

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 6 March 2016..... Acts 1 Entrusted
- 2) 13 March..... Acts 2 Empowered and Unified
- 3) 20 March..... Acts 3 Benevolent
- 4) 27 March..... Luke 24 Resurrected!
- 5) 3 April..... Acts 4 Courageous
- 6) 10 April..... Acts 5 Integrity & Faithful
- 7) 17 April..... Acts 6 Selfless
- 8) 24 April..... Acts 7 Forgiving
- 9) 1 May..... Acts 8..... Obedient**
- 10) 8 May..... Acts 9..... Converted & Bold
- 11) 15 May..... Acts 10..... Accepting
- 12) 22 May..... Acts 11..... Engaging
- 13) 29 May..... Acts 12..... Extraordinary

INTRODUCTION

- Like Philip, we can't wait for people to come to us asking to be led to the Lord. We must be bold to go and look for and make opportunities to share
- We are told unbelievers are unable to discern spiritual truth because they do not have the Holy Spirit – So God uses us to help them **1Cor 2:14**
- **"WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."** How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent?.... **Romans 10:13-15**

Passage	Comments
8:1-4	<p>They Were All Scattered...Except The Apostles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People were being forced to leave their homes, jobs, and families. Where was God in all this? Why was He silent and allowed such tragedies to occur? • v3. Saul wreaked havoc on the church. What would this look like? <input type="checkbox"/> Families split up as parents were dragged off to jail? <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses and jobs lost? <input type="checkbox"/> People beaten and even killed? <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors & families turn on each other? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ These tactics are a favorite of Satan's, and he's been doing this for centuries (Russia, Asia, Middle East) • v4. "Those that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Here's God's Purpose in driving people out of their comfort zones – To further His kingdom & to save more people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Similar to how God scattered those at Babel to force them to "fill the earth" as He commanded Gen 1:28
8:5-13	<p>Philip Worked Signs, Healings, and Miracles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people were so amazed at Philip's message, and after seeing all the wonders confirming his message, men and women accepted the Gospel, and were baptized to show their new found faith in God. Even Simon the sorcerer accepted Christ. • We can logically assume Philip, like Jesus and the Apostles, healed 100%, even the hard cases – else, he would have had nothing better to offer than Simon the sorcerer. And the people, along with Simon, recognized the superiority of God's power.
8:14-25	<p>Only the Apostles were Able to Give the Holy Spirit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though Philip was able to work signs, healings, and miracles, he could not bestow the Holy Spirit on anyone • Giving the Holy Spirit to a new group of people was the sole responsibility of the Apostles, and the Apostles only
Unique Bestowing of the Holy Spirit (with Tongues Following) by the Apostles	<p>A unique apostolic sign was the granting of the Holy Spirit to initial people groups → Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, & Gentiles .. Acts 1:8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall the Apostles received the Holy Spirit in <u>Jerusalem</u>... Acts 2 • Also, when Cornelius & his family received the Holy Spirit in <u>Judea</u>, Peter was present Acts 10 • Philip, even though he performed numerous signs, healings, and miracles, could not give the Holy Spirit to the <u>Samaritans</u>. Peter and John came for that event to happen Acts 8:14-17 • Paul gave the Holy Spirit to the Ephesians (<u>Gentiles</u>) Acts 19 • The only exception was when Ananias (a disciple) gave the Holy Spirit to the newly appointed Apostle, Paul Acts 9:10-17 <p>Since we can only prove things according to what is in Scripture, we can logically deduce the Holy Spirit, can only be given when an Apostle is present. This destroys many Pentecostal doctrines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is why there is a Pentecostal movement afoot to try to justify biblically that Apostles, like Peter's and Paul's, still exist • But they cannot work the signs of an Apostle (100% healings, and the penning of new Scripture) → Always "Prove all Things"

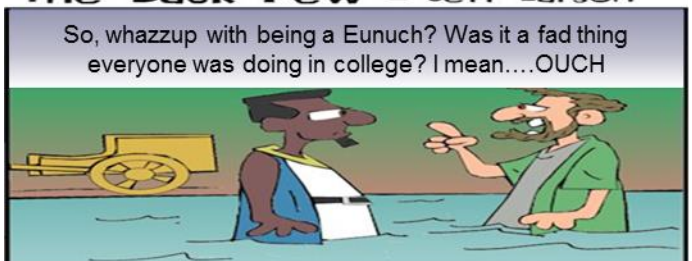
Passage	Comments
8:26-38	<p>Divine Appointment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eunuchs in ancient societies were castrated males chosen to oversee royal harems (Esther 2:3). The term later became used for government officials with or without the physical malady. • This Ethiopian eunuch was in charge of the royal treasury and was therefore an important official in his country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ He was a Jew from outside of Israel ♦ If he truly was a eunuch, he would not have been allowed into the temple complex Deut 23:1 • Philip's knowledge of Scripture made him very usable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Which sayings below are true? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The more we know God's word, the more God can use us <input type="checkbox"/> The more eager we are, the more God can use us <input type="checkbox"/> The more humble we are, the more God can use us What if we were humble, eager, and fluent with God's word, like Philip was? What could WE accomplish for God? • Note that the "<u>Angel of the Lord spoke</u>" in v26 and the "<u>Spirit</u>" spoke in v29; & the "<u>Spirit of the Lord</u>" snatched Philip away. Begs the question, does such manifestations of angels and the Holy Spirit, and even Jesus Christ still happen today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Unconfirmed stories exist, BUT remember – We have something better than experiences. We have the "more sure word" of prophecy, that being the written word of God.. 2Pet 1:19-20
Methods of Evangelism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many canned approaches for witnessing such as the Romans' Road, the Ephesians' Walk, Evangelism Explosion, & Kirk Cameron's use of 10 Commandments. They are all nice tools, BUT spur-of-the-moment discussions work just as well. • God did not give us a blow by blow description of how Philip witnessed to the Eunuch and from Azotus to Caesarea; probably so we would not settle on only one way to witness.
8:39-40	<p>Beam Me Up, Scotty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God seems to have supernaturally "teleported" Philip from the desert to the coastal city of Azotus, almost 30 miles away • There are several places in Scripture where God seemingly transports people instantaneously from one place to another? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Enoch (God took him) Gen 5:24 ♦ Elisha (chariot of fire and a whirlwind) 2Kings 2:11 ♦ Ezekiel (Spirit lifted him up & took him away) Ez 3:14 ♦ Jesus and His disciples in a boat were "immediately" brought to land John 6:21 ♦ Philip (αἰραζω, "harpazo" – caught up) Acts 8:39,40 ♦ Paul "caught up" in Heaven (same "harpazo") .. 2Cor 12:2,4 ♦ The Rapture (same "harpazo") 1Thes 4:17 ♦ John, the Apostle ("come up hither") Rev 4:1 • Note. The emphasis was not on Philip's "sudden" departure, but his preaching the Gospel till he got to Caesarea

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- Does God still arrange Divine Appointments today? Absolutely, but He does it these days working through natural events He orchestrates providentially, not supernaturally. This conveys even in a stronger way God's majesty and sovereignty over man and nature, and He does it without forcing, manipulating, or violating anyone's free will.

NEXT WEEK: Acts 9. Saul gets saved and healed of blindness, Bedridden Aeneas gets healed; and Tabitha is raised from the dead. These episodes beg some questions: Do such miracles still occur today? If not, why not? And if so, why are they so rare and subjective?

The Back Pew – Jeff Larson



After the Ethiopian Eunuch was baptized, Philip just had to ask. Acts 8:38 ½