

## **Our Mission:**

*To share Christ with the world  
and grow disciples for Jesus*



## Loving God and Loving Neighbor as Ourselves

### **Background:**

Philip had a very successful ministry in Samaria, but the angel sends him out into the desert for the sole purpose it would seem to meet this court official. Obviously, this man is not a Jew, and as a eunuch, he was less than whole. Yet he is welcomed into the Way, being baptized, and we assume born from above (this is not the baptism of John solely for the repentance of sins). Once again, we see God intervening to push the faithful toward fulfilling the mission as stated in Acts 1.8.

### **Theology Connection:**

Throughout the Book of Acts, we witness a church that is reluctant to stray too far from Jewish tradition, but it is the Holy Spirit that continually calls and sends the Apostles further and further afield. Our relationship with God is not a static one. It is more than a one-time kneel at the altar statement of belief, but an on-going and evolving experience of God enlightening us to the expansive power of grace at work in the world around us.

### **Application:**

Philip did not plan to meet the Ethiopian. Philip did not have a tract to hand to him. Philip listened and responded to the questions of this court official. Sometimes we believe that to give witness to our faith we need to have all the answers. Maybe this text reminds us that we simply need to listen and be willing to share from our own experience of God. We do not need to fear telling our story because given with humility, sincerity and integrity we know it to be true.

### **The Text: Acts 8: 26-39**

<sup>26</sup>Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." <sup>27</sup>So he started out, and on his way, he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, <sup>28</sup>and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet.

<sup>29</sup>The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." <sup>30</sup>Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

<sup>31</sup>"How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So, he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

<sup>32</sup>This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

<sup>33</sup>In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth."

<sup>34</sup>The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

<sup>36</sup>As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" <sup>38</sup>And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

<sup>39</sup>When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

## ADULT

Have you ever been on a mission trip? It can sound daunting to some and exhilarating to others. Both are true. Yet, our mission field is always right out our front door. The greatest impact our faith might have on another is those who we already have a relationship with. They see us day in and day out and know whether we walk the talk. So, don't be afraid to share in all humility the reason why you have this hope in Jesus (1 Peter 3.15) with those who are regularly a part of your life.

## YOUTH

Please read Acts 8:26-39

In this story Philip followed the leading of the Holy Spirit in talking to this random guy, the Ethiopian, as it turned out, the Ethiopian was confused and needed help understanding the Bible. He was so excited to hear about Jesus that he wanted to be baptized and receive a new life right away! How awesome is that. Have you ever felt that excited that you wanted to do the activity right then and there?

Our lives might not have these types of opportunities...but we can live in a way that makes people wonder, what is that person doing that makes them so positive and happy. We can make sure our actions follow the example of Christ.

The Ethiopian eunuch in the story is already prepared in some ways to receive Philip's message, by his familiarity with Judaism, the scriptures, his commitment to worshipping the God of Israel, and so on. Did any ideas and experiences prepare you to receive the gospel? What were those, and how do you see them as preparation?

Let us pray:

Dear God, Thank you for this story of the Ethiopian. Please help us prepare for any opportunity we have to share your word with others. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

## CHILDREN'S

An angel of God told Philip to go to a certain desert road that led from Jerusalem to Gaza. Philip followed the angel's instructions without hesitation. As Philip traveled down the desert road, he heard the rumbling of horses carrying a chariot, they were coming his direction! Sitting in that chariot was a man all the way from Ethiopia. He was an important official in the land of Ethiopia. He was the treasurer for the Queen of Ethiopia! The man had traveled to Jerusalem to worship God. This man was not yet a believer, but he was seeking God and wanted to do what pleased Him. This man was reading from an Old Testament scroll but was unable to understand it. Philip got into the chariot with the Ethiopian man and began explaining what it meant and all about Jesus! When they passed by some water the man said, "Why shouldn't I be baptized?" So, the man gave orders for the chariot to stop. Philip took the Ethiopian man down to the water and baptized him. This Ethiopian man's life was changed forever because he believed in the Lord Jesus!

1. Where can you find God's instructions for your life? (The Bible)
2. Why do you think the Ethiopian wanted to be baptized?
3. What are some ways that you can help others?

Pray:

Dear God,

Please help us to be ready to help those in need, and to shine our light with everyone that we meet!

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen!