

Power to Finish the Job

When the Holy Spirit prompts us to a ministry to others, He empowers us to carry it out.

There are 3 involved in this account of evangelistic outreach:

God, the Holy Spirit, Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

**We go in obedience to the command of the Lord in Matthew 28:19-20
And the Lord promises to be with us always everywhere we go.**

Philip was a Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, versatile evangelist. He could preach to great crowds in city-wide-revival in the city of Samaria but he could also do personal work with a single individual on a desert road.

Acts 8:5-8, 12

When persecution broke out in Jerusalem Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip

and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city.

V.8 The people believed Philip as he preached the good news of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

There was such great response that the Church in Jerusalem also sent Peter and John to help out. It appeared that the ministry of Peter and John was like a follow up to the ministry of Philip. God used them to teach about the Holy Spirit and in V 17 we read that Peter and John placed their hands on the people and they received the Holy Spirit.

In the midst of this great revival in Samaria God called Philip to a new assignment. It seemed like a small and insignificant assignment. V. 26, An angel of the Lord said to Philip. Go South to the desert road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. Philip obeyed. Prompt obedience. Had he delayed he would have missed this divine appointment with an important official.

Actually Philip could have excused himself. He was busy, involved in a great ministry in a large city. Many were saved, healed and filled with the Holy Spirit. Why leave for a lonely desert road?

Gaza was 90 KM south of Jerusalem and Jerusalem about 50 KM from Samaria. So we are talking about a 140 KM trip! I do not think there were taxis or buses.

In V. 27 we read that Philip met an Ethiopian Eunuch, an important official in charge of the entire treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This minister of Finances was on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was now on his way home. He had purchased a handwritten scroll of the Book of Isaiah. These scrolls were rare and expensive but of course he was a rich man and could afford it. No doubt he had the best of transportation, a beautiful chariot. He was reading aloud. The Jewish rabbis taught that the Law must be read aloud by one traveling.

Ethiopia is the name of a kingdom on the Nile river, south of Egypt. There is a prophecy in Psalm 68:31 "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God." This was fulfilled in the conversion of this Ethiopian.

V. 29 The Holy Spirit told Philip "Go to that chariot and stay near it" Philip heard the man reading from the book of Isaiah. Philip started the conversation. Do you understand what you are reading?

We see here that the Holy Spirit is leading when we are obedient. Another lesson is that we must be bold and take the first step. Ask a question.

The minister answered, "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?"

The Greek word here is actually "How can I except someone guide me?" This word 'guide' is also used in John 16:13,

"Spirit of truth is come He will guide you into all truth."

Philip was Spirit-filled and was able to give guidance. So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him in his chariot. Philip had walked for days and was tired. God rewarded him and now he is traveling first class. The minister was reading from Isaiah 53:7-8

V 34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me please who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" So Philip began with very

passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. Philip no doubt also echoed the words of Peter in Acts 2:38 “Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” Because when the Eunuch saw a body of water he requested baptism. V. 38 He gave orders to stop the chariot. Both went down into the water and Philip baptized him. They came up out of the water and suddenly the Lord took Philip away. His assignment was finished. V. 39 The eunuch return to his country of Ethiopia rejoicing.

Philip appeared in Azotus. This is the OT Ashdod one of the 5 cities of the Philistines. Located about 30 KM north of Gaza. He was traveling up the coast and preaching in all the cities.

This passage emphasizes the importance of 2 kinds of evangelism, Mass Evangelism and Personal Evangelism.

Under mass evangelism we notice that
the Method is preaching,
The Message is Christ and
the Motive is get people saved and sanctified.

Under Personal Evangelism we notice the
importance of Prompt Obedience,
the Opportunity God provides when we obey,
the place of Prophetic Scripture,
the Interpretation of the passage and
the Application to personal needs.

We can all be involved in Personal Evangelism. Like the Ethiopian minister of Finances, all people are traveling on a journey. Most people do not know their destination. The Holy Spirit wants to use in providing guidance.