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Philip and the Ethiopian

Scripture: Acts 8:26-40

Theme: The Gospel is for everyone, everywhere

1st-3rd Grade (Ages 6-8)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

This Sunday school lesson explores how God's message of salvation isn't just for a few special people, but for everyone, no matter who they are or where they come from. In Acts 8:26, 40, God sends the apostle Philip to meet a high-ranking Ethiopian eunuch traveling home from Jerusalem, a man who was likely excluded from some Jewish traditions because of his physical differences. Though the eunuch is far from a church, Philip shares Jesus' love with him, and the man immediately believes, being baptized and sent on his way. The lesson teaches that God uses ordinary people (like Philip) to bring the Gospel to unexpected places, showing that His grace is for all, regardless of race, status, or background. Students will learn that Jesus' message isn't just for "us," but for them, too, and th

Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, lowprep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

The angel of the Lord appeared to Philip and said, 'Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza,' which is along the desert road. Philip had just been doing his work near the city of Samaria, where the good news about Jesus was spreading through the crowds. The angel was telling him to move further away from Jerusalem, toward a different people group.

Philip ran to the desert road, eager to share the good news. Soon he came to an Ethiopian eunuch who was traveling from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship God. The eunuch was reading from the prophet Isaiah in his cart, pulling a big oxen team along the dusty path. He was sad because he could not understand what he was reading, he had no one to help him.

As Philip walked by, he noticed the man's sorrow and kindness. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' The Ethiopian replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' Philip smiled and said, 'The thing you are reading is about Jesus!' He pointed to the passage in Isaiah and began to tell him how Jesus had been born, died, and rose again to save everyone, just like what the prophet had written about long ago.

The Ethiopian's heart filled with joy. He said, 'I believe! I believe in Jesus!' Then Philip said, 'If you truly believe with your heart, God forgives you for what you've done before,' and he baptized him in the water right there by the river. The Ethiopian rejoiced as he was filled with God's Spirit, and Philip went on his way, glad to have shared the good news with someone who needed it!

Key Verse

Acts 8:35 , 'Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.'

The key verse (Acts 8:35 , 'Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.') calls us to respond to God's truth.

>> Missions Spotlight

Ethiopia has one of the oldest Christian traditions in the world , dating to the 4th century. Today, the Ethiopian church is growing rapidly, especially among Muslim-background believers. The story of the Ethiopian eunuch has come full circle.

-> To the Cross

Philip explained Isaiah 53 to the Ethiopian eunuch , a passage about the suffering servant who would die for sin. The Ethiopian understood, believed, and was baptized. The cross was the key that unlocked the Old Testament for him.