

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 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 what is now northern Sudan and 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.

The Jesus Connection

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?

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

Name _____

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To help your child become a better listener, play this listening game. Read the Bible to your child. Then read the same verse but leave out one of the important events. Ask your child to fill in the missing part. Read it again, leaving out something else, and ask your listener to tell you what's missing. Soon your child will be telling you what God said. Say that each time we read and hear God's Word, we are listening to God.

Daily Challenge

This week, your child learned that we can listen to God. Your child committed to one of

the following challenges to practice listening to God. Help your child weave faith into life this week and follow through on the challenge!

- Listen to a song about God, and tell your parents why you want to listen to and obey God.
- Practice listening and obeying God by doing what your parents ask.

Stop! Look! LISTEN

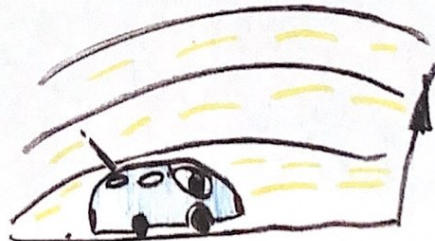
Go outdoors with your child

during the week to sit quietly and listen to all the sounds. Encourage your child to pay close attention to man-made sounds

(such as cars and trains) and

God-made sounds (such as animals, people, and birds). Mention that one way we can listen to God is

by listening to the sounds he's made for us to hear.



Lesson 10

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