



WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: Open the Eyes of My Heart, Praise Him Forever, I Will Go, Lamb of God, Hallelujah to the Lamb

WELCOME

Do you have any phobia (fear of spiders, heights, crowds, etc.)?

WORD

ACTS 8:26-40

²⁶ But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert *road*.) ²⁷ So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot." ³⁰ Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this:

"He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He does not open His mouth. ³³ "In humiliation His judgment was taken away; who will relate His generation? For His life is removed from the earth."

³⁴ The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please *tell me*, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. ³⁶ As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch *said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" ³⁷ [And 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."] ³⁸ And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

Most of us fear many things, including sharing the gospel to others. But the apostle Paul declares that he is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God for salvation for all who believe (**Romans 1:16**). How about you? Sometimes we think that sharing the gospel effectively is about our knowledge, eloquence or training. But Jesus promised His disciples that it is the Holy Spirit who will empower them to be witnesses starting where they were (Jerusalem) and farther out (Judea and Samaria) to the ends of the earth (**Acts 1:8**). God is calling all of us to be His witnesses today, no matter your personality and limitations. God did not make a mistake when He made you --- do not make your personality an excuse for sharing Christ to others. You might not make a difference to EVERY person, but you can make a difference to ONE person. Reach out to one soul at a time, one step at a time. Philip the Evangelist gives us an example of how to go about this:

START WHERE YOU'RE AT

Philip first served as one of the early church's deacons responsible for distributing food for widows (**Acts 6:3-4**). Philip's main qualification for being chosen was being Spirit-filled, and he was faithful right where he was, before being an evangelist (**Acts 6:5**). Don't even wait for a position before serving the Lord!

Later, after Stephen's death (the first martyr), a great persecution broke out and Philip and the other believers were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria, preaching the gospel wherever they went (**Acts 8:1-4**). Whatever pain point you may have in your life right now, God can turn it around so that the gospel will reach more people when we respond with a godly perspective. Whenever the church is persecuted, the gospel spreads even more! Philip himself went down to Samaria, a place that was out of his comfort zone as the Samaritans were considered "outcasts" by the Jews; crowds of Samaritans believed the gospel that came with power (**Acts 8:5-8**). Do you bring great joy when you come into the office, your classroom, your neighborhood? Do not hesitate to share the gospel, even from your home, you can reach other places around the world through technology!

After much success in Samaria, God sent Philip to a desert road to the south that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza (**Acts 8: 26**). Perhaps it didn't make sense that God will assign Philip to this remote desert place, and not back to Samaria where he was having a successful ministry. But wherever God sends you, just be faithful in what He wants you to do. Do you have your own "desert road" right now? Will you still commit to obey God even if it seems illogical?

TAKE INITIATIVE

Philip "started out" to obey God's direction, even if he didn't

know all the details of God's plan, he took the initiative to take one step at a time. In God's perfect timing, Philip met an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Ethiopian queen on his way home (**Acts 8:27**). At that exact moment, the Ethiopian was reading Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus (**Acts 8:28, 32-33**)! Have you missed out on opportunities to share about Jesus because you were fearful in taking initiative with others, going beyond our comfort zone? The Lord commanded us to make disciples of all nations, and it starts with one soul at a time (**Matthew 28:19**). "All nations" refers to "people groups" within a nation, not just the nation itself. There are thousands of people groups in this world, and God is telling us to make disciples among all of them. God is preparing people's heart to hear the gospel as He did with the Ethiopian court official (**Acts 8:34**). To take initiative, we must be "A.B.C.": Be Available – Philip stayed by the chariot (**Acts 8:29**); Be Bold – Philip "ran up" to the eunuch and started a conversation with him (**Acts 8:30**); Be Compassionate – Philip cared about the eunuch's ability to understand the Scriptures, he cared enough to do something about it (**Acts 8:35**). Who is God telling you to reach out to? Every soul matter to God, and every soul is someone He wants us to reach out to. Make them G.L.A.D. (Gospel Story, Life Testimony, Ask for Prayer Requests, Deeds of God Recently). Start where you are at and take the initiative!

EXPECT GOD TO WORK

God is at work in the timing and in circumstances because He is a good God who never stops working in people's hearts (**Acts 8:30-31**). God uses trials, transitions, tragedies and times of waiting to get people's attention, you can be the one to help them know Jesus. Philip explained the gospel to the eunuch (**Acts 8:35**), and we must know and be ready to share the gospel too using a simple outline: 1-God's Promise; 2-Man's Problem; 3-God's Provision; 4-Man's Proper Response. God worked in the eunuch's heart, he believed and was baptized (**Acts 8:36, 38**). If God has transformed your life, that too, is a miracle for today!

PRESS ON!

Philip continued on his mission after this, preaching the gospel to all cities along the way from Azotus to Caesarea (**Acts 8:40**). He did not rest on his "successes" but pressed on. As long as we are alive, God still has a purpose for us! The Ethiopian eunuch went away rejoicing! When we have good news, we usually go and share it to others and that's probably what the eunuch did in Ethiopia. The story of Svea Flood who was a missionary to Congo, Africa shows us that even if our great sacrifices result in only one life reached for Christ, it is worth it, and we must press on like the many faithful CCF servants God has raised up in different parts of the world to plant churches. Be faithful "fishers of men", one soul at a time, one step at a time (**Mark 1:1 7-18**)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Who is God telling you to reach out to?
2. How will you take the initiative? (Share your Gospel story, life testimony, or their prayer requests, deeds of God recently).
3. What will you pray for and expect God to work in His perfect time?
4. Who is God telling you to continue reaching out to and press on?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for more people to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Do your part in accomplishing the mission of making disciples of all nations. Pray, Care and Share to one soul at a time and take the initiative to share Christ wherever you are, going beyond our comfort zones one step at a time.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.
- For the rest of the Israeli hostages to be restored to their families safely. For Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- Pray for Jewish people worldwide who are experiencing a surge of antisemitism; may this lead them to the Messiah, Jesus as they turn to God for help and comfort.
- For protection of Iranian, Syrian and Lebanese Christians and other minorities, and freedom from oppression. Pray for the gospel to spread rapidly throughout their region.
- Pray for Sudanese and Nigerian persecuted Christians; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.
- God's help to rescue and comfort flash flood victims in central Texas, USA who have lost loved ones, many of them young

children; strength and protection for first responders and recovery volunteers.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples
- For elders, pastors, deacons, and families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)
- For ministries and church expansions worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

Romans 1:16

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.