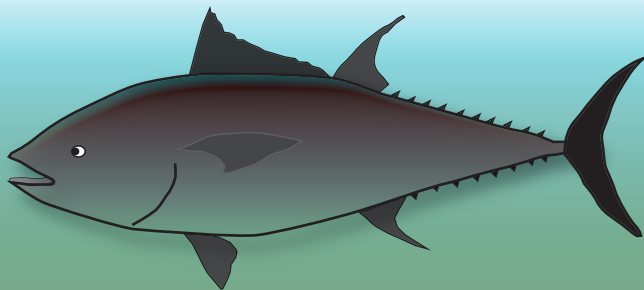


Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch

a four-step study on evangelism and missions in Acts 8:26-39

W	<i>Watching</i> in order to gather the measurable biblical data.
A	<i>Analyzing</i> the passage data to find the main theme and subthemes.
L	<i>Linking</i> the content themes to other Scripture and everyday life.
K	<i>Knowing</i> what to do and planning how to do it.

one at a time



Commentary overheard in a Missions Class at imaginary Quest Bible College

Mr. Carey (on evangelism being like fishing)

Evangelism has often been compared to fishing, but nearly all the fishing in the Bible was done with nets, and many fish were caught at the same time. Yet, in today's passage, Philip evangelized an individual. How is the fishing analogy still appropriate? Hint: really big fish are usually caught one at a time.

Ichiro (on the Ethiopian being like a bluefin tuna)

Yes, *maguro*, bluefin tuna! I wish I could take you all to my favorite sushi place back home in Japan, because, to me, the Ethiopian was like a giant bluefin tuna. He was a powerful man (8:27). So when he took the gospel home with him to North Africa the long term results could have involved hundreds or even thousands, just like one large *maguro* feeds many.

Red (on Simon the sorcerer being like an eel)

Ok, but no thanks on the eel, even though I've read that it is very popular. To me, eel is like Simon the sorcerer who also seemed to be a great catch at first (8:9-12, 18-24).

Mr. Carey (on God caring about various individuals)

Eel and tuna are very different and so too were Simon the sorcerer and the Ethiopian eunuch. Yet, they both may have turned out well in the end. We don't know for sure about Simon (8:24), but since he is named in the chapter I'm hopeful. Sometimes you pull in a beautiful bluefin tuna, and sometimes it is just a snake-like eel. Yet, I like to think that it is worth the effort either way. God cares about individuals from varied backgrounds.

ON THE MOVE FOR GOD	Acts 8:26-39 Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch
W.	A.
<i>who, what, when, etc. (especially measurable things)</i>	<i>Theme Analysis, putting it All together</i>
<p>Who were present?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Philip (one of the seven in Acts 6:5) - an angel of the Lord (only mentioned in 8:26) - the Holy Spirit (mentioned twice: 8:29, 39) - the Ethiopian eunuch (8:27), others implied (8:38) <p>When?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - after intense persecution had begun (8:3-4) - after a ministry in Samaria (8:4-13) after bad experience with Simon (8:9-24) - before ministered along the coast (8:40) <p>What stands out?</p> <p>1.) LOTS OF MOVING (God's leading & changing places)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapters 1-7 were all Jerusalem. now from Jerusalem (8:1, 14, 25, 26, 27, 9:2) Gaza(26), Ethiopia(27), Azotus(40), Caesarea(40) - Philip's various movements went (8:27, 36), go near (8:29), ran (8:30), especially being caught up (8:39) like Elijah (This made him prophet like.) - road / way (8:26, 36, 39) - gospel presented while moving (8:31-38) <p>2.) VARIOUS O.T. CONNECTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eunuch reading Isaiah manuscript by himself. read(ing) (8:28,30,30,32) - Isaiah (8:28,30,34) (Isa. 53:7-8 quoted in 8:32-33) usually read in synagogue (13:15, 27, 15:21) - Eunuch returning from Jerusalem (8:27-28) He was a Gentile needing a guide (8:30-31). - Philip caught away (8:39) like Elijah (2 Kgs. 2:11) <p>3.) MANY QUESTIONS</p> <p><i>Do you understand what you are reading? (8:30)</i> <i>How can I, unless someone guides me? (8:31)</i> <i>Of whom does the prophet say this . . . ? (8:34)</i> <i>What hinders me from being baptized? (8:36)</i></p> <p><i>Add or change points as needed.</i></p>	<p>What are the themes?</p> <p>Main theme is the gospel of Jesus Christ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the Isaiah quote (8:32-33) - in Philip's "preaching" (8:35) <p>What are the significant sub-themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the gospel moving change between chapter seven and eight God used persecution to move gospel. Chapters 1-7 were all in Jerusalem. change but still Scripture focus 8:28-34 to the Gentiles (Samaritans first, Acts 1:8) joy because of gospel belief (8:8, 39) 8:39 joy included having assurance. after Philip's miraculous removal - the Lord's direction in gospel movement through persecution (8:3-4) through an angel (8:26) through the Holy Spirit (8:29-30, 39) - the ministry of the gospel to an individual Why is this emphasized? because God cared about the eunuch because God cared about Ethiopia to show the gospel on the move to contrast the eunuch with sorcerer Simon getting to know individual through Q&A - the gospel and Scripture (8:36-39) The use of Scripture is emphasized. - after the gospel is received baptism (8:36-39) joy and assurance (8:39)

L.

*Like: what is the passage like?***Like what / who else in Acts?**

- **unlike Jewish evangelism**
There was anger in 7:54, but joy in 8:8, 8:39.
unlike blind guides (in Mat. 23:16, 24)
- **somewhat like Peter going to Cornelius**
- **unlike Simon (8:13, 23)**
Eunuch saved, Simon was not (8:13, 23)

Like what/who in other Scriptures?

- **Philip was like Elijah.**
who was caught away (2 Kgs. 2:11)
who was not seen again (2 Kgs. 2:12)
whom the Spirit moved (1 Kgs. 18:12)
who moved a lot (2 Kgs. 2:1,4, 6,16)

Like what else?

- **Like God leading His worker today**
regarding where to go
regarding what to say
in lesson and sermon prep.
Is God's leading still miraculous?
in a way yes, by the Spirit
- **Is this like evangelism/teaching today?**
like personal evangelism, one on one,
BUT it was also teaching!
The eunuch knew the Bible some.
centered on Jesus and cross (8:32-33),
Unlike current emphasis on numbers
- **Like being a guide or a tutor.**
Like one-on-one Tutoring
Philip was guide/tutor (8:31), but not for \$.
Tutors use Q&A and drill books.
They lecture some, but Q&A important.
- **Like and unlike catching a large fish.**
The Ethiopian was an important person,
but he quickly believe and was baptized.
He was saved alone (like one fish at a time).

Add or change points as needed.
Choose your favorite likeness point(s).

K.

*Key points for us, Knowing what to do***What are the key points?****BE LIKE PHILIP THE EVANGELIST.**

- **Be ready to move.** (8:4-40)
React rightly to problems (8:4)
by changing the right things.
Don't stay in Jerusalem (8:5).
(It was ok for the apostles, 8:1.)
Philip's home was in Caesarea (8:40, 21:8-9).
There are various ways to move.
It is God's Word that must move.
- **Expect God to guide & work.**
The work doesn't totally depend on the workers.
God leads. He is the Guide. (John 16:13)
God also works in unbelievers.
So trust and pray for guidance.
- **Teach / tutor individuals.**
Expect differences as you teach.
Simon & the Ethiopian were very different.
No synagogue preaching in ch. 8.
speaking to a group in 8:5-6,
but not worship service, not scheduled
Use Q&A like in 8:30-31, and
allowing others to ask questions
Philip's daughters' ministry (21:9)
was probably to individuals.
They were not lady preachers.
Are we too focused on preaching?
Are we too focused on worship?

How? *Make some specific applications.*

Commentary from various perspectives as overheard in a missions class at imaginary Quest Bible College

Mr. Carey (on the third (L) step in W.A.L.K. Bible studies)

We are studying evangelism and missions in Acts, using four-step Bible studies. What makes our approach special is the third (L) step in which we compare the passage and the people in it to things and people around us today. This meditative step leads to better applications. What do you think Philip's ministry to the Ethiopian eunuch is like?

Geo (on Acts being like maps and Philip like a guide)

I love maps, especially maps of the Holy Land. So to me, Acts chapter eight is like a map of the area between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean, and 8:26-39 is about the lonely road between Jerusalem and Gaza. As for Philip, I think of him as a guide who was sent to help an important visitor who couldn't understand Isaiah's map.

Red (on the transitional nature of Philip's ministry)

To me, Philip's ministry was like a son taking over the family business from his father and expanding it into new areas. Business books that I have read show that these transitions are often difficult, and it sounds like there were some struggles in 8:9-24.

Later, there was an even bigger problem, because Peter was not as open to Cornelius as Philip was to the Ethiopian. Maybe that was because Philip had a more international background. (When I read chapter 21, I noticed that Philip's home was in Caesarea.)

Frank (on Philip being a better international guide than Peter)

If Philip was a better guide for internationals than Peter, we have a problem. Frankly, that would mean that God made a mistake sending Peter instead of Philip to Cornelius.

Mr. Carey (on why God sent Peter to Cornelius)

We are getting ahead of ourselves, but here is the answer. God sent Peter to Cornelius in order to teach Peter (!) about God's openness to Gentiles. It wasn't just for Cornelius. Are there any other suggestions on what Philip's ministry was like?

George (on evangelism as sowing seed)

I grew up on a farm. So I often compare evangelism to sowing seed. This works well with Philip's ministry in Samaria (8:5-6) but not as well with the eunuch. To me, Acts 8:26-39 is like going to a special spot to plant **one** seed or transplant a fruit tree.

Mr. Carey (on being a good guide like Philip)

Like Geo, I think of Philip as a guide or as a tutor [8:31] who often worked with individuals, and that was a good thing. The Holy Spirit who guided him is the Guide who will lead us as well [John 16:13]. Like Philip, we are to care for individuals, teach God's Word, and various other things that biblical guides do.