

## 1-31-21 Be Like Phillip

### Acts 8:26-40.

To me Acts 8 is all about contrast. Chapter 8 lays out the gospel going out, and persecution. It also lays out two different responses to the gospel. God used one man in both gospel presentations, Phillip.

First there was Simon:

Simon the Sorcerer was a man full of pride. He was able to astonish and amaze the people of Samaria with his Sorcery. Simon claimed that he was someone great!

**Acts. 8:9, “But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great,”**

He loved and fed off all the attention, respect, and all the celebrity status that came with it.

**Acts 8:10, “to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, “This man is the great power of God.”**

Can you imagine how out of touch with reality you would become with all of that?

Phillip, a follower of Jesus. Scattered “everywhere” from Jerusalem, because of what Saul was doing to the believer’s in Jerusalem, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### Read Acts 8:4-8.

The multitudes that were once following Simon are now following the teaching of Phillip. When Simon witnessed the power, God gave to Phillip he had to have it. Simon was amazed by the signs and miracles being done. Simon offered Peter money for the power that only comes by the filling of the Holy Spirit. Peter told him to get his heart right with God, his money couldn’t buy anything from God. Simon’s answer was, pray for me.

But seven facts suggest that Simon probably was not born again:

- The verb “believe” (pisteuō) does not always refer to saving faith. Simon’s faith could have been like that of the demons in James 2:19, merely intellectual assent.
- (2) Faith based on signs is not a trustworthy faith (cf. John 2:23–25; 4:48).
- (3) Luke never stated that Simon received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17–18).
- (4) Simon continued to have a self-centered interest in the display of miraculous power (vv. 18–19).
- (5) The verb “repent” (metanoēō) used in verse 22 is normally addressed to lost people.
- (6) The word “perish” (eis apōleian) employed in verse 20 is strong. It is related to the word “perish” in John 3:16.
- (7) The description of Simon in Acts 8:23 is a better description of a lost man than of one who is saved (cf. Deut. 29:18). Still, one cannot be dogmatic on this point. The Lord knows those who are His (2 Tim. 2:19).

Toussaint, S. D. (1985). Acts. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 373). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**Acts 8:25, "So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans."**

They continued to preach the word of the Lord!

**Read Acts 8:26-28.**

We have a message to get out, and we are the ones God has chosen to do it. What do we see in verse 26?

**I. Be in Ready Position.**

- When the church was scattered because of persecution they **"went everywhere preaching the word."**
- Phillip left Jerusalem and headed to Samaria, a place that no Jew in their right mind would think of going. Good thing Phillip was a Hellenist (Greek) Jew.
- Many were saved in Samaria because Phillip was in a ready position. He was ready to be used to spread the gospel.
- During this preaching revival, that started in Samaria and headed back up to Jerusalem, Phillip is instructed by an angel, **"Arise and go."**
- Put your name in there, "Cecil, leave all this, multitudes of people getting saved and head 60 miles south, down a road, an area that is a desert."
- How many would sign up for that?
- Did you say head out and get dessert?
- At the least, I would have probably procrastinated. Finished out the soul winning world tour. I mean come on! Wasn't I the one who got through to the Samaritan's? Peter and John didn't come down until I blazed the trail.
- What does the first sentence in **verse 27** say Phillip did? **"So he arose and went."**
- On this desert road Phillip comes upon an Ethiopian eunuch. This wasn't your average Ethiopian eunuch, this guy was of great authority, the queen of Ethiopian's treasurer.
- The scripture says he went to Jerusalem to worship. That is seriously interesting, a foreigner, from Sudan, probably not Jewish, seeking Jehovah and reading **Isaiah 53**.
- **Read verse 28.**
- We know some of the frustrations running through his head, because we read it in the next few verses. But I believe this Ethiopian's heart was heavier than we realize.
- According to **Deuteronomy 23:1**, a eunuch wasn't allowed in the temple to worship.

**"He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the Lord."**

- He was searching and being discriminated against. Does God not want him? Is he too damaged? Was he born in the wrong family, country, or the wrong side of the tracks?
- Have you ever felt, or thought any of those things regarding yourself? Many of us have, and many that we rub elbows with still do.
- We must be in a ready position. Phillip shared the gospel with Samaritan's, half breeds, was he ready to share with a foreigner, an Ethiopian eunuch?
- Are we ready? To be called out of our comfort zone to share the gospel with? To be used of God to reach people that don't deserve to be reached. Are we in a ready position to do the work of the Lord?
- To be ready, we must start by being available and pliable. Available for God to use and pliable to be used in whatever way God sees fit to use us.
- Are you available? Are you pliable?

## II. Be in Ready Condition

- First the angel spoke and directed Phillip, **verse 29, "Then the Spirit said to Phillip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."**
- What was Phillips response? **Verse 30 "So Phillip ran to him,"**
- Look at the condition of Phillip. His heart was in a ready position to serve God, no matter the size of the job.
- **Acts 8:5 "Phillip went"** to a city that all other Jews, except Christ avoided and preached the gospel. **Verse 6 says, multitudes heeded the things spoken by Phillip. Verse 12 repeats that "they believed Phillip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,"** In **verse 26,** the angel says, **"arise and go. So he arose and went."** **Verse 29,** God, The Holy Spirit says, **"Go near and overtake this chariot." "So Phillip ran to him and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"**
- Phillip was in a ready position and condition. He was ready to serve and give an answer when needed.
- Phillip was in the right condition to meet the need of the Ethiopian eunuch. **Read verse 31. "How can I, unless someone guides me?"**

**Romans 10:11-14, "For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"**

- Phillip was in ready condition to minister to the Ethiopian eunuch. Phillip was ready to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- Are you? If God put you in the position to share the gospel, could you?
- Is your heart in tune with God? How can we be ready to be used if our heart isn't in the right condition?

### III. Be Ready with the Right Proclamation. (message)

- **Read verses 31-33**
- Phillip didn't try to give him any of man's philosophies. He recognized that God had teed him up well.
- **Read verses 34-35**
- Notice that the eunuch invited Phillip into his chariot/life to explain the scriptures to him. We must be careful that we aren't kicking the door in on people.
- Phillip opened his mouth and told him all about how the world is shot...no he opened his mouth and in whatever language the eunuch understood, he spoke.
- **Read verses 36-39**
- The Ethiopian eunuch was ready to take the next step and be baptized.
- Phillip asked the question we all should ask others and ourselves. "Do you believe with all your heart?" Do you believe that Jesus is the son of God, subjected himself to take your sins and death upon himself? That Jesus lived perfect, died perfect and rose again victorious 3 days later? Have you repented of your sins and life, turned the reigns over and been redeemed? Where you may not be perfect, you are seeking after Jesus and His will for His body.
- Being a follower of Jesus is different than a fan of Jesus. Followers are transformed and, in the game, being used by the Holy Spirit.
- A fan might have some memorabilia and cheer on, but the minute times become trying, troubles come along, you take your seat cushion and find another team.
- Jesus has never sought after the best, he always seeks out the desperate, wicked, unworthy, feeble, available, humble, teachable, and those that have nowhere else to turn.
- The Ethiopian eunuch's answer was, yes to it all. I want it all!

*Note, In the solemn dedicating and devoting of ourselves to God, it is good to make haste, and not to delay; for the present time is the best time. Those who have received the thing signified by baptism should not put off receiving the sign. -Matthew Henry*

#### **Ps. 119:60, "I made haste, and did not delay To keep Your commandments."**

- God raptured Phillip out as soon as the baptism was over, and the eunuch went away rejoicing.
- Phillip continued preaching.

- I wonder, when the Ethiopian eunuch got back into his chariot, did he continue reading, and if he did, did he continue reading Isaiah. **Isaiah 56:3-8** has some encouraging words that his heart needed to hear.

### **Conclusion**

**Read Isaiah 56:3-8.**

**Isaiah 56:8, "The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel says,"**

Beloved, if we are followers of Jesus', we are His, and we must choose what pleases Him.

If you are not a follower, God's desire is that you will become one.