



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.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 horizontal lines.



IN THE BIBLE

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Philip seemed to be minding his own business when, all of a sudden, God gave him some pretty strange directions. *“Go here!” “Stand over here!”* And then when everything was getting interesting, God *“Spirited”* him away!

Philip followed God’s directions to a T and found out that a pretty influential person needed what Philip had to give—a humble heart and a willingness to follow God’s leading.

- *How does God communicate with people today?*
- *Who needs to hear about God’s love from you? What is God leading you to say?*

Monday | Matthew 22:36-39

- *What does it look like to love your neighbor?*

Tuesday | 2 Timothy 3:16-17

- *What’s one way God has spoken to you through the Bible?*

Wednesday | Matthew 7:8

- *How is this verse related to God leading us?*

Thursday | Matthew 6:33

- *What does it look like to seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness?*

Friday | Matthew 6:6

- *How can praying help us trust God more?*

Saturday | John 14:26

- *How does the Holy Spirit lead us?*



The WORD for the Week

Family Fun

Can you follow instructions? Get your family together, and take turns giving funny instructions and having other members of your family follow them. Change the ways that you give your instructions. Give some of them verbally, some written. After you give the instructions, have the family judge how well they were carried out. Have the winner choose the next family meal or outing.

Daily Challenge

God leads us in many ways. Choose one of these ways to follow where God leads this week:

- Spend time asking God to lead you in the ways he wants. As you pray, make sure you focus entirely on God.
- Read God’s Word to see how he’s leading you. This will help you focus on him as Philip did. You can start with Matthew 28:19-20. But don’t stop there! There’s so much more you can learn about following God.
- Talk to a trusted Christian adult about how he or she focuses on and follows God.

Bible Point

Follow where God leads.