

Philip: The First Evangelist

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

1. Philip took the words of Jesus seriously.
2. He took the gospel past Jerusalem and Judea into Samaria.
3. He was used to win the Ethiopian to the Lord and take the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.
4. He began as a deacon during a time of need in the early church.

“Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” (Acts 6:1-7)

1. Racism was one of the first problems in the early church.
2. It was handled by choosing men full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.
3. Philip was Greek. His name means “lover of horses.”
4. Philip was a deacon who became the first evangelist.
5. Evangelist is a spreader of the gospel, good news.

“Therefore (because of Saul’s persecution) those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were

possessed; and many who were paralyzed, and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.” (Acts 8:4-8)

1. A true New Testament evangelist has signs and wonders accompanying the ministry.
2. Philip operated in signs and wonders and saw the people saved. He also taught the new converts to be water baptized.

“But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.” (Acts 8:12)

1. Philip baptized them immediately after they confessed Jesus as their savior.
2. Philip was not as gifted in seeing converts filled with the Holy Spirit.

“When the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 8:14-17)

1. Philip was called to go to the desert and win one key man to Jesus.
2. Philip had no ego problem preaching to one or an entire city.

Philip Meets the Ethiopian Secretary of the Treasury

“Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is desert. So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship...” (Acts 8:26-27)

1. God cares as much for the one as he does for the many.
2. Each *one* we win can win thousands of others.
3. The Ethiopian was very influential in the government of his land.
4. He went to Jerusalem in search of understanding. He thought he was going to the home of David, Solomon, the temple, and the presence of God. He found religion and legalism.
5. He still had questions as he rode home and God sent Philip to bring answers and eternal life.
6. Philip took the same verse he was reading from Isaiah and preached salvation through Jesus Christ.

Saved and Water Baptized

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?”

Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."

And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him." (Acts 8:35-38)

1. Just as in Samaria, Philip preached the importance of water baptism immediately after salvation.
2. Salvation was believing Jesus is the Son of God. Water baptism is the outward act showing his faith before others.

Philip Was Translated to Azotus

"Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea." (Acts 8:39-40)

1. Azotus was the ancient of Philistine city of Ashdod, 20 miles up the coast.
2. Philip remained in Caesarea and raised his family.

"On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied." (Acts 21:8-9)

1. Philip apparently continued to evangelize, basing himself out of Caesarea.
2. Philip's daughters followed in the ministry and prophesied.