

CLOSER LOOK



A LIFEGROUP STUDY ON THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

The Church Global
Acts 8
March 27, 2022

MAIN POINT

The Church is called to take the good news of God to the ends of the earth.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What has been your favorite experience sharing the gospel? What has been your least favorite?

If we're commanded to tell the story of Jesus to others, why do we often avoid the task?

Like a farmer who scatters seeds on a plot of land, we sow the seeds of the gospel into the field of the world. Sometimes the seeds we plant take root and bear fruit, but it is the job of every believer to faithfully do the work of the Great Commission and sow seeds wherever God allows.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says about a particular topic.

Have a volunteer read Acts 1:8 & Acts 8:26-29

Why did Philip head down this road and over to this particular chariot? What do we learn about God from these verses?

As believers, how can we tell when the Holy Spirit is leading us? How can we get better at hearing the voice of the Lord?

Share of a time when you felt the Holy Spirit prompting you to do something. What happened?

What kind of power from the Holy Spirit do you think Acts 1:8 is speaking about? How have you seen this power working in your own life?

What do we learn about the Ethiopian man in verses 27-28? How did Philip take advantage of this special situation?

Upon salvation, God has blessed believers not only with salvation but with the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does many things in the life of a believer, one of which is guiding and prompting believers to act. As Christians, we need to be in God's Word and hear His voice there in order to help us better discern the voice of His Spirit in our lives.

Have a volunteer read Acts 8:30-38

Why do you think the Bible tells us that Philip RAN to speak to the eunuch? What is the lesson here for us?

What might have happened if Philip was unprepared to talk about the Scripture or was unfamiliar with the Isaiah prophecy? What does this tell us about the connection between personal discipleship and missions?

What can we do to be better equipped to help others understand God's Word?

According to these verses, what did Philip start with when explaining Isaiah to the eunuch? Why is it so important to begin with Jesus?

Philip was a faithful man. When God called him to serve the church in Acts 6:5, he obeyed. He responded with the same quick obedience in 8:26 as he left his successful ministry in Samaria at the angel's instruction. As a result, the Lord used Philip powerfully in the life of the Ethiopian man. Providentially, Philip found the man reading a passage of Scripture that very clearly referred to Jesus. Philip was able to use this passage of Scripture to explain the gospel to the Ethiopian man. Philip's faithfulness and attention to discipleship gave the Lord an avenue to work through Him to reach someone who was far from Christ.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives.

Consider the example of Philip and the eunuch. Are there people you have neglected to share the gospel with because they are different from you?

What places in Scripture might you turn to teach another person about the gospel? Have you considered memorizing these passages?

PRAYER REQUESTS

Take a moment to ask your group if there are any prayer requests.

PRAY WITH YOUR GROUP

Pray over your group's prayer requests, along with the following prayer:

Pray that God would use all the circumstances in your life to share His gospel and offer Him glory.

LP REMINDERS

- June 6-10: CentriKid Camp
- July 11-15: Student Camp
- Stay up to date with emails and/or social media for any changes on Lifepoint's meeting times.

MEMORIZE

So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" (Acts 8:30)

COMMENTARY

ACTS 8:26-38

8:26-40 An angel directed Philip to go to the road that led from Jerusalem to Gaza (v. 26). Philip obeyed and encountered an Ethiopian eunuch returning home from worshiping in Jerusalem (vv. 27-28). Philip seized the opportunity to proclaim the good news about salvation in Jesus (vv. 29-35). The eunuch responded positively, and Philip baptized him (vv. 36-38). The Spirit took Philip away, but the eunuch continued his journey home, elated at finding Christ (v. 39). Philip preached in the coastal cities of the Mediterranean Sea on the way to Caesarea (v. 40).

8:29 An angel instructed Philip to leave Samaria and travel south to the road that led to Gaza [GAH zuh] on the route to Egypt. There God would provide him a special situation. Philip immediately obeyed, and on the road to Gaza he met an Ethiopian [ee tihi OH pih uhn] eunuch [YOO nuhk], the treasurer of Candace [KAN duh see], queen of Ethiopia (see v. 27). Ethiopia was an area south of Egypt. The eunuch was returning home after worshiping in Jerusalem. The term "eunuch" could refer to a man who had been castrated or could mean "treasurer." He was a God-fearer, a worshiper of the one true God; but if he had been deprived of his manhood, then his physical condition prevented him from converting to Judaism. He may have been attracted to Judaism's moral and ethical teachings. In his chariot he was reading from a large scroll, from a portion of the prophet Isaiah.

This eunuch was a high official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians and was in charge of her entire treasury. Candace is the hereditary title for all the queens of Ethiopia. The eunuch was sitting in his chariot, perhaps an ox-drawn wagon.

8:30-31 Philip's question and the Ethiopian's response imply that the OT passage the eunuch was reading (Isa 53:7-8) required interpretation in light of what God had done in Jesus of Nazareth. The eunuch's response to Philip's question was suggestive: "How can I . . . unless someone guides me?" This question underscores a prominent theme in Luke-Acts: the need for Christian interpreters of Old Testament prophetic texts. Jesus had done this for the apostles (see Luke 24:44-45); in turn, they had interpreted Old Testament texts for the Jews in Jerusalem.

8:32-34 The Ethiopian was reading Isaiah 53:7-8, apparently from the Greek text. It is likely that he was reading the entire Suffering Servant section of Isaiah (52:13-53:12). The eunuch's question, "who is the prophet saying this about," allowed Philip to explain Jesus as the subject of the passage. It is Jesus, not Isaiah, who suffered for the sins of humanity (Isa 53:6). From the earliest days of the church, the Suffering Servant section has been seen as an ideal starting place for explaining the gospel.

8:35 Philip's words were good news to the eunuch, for he was included in the gospel and had access to God's grace in Christ. Although he could not be accepted as a Jewish convert, he would be accepted by God if he placed his faith in Christ. After Philip explained Isaiah

53:7-8, he moved to other passages that pointed to Jesus, probably using such texts as Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-5; 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; and 52:13–53:12.

8:38-40 The Ethiopian requested and was granted baptism just as soon as he believed. That they went into the water and then came up out of the water apparently indicates baptism by immersion. A miracle is indicated by carried Philip away, for the eunuch came “up out of the water” and found himself alone. The Holy Spirit had taken Philip to his next appointment, a place called Azotus.