

Q: How can we discern & follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit in our lives? (Why is it important to continue developing your relationship with God through reading and obeying His Word, and seeking fellowship of other Christ-followers?)

Q: God set up this divine encounter. He often places people with questions in our path as well. Do we ignore them or seek His wisdom as we engage? Describe a conversation you had that God clearly orchestrated and then empowered you to speak.

Q: (vv.30-35) What was the eunuch reading and what question did he have? How does his attitude contrast with Simon's?

Q: Where does Philip begin when explaining the gospel?

Who helped you understand the Gospel? (How can we be better prepared to share the gospel with others?)

Q: (vv.36-40) The eunuch initiated the call to be baptized (a public declaration that he now belongs to Christ and His church). Have you been baptized? If not, would you like to? Let the church office know! We'd love to help you grow in your journey!



Harvest Growing Deeper

Evangelical Free Church

A Disciplemaking Tool of Harvest Evangelical Free Church
(for personal and/or small group study)

Week of July 19, 2020

Acts 8:1-40

Peter's witness in chapter 2 led to mass conversions to Christ. Stephen's witness led to his martyrdom by the religious authorities. We are called to be faithful & trust God, regardless of outcome. Persecution scattered the church, yet also spread the Gospel message of Christ throughout the nation and to the ends of the earth, fulfilling Acts 1:8. Chapter 8 focuses on Philip, who was a godly servant like Stephen, chosen to address the discrimination taking place against the Greek speaking widows in the church (6:1-7). Like Abraham in Gen 12, Philip would go where God called him.

Q: Persecution broke out against the church. Think of a traumatic event in your past. Looking back, can you see perhaps how God has used that experience for good? Explain. (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:29-29)

Q: (vv.4-6) As the church was scattered (through persecution), it fulfilled Jesus' command in Acts 1:8 to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Philip went into Samaria to proclaim Christ there. Philip was an ordinary guy, yet filled with the Holy Spirit's power and wisdom. Describe what God empowered him to do?

Q: The Jews hated the Samaritans, called them half-breeds. Why was it significant that the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ is taking root not just in Jewish circles, but now in other areas (bringing much joy!)?

Q: (vv.9-13) Who is Simon and what made him significant in Samaria? What made the people turn away from following him? (v.13) What does Simon then do?

Q: (vv.14-17) As the early church was growing, and as the gospel was received in different cultures, God used the apostles to impart His Holy Spirit upon the new believers and also help bring them under their Spirit inspired teaching. Knowing the discrimination that Jews had over Samaritans (and others), why was it key that God use the apostles in this way to demonstrate officially that *all believers* are equal partners in God's family? Why is it important for today's church to work to break down barriers and bring unity among all believers? (see John 13:34-35: 17:20-23)

Q: (vv.18-19) In what ways does Simon's response show deep misunderstanding about the gospel? How might it reveal his true motivations? (see John 2:23-25). Can a person say they believe, even get baptized, yet show no signs of life transformation by the Holy Spirit? (see Gal 5:16-26) How do people today cling to superficial "religion" but not a genuine relationship with God?

Q: (vv.20-24) Peter rebukes Simon. How does Simon's answer further reveal the lack of genuineness of his true faith?

*some scholars believe this man Simon, never put his saving faith in Christ and eventually became an opponent to Christ-followers (see 1 John 2:19), proving he never truly knew Christ at all. Ultimately only the Lord knows (2 Tim 2:19).

Q: Some are drawn near to Christ by miracles or by (perhaps false) promises of financial or other earthly reward, life will be easy, or that God would prevent trials in our life, etc. True followers of Christ know our wretched sinfulness separates us from a Holy God and we are in desperate need of His forgiveness and redemption (Rom 3:23; 6:23). This is only offered through God's grace, freely given to all who repent and turn their lives by faith over to God's control (Rom 10:9-10; Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:3-7). Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ alone for forgiveness of all your sins-God's payment for your sins, and new life through Him? Tell your story!

Q: (v.25) Peter & John, by the Holy Spirit's power, had overcome their prejudices with Samaritans. What prejudices were you brought up with? How is Christ breaking these prejudices in your life and helping you see God's Truth?

Q: What was your primary motivation when you received Christ as your Lord and Savior? (jealous of others, follow the crowd, wanting to please parents, other selfish motives, or was it out of genuine (good) fear of God, recognizing a need for forgiveness/life change?). What is your primary motivation in *continuing* (persevering) in the faith today?

*Praise God that as we lean on Him, He does the work to help us persevere! (Phil 1:6; 1 Thes 5:24)

Q: (vv.26-29) How did Philip encounter the Ethiopian eunuch (official)?
