

Philip the Evangelist

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:5

But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

We will study a portrait of Philip the evangelist and not the Apostle, who also bears the same name. We will study great and practical lessons that we learn from the life of Philip. I am truly convinced that the church of Christ needs more Philips today. If the church is to grow in number, we must imitate the life of those who had a great deal of concern about the lost souls of this world; Philip, the evangelist, was one of those men.

Evangelism lessons from Philip

1. PHILIP WAS A FAITHFUL MAN WILLING TO SERVE (Acts 6:3-6)

Everything we learn about the life of Philip the evangelist, we learn from the book of Acts. His name is mentioned **16** times in this book. In chapter six of the book of Acts we learn that he was a faithful man willing to serve the church as one of her deacons (Acts 6:3-6). In verse 3 we see that Philip, along with the other 6 men, were of good report, meaning they were a great example to others. They were also full of the Spirit, which in context, may denote both the ability to perform miracles as we see Philip doing in chapter 8, as well as men who had the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. They were wise men who knew how to conduct themselves before men. They were also dependable man, which means the church could count on their faithful work. The fact that he was willing to accept the responsibility tells us very much about his character and conduct as a faithful Christian. We stand in need of faithful men who are willing to serve the church in the capacity of deacons. The church needs faithful men and women of good report, men and women who possess the fruit of the Spirit and who are wise in the way they conduct their lives. The church for which Jesus died on the cross will be blessed by the presence of faithful men who can serve like Philip did. Are you willing to be a man like Philip? There are many congregations that have several faithful men who serve in the capacity of deacons. May God bless them as they continue to serve faithfully in God's church!

2. PHILIP WAS A MAN WHO PREACHED CHRIST EVERYWHERE HE WENT (Acts 8:4,5, 35)

We will now spend several minutes in chapter 8 of the book of Acts. In this chapter, we will see several traits of the faithful life of Philip. He was a faithful man who preached Christ everywhere he went. Luke, the historian, provides us with the following verses: "Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed Messiah there" (Acts 8:4, 5). We also read in Acts 8:35, "then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus". Why did Philip emphasize Jesus in his preaching? The answer can be found by reasoning

correctly regarding the only way to eternal salvation. The Bible tells us that Jesus must be preached because He is the only way to salvation (14:6; Acts 4:12). Jesus is the only light for those who live in darkness (Jn. 8:12; 9:5). According to the teaching of the Bible, eternal life is found only in Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 5:11, 12).

The Apostle Paul was also a man who was determined to preach Christ and Him crucified. Throughout the life of Paul, we see a Christ-centered message. This is the same thing we see in the life of Philip the evangelist. Through the example of Philip, gospel preachers are encouraged to preach Christ and nothing else. He is the only way to heaven and the only solution to the sin problem (Jn. 1:29; Eph. 1:7). Thank God for faithful gospel preachers like Philip, who preached Christ to the world! Thank God for faithful gospel preachers who still preach Christ to a lost and dying world!

3. PHILIP WAS A MAN WHO BROUGHT MUCH JOY TO THE LIVES OF MANY (Acts 8:8)

Another great lesson we learn from Philip is that he was a man who brought much joy to those whom he preached. In Acts 8:8 we read, “And *there was great joy* in that city.” In Acts 8:39 we also read, “And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way *rejoicing*.” We must ask two questions: why was there much joy in the city of Samaria? And, why did the Ethiopian eunuch go on his way rejoicing? The answer to these questions is simple: Those people in Samaria and the Ethiopian eunuch had obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ. When men obey the gospel, great things happen: 1. People show God they love Him (Jn. 14:15), 2. People receive forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Eph. 1:7), 3. People are added to the family of Christ (Acts 2:47; Gal. 3:27), 4. People receive the hope of eternal life (Tit. 1:2; 1 Jn. 5:11). Brothers and sisters, these are great reasons to go on our way rejoicing! When we preach the gospel of Christ to our friends and family, and they obey this gospel, much joy is being brought to their lives. Perhaps you have seen the joy manifested in the faces of those who are coming up out of the waters of baptism. Are you striving to bring joy to a lost and dying world?

4. PHILIP WAS A MAN WHO PREACHED THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST (Acts 8:12, 35; 21:8)

If there was a man who took the great commission seriously, this man was Philip the evangelist! Jesus instructed His Apostles to go into the entire world and preach the gospel to every creature (Mk. 16:15). Philip the evangelist took this commission seriously and proclaimed the gospel to many people. In Acts 8:12 we read, “But when they believed *Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ*, they were baptized, both men and women.” Acts 8:35 says, “And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture, *preached unto him Jesus*.” From these two Scriptures we learn that Philip was indeed an evangelist for more than 20 plus years (Acts 21:8). An evangelist is one who carries the good news of salvation to a lost and dying world. The gospel was preached to Philip, and then, in

turn, he became an evangelist. Someone once said, "The preaching of the gospel to the whole world will never be accomplished, unless the evangelized becomes an evangelist." Brethren, this is so true! We must become evangelists who carry the antidote to the sin problem. We must never be ashamed to preach the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16). We must always keep in mind that the gospel is the only power of God unto salvation. As we examine the book of Acts, we realize how much emphasis was put upon the preaching of the gospel of Christ. According to the Apostle Paul, the gospel consists in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4). This is the message that was preached by Peter on Pentecost (Acts 2:22-36). It was also preached throughout the book of Acts in all of the conversions for which we have a record. Sadly, this message is not being proclaimed by many today. Many congregations are not hearing the old Jerusalem gospel being proclaimed anymore. We must go back to the Bible and preach the gospel to every creature!

5. PHILIP WAS A MAN WHO KNEW HOW TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO MANY, AS WELL AS ONE (Acts 8:5, 40; 26-39)

As we consider the evangelistic life of Philip, we learn that he knew how to preach the gospel to many people, as well as just one person. He preached the gospel to many people in Samaria (Acts 8:5), Azotus and Caesarea (Acts 8:40). He also preached the gospel to the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-39). As Christians, we must learn from this example and be ready to preach the gospel to groups of people, as well as to a single person. We must develop the skills to share the good news of salvation in any context or place where we find people willing to study. We must be willing to hold Bible studies in the homes of people where two or more will be present, as well as Bible studies where only one person will be present. The more we preach the gospel, the more experience we will gain. Are you ready to study the Bible with many as well as with just one person? Jesus, Paul, Peter and many more had the ability to teach the Word of God to many or to just one person. Let us emulate their godly example!

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt in our minds that the church needs more Philips today. We need faithful men who will serve the Lord in His kingdom; men who are willing to be of good report; men who will preach Christ at every opportunity they have; men who will bring much joy to those whom he preaches; men who know very well how to preach the gospel to the masses; men who know the Scriptures by heart; men who have godly families; men who practice hospitality. May the Lord give us more men and women with the same traits as that of Philip.