

UNSTOPPABLE POWER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

“PORTRAIT OF AN EFFECTIVE EVANGELIST”

ACTS 8:1-40

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS

DECEMBER 5, 2021

Introduction: The first – and only – person called an “evangelist” in the Bible was not a paid professional apostle or pastor, but a layperson named Philip. Today, we are going to discover how God used this ordinary Christian in an extraordinary way to be the first person to take the gospel beyond the city limits of Jerusalem.

I. Philip In Jerusalem: Invincibility (Acts 8:1-5)

Acts 8:1 “Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him [Stephen] to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.”

Acts 8:3 “Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.”

Acts 8:4 “Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.”

Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Acts 8:5 “Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them.”

II. Philip In Samaria: Humility (Acts 8:6-25)

Philippians 2:5-8 ⁵ “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

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A. Philip Laid Aside His Personal Prejudices (Acts 8:6)

Acts 8:6 “The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing.”

B. Philip Laid Aside His Desire for Recognition (Acts 8:7-25)

Acts 8:7-8 ⁷ “For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. ⁸ So there was much rejoicing in that city.”

Acts 8:20 “But Peter said to him [the magician], ‘May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!’”

1 Corinthians 12:13 “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

Romans 8:9b “But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.”

Acts 8:25 “So, when they had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they started back to Jerusalem, and were preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.”

III. Philip In The Desert: Clarity (Acts 8:26-40)

A. Philip Encounters an Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-27)

Acts 8:26-27 ²⁶ “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.”

Acts 4:12 “There is salvation in no one else. There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

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B. The Ethiopian's Question (Acts 8:28-35)

Acts 8:30-34 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?’”

Isaiah 53:5-6 ⁵ “But he was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. ⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”

Acts 8:35 “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him.”

C. The Ethiopian's Response (Acts 8:36-40)

Acts 8:36-39 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.”

1. The model of baptism (Acts 8:36-37)

Acts 2:38 “Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”

Acts 2:41 “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.”

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Paul believed and was baptized.

Acts 9:18 “And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized.”

Cornelius and his household believed and all were baptized.

Acts 10:47-48 ⁴⁷ [Peter answered] “Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?” ⁴⁸ And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.”

Lydia believed and was baptized.

Acts 16:15 “And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, ‘If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay.’ And she prevailed upon us.”

The Philippian jailer and his household believed and all were baptized.

Acts 16:33-34 ³³ “And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. ³⁴ And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.”

It was Christ who commanded that all believers in this age are to be baptized.

Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

2. The mode of baptism (Acts 8:38-39)

Matthew 3:16a “After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water...”

Acts 8:38-39 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 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing.”

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3. The meaning of baptism (Romans 6:1-4)

Romans 6:1-3 ¹“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?
² May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?”

Romans 6:4 “Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”

Conclusion