

thus is not true baptism. Both Philip and the eunuch went into the water and came up out of the water (v.38-39).

4) The eunuch went on his way rejoicing.

**b. Baptism is a new believer's first act of obedience.**

- 1) If you have trusted Christ but have not been baptised by immersion after that event in a church that preaches the true Gospel, that needs to be your next step.
- 2) Becoming a member of a biblical church ought to follow baptism. While some argue that official church membership is not found in the Bible, the practices of members voting, sending out missionaries, and church discipline are clearly found in the Bible. A sinning believer could not be disciplined by a church if he was not a member of it. Simply attending church does not make you a member.
- 3) If you have been baptised but have not joined our church membership, I urge you to talk to me about it.

**Conclusion:** We have found in this passage of Scripture several important truths that can greatly help you in your spiritual walk.

1) **Questions are great Gospel openers.** Try asking questions to open conversations about the Gospel. You can do it!

2) **The theme of the Bible is the Gospel of Christ.** The more you study your Bible, the easier it will be to share it with others. Pick up some tracts and begin memorising Gospel verses. Then, share them with others. It is true that many will not respond as positively as the eunuch did, but our job is to share the Gospel; God's job is to convict and save.

3) **Those who truly trust Christ, desire to follow Him.** When a person truly gets saved, his life changes from the inside out. If you have not yet been baptised after salvation, you ought to be. If you are saved and baptised but not a church member, please pray about that, and come talk to me about it.

**Song:** Have You Any Room - **241**

# Sharing the Gospel

11 February 2024 AM – Text: Acts 8:26-39 – Topic: Witnessing

**Introduction:** The year was 34 A.D. Philip, one of the deacons of the new church in Jerusalem, fled to Samaria during the persecution led by Saul of Tarsus. There he preached the Gospel and God gave them a great revival. However, in the midst of that revival, the angel of the Lord sent Philip to a deserted area on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. (See map).

While walking down that wilderness road, along came a caravan of travellers heading south to Ethiopia (south of Egypt), a very long journey. One of the chariots obviously belonged to an Ethiopian eunuch of great authority. Philip must have jogged alongside his chariot. As he did, he heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Above the noise of the chariot, Philip shouted, **“Do you understand what you are reading?”**

That simple question opened up a wonderful opportunity to share the Gospel that led to the man's conversion to Christ.

**Transition:** This passage contains several important truths that can greatly help you in your spiritual walk.

*The first important truth is that...*

## 1. Questions are great Gospel openers (v.30).

### a. Philip simply asked a question.

- 1) He asked, **“Understandest thou what thou readest?”**
- 2) In other words, **“Do you understand what you are reading?”** How simple was that? He just asked him a question. When he did, the man stopped his chariot and invited Philip to sit beside him and explain the text.
- 3) Philip could have made all kinds of excuses to say nothing, but he obeyed the Holy Spirit and ask a question.

### b. Questions are great openers today as well.

- 1) We covered this some time back when I taught you the Gospel Hand. Do you remember that?
- 2) Bill Fay, in his booklet *Share Jesus Without Fear*, gives the following questions as witnessing openers.
  - a) **Do you have any kind of spiritual beliefs?**
  - b) **Do you think there is a heaven or hell?**

- c) **If you were to die today, where would you go?**
    - (1) If they say “heaven” ask, “**Why would God let you into heaven?**”
    - (2) If they say anything else, just move on.
  - d) **If what you believe were not true, would you want to know the truth?**
    - (1) If they say, “No”, the talk may be over.
    - (2) If they say, “Yes”, you say, “**Could I share with you what the Bible says about these things?**”
- 3) These are only sample questions. Use your own, depending on the situation. You only fail if you say nothing!

*The second important truth is that...*

## **2. The theme of the Bible is the Gospel of Christ (v.35).**

### **a. The Ethiopian was reading in Isaiah 53.**

- 1) Read v.32-33. He then asked Philip a question, v.34.
- 2) We know very little about this man, but it appears that he believed in Jehovah, the God of the Jews. Whether he was on a business trip or a personal search, we know not. While in Jerusalem, he may have heard about Jesus, who had recently been crucified, but the man left Jerusalem confused and without peace.

### **b. Philip did not miss the opportunity to witness.**

- 1) He **opened his mouth**. That is where witnessing begins. Swallow your pride, quash your fear, and open your mouth. You can do it! It is not that hard.
- 2) He **began at the same scripture**. Because the Old Testament points forward to Christ, the Gospels (Mat-Joh) highlight Christ, and the New Testament points back to Christ, you can begin at any scripture to share the Gospel.
- 3) He **preached unto him Jesus**. Seven hundred years earlier, Isaiah had described how Jesus Christ would pay for the sins of the human race. Turn with me to Isaiah 53 and let's see some of the things Philip likely explained.
  - a) **Isaiah 53:4**, Christ took upon himself our spiritual griefs and sorrows, and was smitten for us.
  - b) **Isaiah 53:5**, Christ was wounded for our transgression

or rebellion. He was beaten for our punishment.

- c) **Isaiah 53:6**, In our sinful ways, we have turned from God to our own way, and God placed on Jesus Christ the iniquity or punishment we deserve.
  - d) **Isaiah 53:7**, He was oppressed (i.e., forced) and afflicted (i.e., humiliated) for us, yet He endured it quietly.
  - e) **Isaiah 53:12**, He died with criminals to pay for my sin and yours, making intercession for our rebellious sins.
- 4) Philip's preaching convicted his heart, and he believed that Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross to pay for his sins, and he placed his trust in Jesus alone. How about you? Have you placed your trust in Jesus alone?
- 5) If you have, memorise just a handful of Gospel verses, so that you will be able to explain them to others. The simplest way to do this is to get one of the Gospel tracts from the back table and read it repeatedly and memorise the Bible verses in it.
- 6) Practice sharing the Gospel Hand.

*The third important truth is that...*

## **3. Those who truly trust Christ desire to follow him (v.36).**

### **a. The eunuch desired to be baptised (v.36).**

- 1) Baptism is not part of salvation. Baptism did not die for you, Christ did. Baptism is a public identification with Christ and a testimony of your faith in Christ.
- 2) Note what Philip said was required before baptism (v.37). Before baptism, a person must believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all his heart. [It is tragic that many modern translations do not include this verse, claiming that it has too little manuscript support. To dig further, go to <https://www.tbsbibles.org/page/Acts8verse37?&hhsearchterm=s=%22acts+and+8%22> ] Many Scriptures clearly prove that baptism must be after salvation, not before it.
- 3) Baptism is always by immersion (i.e., plunging beneath the water). It pictures the death and resurrection of Christ. Christening or sprinkling does not picture this, and