



# Philip and the Ethiopian

**Lesson Aim: To know the Holy Spirit makes us ready to tell others about Jesus.**

## **THE WORSHIP**

**Who God Is:** The Spirit Who Gives Us Power

## **THE WORD**

**What He Has Done:** God led Philip to teach the Ethiopian about Jesus.

**Scripture Focus:** Acts 8:4-8, 26-40 **Key Verse:** Acts 8:35

**Christ Connection:** Isaiah 53:10-11

## **THE WAY**

**The Big Question:** What questions do you have about the Bible?

## **UNIT 1 FOCUS VERSE**

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

<b>Unit 1: The Promise of the Spirit</b>			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
1	The Promise of the Holy Spirit, Acts 1:1-11	Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit.	To know the Holy Spirit's power helps us to be witnesses.
2	Pentecost: The Holy Spirit Comes, Acts 2:1-8, 16-17, 25, 30, 32-33, 36-41	Jesus kept His promise to send the Holy Spirit.	To know that all who believe in Jesus receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
3	Peter and John Defend Jesus' Name, Acts 3:1-12, 16; 4:1-4, 7-12, 18-21	God healed the man when Peter called on Jesus' name.	To understand the power of Jesus' name.
4	The Stoning of Stephen, Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60; 8:1-4; Romans 8:28	God strengthened Stephen and spread the gospel.	To see how God is working in all things for the greater good.
5	Philip and the Ethiopian, Acts 8:4-8, 26-40	God led Philip to teach the Ethiopian about Jesus.	To know the Holy Spirit makes us ready to tell others about Jesus.

**LEADER'S ENCOURAGEMENT** This week, read Deuteronomy 4:7-10. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for giving us the Bible. Help us teach students Your Word so they have the knowledge to tell others about Jesus. Give them confidence to share what they know with others. Amen."

**Lesson Aims** are based on reflecting God's character as we participate in His actions to, for, and in the world.

**Take Home Elements:** The Journal Entry, Action Card, and Family Discussion Card may be sent home to encourage students to reflect on the lesson. The Journal Entry is an in-depth personal study. The Action Card is a visual reminder of the Bible story, God's action, and how we can join into that action. The Family Discussion Card gives parents and guardians a way to engage their students in what they are learning.

**Leader's Tip:** For larger gatherings, teach THE WELCOME, THE WORSHIP, and THE WORD in a large group setting and divide into small groups for discussion with THE WAY.



Getting started

## THE WELCOME

**Suggestion:** Choose a game that focuses on ideas such as receiving messages, chariots, or traveling.

### **ACTIVITY OPTION 1: CHARIOT RACES**

**Purpose:** To introduce the story of Philip and the Ethiopian.

**Supplies:** A large blanket or sleeping bag for each team

**Preparation:** Create the race course, a large oval works well. Depending on the group size and amount of time, you may have everyone play or you just a few. Make the race into a tournament by having the winners of each round play each other until there is an ultimate winner.

**Directions:**

1. Divide students into teams of 3.
2. Place two (or more) teams at the start line. Give each team a blanket or sleeping bag.
3. Two of the students on each team are horses and hold onto the front corners of the blanket. The third student is in the "chariot," sitting on the other end of the blanket and holding on tight!
4. On your signal, the teams run three laps around the designated course. At the end of each lap, the team members rotate so each team member sits in the chariot for one lap.
5. If a rider is thrown from his chariot, the team must stop until the rider is firmly reseated.
6. The first team to complete all three laps is the winner.

### **ACTIVITY OPTION 2: SHARE YOUR STORY**

**Purpose:** Students are often afraid to share their faith if they've never done it. This activity is designed to give students the opportunity to share the story of how they came to Jesus.

**Supplies:** Bible, paper, pencils or pens

**Preparation:** Prepare your own faith story using the suggestions below or develop your own. You may wish to ask a few students ahead of time to be ready to share.

**Directions:**

1. Read Acts 1:8 together. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
2. Begin with prayer. Our words will accomplish nothing unless God's Spirit prepares the way.
3. Tell your faith story.
  - What was your life like before Christ?
    - i. What was important to you? Where did you get your security, identity or happiness?
    - ii. How did those things begin to let you down?
  - How did you come to Christ?
    - i. When did you first hear the gospel? How did you react?
    - ii. When did your perspective toward Christ begin to change?
    - iii. Why did you finally decide to accept Christ as your personal Savior?
  - How are you different now? How is your life different?
    - i. What is important to you now? What do you live for?
  - ii. Even though your life isn't perfect, how does knowing Christ help?
4. Give students 10-15 minutes to write down their stories before asking them to share with the group. For students who don't know Christ, encourage them to write down the questions they have about the Bible or about Jesus.
5. Give students the opportunity to share their faith story. If you have a very large group, divide them into smaller groups to share. Don't push anyone to share who isn't ready.



The Spirit who gives us power

## THE WORSHIP

**Note to Leader:** The instructions below are suggestions only. Adapt this time of worship to suit your environment, resources, and cultural expression. Encourage students to broaden their view of corporate worship by including a variety of expressions such as group prayer, group praise, silent meditation, singing, listening to music, reading scripture, collecting an offering, drama, dance, visual arts, and/or a physical exploration of nature or neighborhoods.

**Ideas for Optional Visuals:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**We worship the Holy Spirit who gives us power. In today's Bible story, we will learn how the Holy Spirit helped Philip explain Bible verses to a man from Africa and tell him the good news about Jesus.**

**One way to worship God is to give thanks for the good news of the gospel and for God's Word which explains it. Pointing others to Jesus is another way we worship Him. The power of His Spirit can help us understand His Word so we can share it with others.**

Read the Unit 1 Focus Verse: Acts 1:8.



Sing worship songs and guide students to focus on the Holy Spirit who gives us power.



Read Psalm 119:169.



Invite students to offer sentences of praise to God by completing the following sentence:  
**"Lord, we worship You for \_\_\_\_\_."**



Philip explains the good news

## THE WORD Presentation

**Note to Leader:** Adapt this segment to your setting (Sunday School class, youth group, multi-age gathering, youth camp, retreat, etc.). In some settings, you may choose to have a student read the scripture aloud, and then have the leader, in his or her own words, briefly communicate the Teaching Points, the Christ Connection, and the Big Question. In other settings, a teacher, pastor, or other experienced speaker may present a lecture or extended message that includes those same elements.

### Ideas for Optional Visuals:

You may choose to include an object lesson, video clip, drama, dance, song, or work of art to illustrate the teaching points.

Option 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Option 2: \_\_\_\_\_



## TEACHING POINTS

Consider current culture and influences impacting your students, and adjust the teaching accordingly.

*Read the suggested scripture and communicate each of the points noted.*

**Leader Tip:** Have a Bible-times map available to show the locations mentioned in this story.

Last time, we learned the power of the Holy Spirit helped Stephen speak boldly about Jesus and pray for the men who were throwing stones at him. After Stephen died, many believers left Jerusalem for their own safety. Today, we will read about Philip.

The leader or a student reads Acts 8:4-8.

- The people in Samaria had been following a man named Simon who practiced sorcery there (Acts 8:9-10).
- When Philip arrived, he told them the good news and did miracles. Many people believed and were baptized.
- The good news Philip preached was about Jesus the Savior, sent by God to save the world from their sins. All who believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior are forgiven and have life forever close with God.

The leader or a student reads Acts 8:26-35.

- Philip followed the direction of the Lord's angel and traveled the desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza. He did not know why he was going there or what would happen.
- The Ethiopian official had traveled to Jerusalem to worship during Pentecost. He was now returning to his home in Ethiopia, which is in Africa.
- The Holy Spirit didn't tell Philip to wait for someone to come find him. The Spirit provided the opportunity for Philip to reach out to the man from Ethiopia by telling him to catch up to his chariot.
- It was at the point when Philip caught up to the chariot and heard the man reading from Isaiah that he would have realized why the Spirit had sent him there.

# THE WORD Presentation *continued*

- It is important to notice that Philip waited for the man to invite him into the chariot. He joined the man in a conversation, based on what the man was focused on at that moment. It was a healthy conversation where both people listened as well as talked to one another.
- We don't know where the Ethiopian first heard about Jesus, but he knew to look in the scriptures for answers to his questions. He also knew he needed to find someone to help him understand what he was reading.
- When the man told Philip he didn't understand the meaning of the Bible verses he was reading, God was giving Philip the perfect opportunity and context in which to share the good news about Jesus. The Holy Spirit gave Philip the words to say.
- Just as the Spirit led Philip to speak to the Ethiopian, He will lead us to places where we can share the good news with others. If we are open to the Spirit's leading and are willing to enter the world of the people who He calls us to, He will help us reach out to them by understanding their perspective and their needs. The Spirit will give us the words to say.

The leader or a student reads Acts 8:36-40.

- The Ethiopian believed and was baptized. He went on his way rejoicing in the joy of his salvation.
- The man was an officer to the Queen of Ethiopia. Because Philip was open to the Spirit's leading and was willing to boldly share the gospel, He was able to share the good news with this important Ethiopian official who would most likely take the gospel back to his people in Ethiopia. Many believe this is one of the ways the way the good news spread into Ethiopia.
- Verse 39 says "When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away" (NIV). Some commentaries suggest Philip was physically taken away, others suggest the Spirit compelled Philip to leave.



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

## CHRIST CONNECTION

In the whole story of God, what's the connection between this New Testament story and the Old Testament?

- The book of Isaiah, found in the Old Testament, was written many years before Jesus was born. Philip was able to explain who Jesus was by starting with the passage from Isaiah. The Old Testament points to Jesus as the promised Messiah, the Savior sent from God to save the world. The man was reading Isaiah 53:7-8. Let's read more of that chapter to see how Isaiah explains what God accomplished for us through the death of Jesus.

The leader or a student reads aloud Isaiah 53:10-11.

- Jesus' death and resurrection was part of God's plan to save us from our sin. God sacrificed His Son for us. Jesus came to this world, suffered and died on the cross, and rose again for us. This is the good news we can share with the world.



## THE BIG QUESTION

Introduce and elaborate on this question. Students will answer it in their discussion group.

**What questions do you have about the Bible?**



## THE WAY Discussion



**GETTING STARTED** Display and review the Discussion Group Covenant below:

**We will include everyone here, treating one another with respect and kindness.  
We will encourage everyone here to express their thoughts and opposing views.**

Every student shares his or her best experience or greatest challenge of the past week.



### READ IT AGAIN

Read Acts 8: 4-8, 26-40 silently or aloud.

**What was the result of the church being persecuted?**

**What do we know about the Ethiopian official?**

**Why do you think God sent Philip to meet the Ethiopian?**



**THE BIG QUESTION** Invite students to share their answers.

**What questions do you have about the Bible?**



**TAKE ACTION** Lead students in a discussion using the questions below.

**Who has helped you understand God's Word?**

**When has the Spirit led you to someone at just the right time?**

**For what conversation could you ask the Spirit to give you the right words to say?**

Ask each student to complete this sentence: **God calls us to learn His Word SO THAT others might \_\_\_\_\_.**



**PRAY** Share prayer requests and answered prayers.

Have students pray with partners, or have the whole group pray together.



**FINAL FIVE MINUTES** When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

Give each student Action Card #5 and Journal Entry #5. **Take home today's Action Card as a reminder of how we can join in what God is doing. Use the Journal Entry as your personal devotional study. Complete your Journal Entries at home and keep them together in a notebook or in your Bible.** Optional: Provide parent or guardian with Family Discussion Card #5.

# PROPHETS & PROMISES

## JOURNAL ENTRY #5

### Philip and the Ethiopian Acts 8:4-8, 26-40

## WHAT DOES IT SAY?

- **Pray!!!** Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what He wants you to learn from this passage.
- **Read Acts 8:4-8, 26-40.**
- Where was Philip preaching about Jesus (v.4)?
- Why had the man from Ethiopia traveled to Jerusalem?
- List three of the things God did that day to help the man understand and believe in Jesus.
- The Ethiopian was reading scripture from Isaiah 53. Who are these verses speaking about?
- What happened after the man was baptized? Why do you think God would have taken Philip away so quickly?

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- The man asked to be baptized. What does that show you about what he now believed to be true about Jesus?
- How does this story show you God loved the man from Ethiopia?
- What do you think the man did when he returned to his home in Ethiopia?

## WHAT CAN I DO?

- What questions do you have about the Bible or about God? Who could help you answer those questions?
- When have you had a life-changing experience you wanted to share with others?
- Have you ever felt the Spirit lead you to share the good news about Jesus? If so, write about that here. If not, take time to ask God to give you an opportunity to share the good news. Ask the Spirit to give you the words to say. Watch what God will do!

Action Card #5/P&P

## PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN

ACTS 8:4-8, 26-40

PHILIP SHARED THE GOOD NEWS WITH THE ETHIOPIAN OFFICIAL.

THE HOLY SPIRIT PREPARES US TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

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WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT WHO GOD IS AND WHAT HE HAS DONE?

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