

**Acts 8:26-40 - "Philip and the Ethiopian"**  
**November 29, 2020 - Outline and Scripture**

**OUTLINE**

- 1. Greet one another, begin with prayer, and read Acts 8:26-40 [5 minutes].**
- 2. Review Acts 8:1b-25 very briefly [5 minutes].**
- 3. Discuss Philip's obedience to the Spirit in Acts 8:26-29 [10 minutes].**
  - Philip receives very clear, but only partial, guidance from God
  - Philip obeys, trusting God to provide what's needed for the next steps
  - Philip sees the eunuch, financial manager of Ethiopia, traveling back home
  - *Why do you think we are often so reluctant to follow the guidance the Spirit gives? What are some of the long-term results from our unwillingness to follow?*
  - *What opportunities to bear witness for Jesus have you missed because you didn't act on the Spirit's prompting? What have you learned? How will the future be different from the past?*
- 4. Discuss the interaction between Philip and the Ethiopian in Acts 8:30-35 [15 minutes].**
  - The Ethiopian leader (probably not alone but part of a large procession) is reading aloud, not silently, per ancient custom
  - Philip takes advantage of an opportunity through the Spirit's leading
  - The Ethiopian is humble despite his high status and invites Philip to join him
  - They talk, with Philip sharing the gospel from the Scripture
  - *What have you observed from Philip's faithful interaction with the Ethiopian? What can you apply to your own opportunities to bear witness to Christ?*
  - *Are you ready to bear witness to the gospel if the opportunity arises? What are your strengths? Your areas of growth? What do you need to do to be better prepared?*
- 5. Discuss the faithful responses of both the Ethiopian and Philip in Acts 8:36-40 [10 minutes].**
  - The conversation leads to a desire from the Ethiopian to commit to Christ
  - Philip acts with flexibility and sensitivity (not allowing his experience with Simon in Acts 8 to negatively affect his response)
  - Then the Ethiopian heads home and Philip is taken to Azotus for more witness
  - *The Ethiopian is ready to respond. Discuss why you think this particular time is "his" time. What factors can impact a person's receptivity to the gospel today?*
  - *How might Philip have responded differently to the Ethiopian to the detriment of the gospel? How do modern-day Christians sometimes turn off those seeking to know more? How can we address this?*
- 6. Close in prayer.**

## **SCRIPTURE (New International Version)**

**26** Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” **27** So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian<sup>[a]</sup> 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, **28** and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. **29** The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

**30** Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

**31** “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

**32** 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.

**33**

In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth.”<sup>[b]</sup>

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

**36** 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?” **[37]** <sup>[c]</sup>

**38** And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. **39** 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. **40** Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

## **Footnotes**

Acts 8:27 That is, from the southern Nile region

Acts 8:33 Isaiah 53:7,8 (see Septuagint)

Acts 8:37 Some manuscripts include here *Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” The eunuch answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”*