acts 8:4-8, Philip was preaching Christ, healing people, and bringing great joy to a Samaritan city. But God had another plan for Philip which included guiding the first non-Jewish convert to faith in Jesus and God's plan resulted in Christianity being taken to Ethiopia. Philip responded in obedience.

Since the Ethiopian eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, we can assume he knew something of the Jewish faith. He may have been quite fully committed to the faith because he had traveled quite a distance to worship, perhaps as far as 200 miles! He had likely been inspired by his time of worship, because he was reading from Isaiah as he rode along. We might find it strange that Philip could hear what he was reading, but it was common in ancient times to read aloud. In fact, the language was such that sounding out the words was almost necessary.

Philip Was Prepared for Questions

At the Holy Spirit's prompting, Philip overcame not only any fears or questions about non-Jews becoming Christians, but also any racial prejudice he may have had. The Ethiopian was a native of Africa and therefore was black-skinned. God is not concerned with the color of our skin, and neither was Philip.

Philip had no difficulty answering the Ethiopian's questions. He had probably been answering the same types of questions from the Samaritans. God had prepared the right person to present the gospel to the Ethiopian on the road.

When Philip told the man about Jesus, the Ethiopian apparently expressed belief immediately. Baptism was taken very seriously in the early church. Philip must have been fully convinced of the certainty and sincerity of the Ethiopian's belief, because he consented to baptize this traveler.

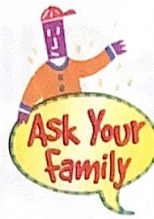
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Having completed his task, Philip was again sent on his way by God. The text seems to indicate that God miraculously swept him away, on to his next mission. The Ethiopian continued on his way, and tradition tells us that he spread the message of Christ in Ethiopia, soon baptizing the queen and others there.

We often don't know why God guides us to do certain things. But when we know what God wants us to do, we must respond in faith and action. Who knows what God will do through us if we respond faithfully to the guidance of his Holy Spirit?

What area of your life is God leading you to listen closely to his voice? You can write your prayer here.





- Ⓢ How can we respond to God's leading?
- Ⓢ How has God led our family in the past?

What I learned today:

Bible: Acts 8:26-40

Philip was probably minding his own business when an angel of the Lord suddenly asked him to go to a certain road. It must have seemed like an odd request, but the Bible says Philip went right away. Because Philip trusted God to lead him, he was in the right place at the right time to help an important governmental official learn about Jesus. This important man, too, was just minding his own business, reading the Bible, when a complete stranger approached his chariot and asked, "Do you understand what you're reading?" Well, as a matter of fact, the man didn't understand. The important man could've turned Philip away, but he didn't. He trusted God to lead him, and he trusted what Philip taught him about Jesus. Because Philip and the important man trusted God, the man learned about Jesus, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing.

Key Verse: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart" (Proverbs 3:5).

Bible Point: Follow where God leads.

Daily Challenge

Today kids committed to one of the following Daily Challenges. Help your child weave faith into life this week and follow through on his or her challenge! (Have kids circle their choice below.)

- Play a game of Follow the Leader with your friends. When you finish playing, tell your friends that God wants us to follow where he leads us.
- Every morning before you get out of bed, ask God to lead you that day—and then follow where he leads!
- Teach your family the Key Verse, and say it together each morning this week.



The Key to Success Ask your family members to read the scroll you created. Ask them, "Do you understand what you're reading?" They should be confused. Tell them about Philip and the important man, and then give them the "key" to figuring out the scroll.

