Intro: 26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. 27 And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship 28 and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29 And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” 30 So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” 31 And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. 33 In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.” 34 And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. 36 And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” 37 And Phillip said, “if you believe with your heart, you may.” And he replied, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God[[1]](#footnote-1).” 38 And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

I. An angel guided Phillip to where he was needed – 26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. 27 And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship 28 and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

a. Angels can be used to point us in the right direction

• Why was an angel used here and not the Holy Spirit, I don’t know, but maybe sometimes it is better to see something from the Lord that to feel some from Him. Maybe, just maybe, Phillip needed to see an answer on where to go than to have a feeling of where to go.

° 29 Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” John 20:29

b. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit is not directing us as well

• This is made clear in the next verse, and will be explained in the next verse.

II. The angel led Phillip to the Holy Spirit – 29 And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.”

a. Godly angels will not undermine the Holy Spirit

• When you read this, you can clearly see that the angel was working with the Holy Spirit, and not the other way around. Why didn’t the Holy Spirit just intervene without the use of an angel, I don’t know, maybe there is more to the story than we are given, but what I do know is that angels are not ever going to undermine the work of God, evil or not evil angels, God is always in control.

° 3 Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established. 4 The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble. Proverbs 16:3, 4

b. Phillip was then led to the chariot

• We may not fully understand all of God’s ways in and why he has to do with dealing with us, but rest assured the mission will always come to winning people to the Lord, in some fashion. The angel seems to know what Phillip was to do, the Holy Spirit surely knew what he was going to do, and the man in the chariot was glad that Phillip obeyed the gospel call. This led us to our next verse.

° 10 Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground! Psalms 143:10

III. Phillip obeying the gospel call – 30 So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” 31 And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. 33 In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.” 34 And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

a. Phillip obeyed the Holy Spirit and the angel

• Phillip listened to the angel, but obedience was giving the Holy Spirit. I know it seems like I’m splitting hairs here but obey God. The angel was given instructions to give to Phillip and he listened and obey. Angels are here to help us, but we are to obey God rather than man or angels. We are to try the spirits (angels) to see if they are from God. Blind obedience to angels can lead to disastrous consequences. Ask Adam and Eve how listening to an angel turned out for them.

° 1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4:1

b. Led by the Spirit Phillip started the conversation

• People don’t want to engage with other people for lack of experience, but there is way where you can break the ice and engage someone without being a bible thumper and still witness the gospel of Jesus Christ. I witness to at least two a day and they don’t even consider me a bible thumper. Trust me if I can do it anyone can.

° 1 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. 2 And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” 3 So he told them this parable: 4 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ 7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. Luke 15:1-7

c. Phillip got down on His level

• He was not afraid to get close to him, talk to him, engage with him. Phillip never said how great he was and how lucky the man was to be in the presence of Phillips Christian life. He never looked down on him, never subject him to shame and embarrassment, but just got down to where the man was and he understood, reached out, and related to him as a human that needed a Savor just like he did at one time. We need to stop this “I am better than you” religion, and start preaching “I am not better than you” Jesus’ doctrine.

° 1 We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. Romans 15:1, 2

d. Deep down inside people are looking for answers to God

• The Spirit had already been dealing with the man, but he was having a hard time understanding what the Lord was telling him. So, the angel of the Lord sent Phillip to the desert outside of Gaza, where the Spirit sent him to the Ethiopian man to help interpret what he was reading. A Jew showing a Black man how to be saved through the gospel of Jesus Christ. God will always send someone to lead someone else to the Lord.

° 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” 8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” 9 And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” Luke 19:5-10

e. Phillip preached and proclaimed Jesus Christ

• Once being told by an angel on where to go, then once being told by the Holy Spirit on what to do, Phillip opened up to him Jesus and Him crucified. This is what the Ethiopian man was reading and he was confused on what this passage meant. How did he get a copy of the Old Testament, and was he a slave Jew or was he a slave black man, no one knows for sure but one thing is for certain the man received Christ as his Savior and Phillip preached and proclaimed Christ.

° 1 And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. 2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 1 Corinthians 2:1, 2

IV. This is a great example of the great commission – 36 And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” 37 And Phillip said, “if you believe with your heart, you may.” And he replied, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God[[2]](#footnote-2).” 38 And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

° 16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:16-20

a. The Ethiopian man wanted to be baptized

• Baptism will follow after conversion. Baptism does not save us buts is does give us a clean and clear conscience before God that our sins are forgiven, and that we are following Jesus and He has commanded us to do.

° 21 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. 1 Peter 3:21, 22

b. He made the admission in believing in Jesus Christ

• Believing is the first step in being saved, then confession is made into profession, then profession is made into salvation, then baptism is used to show commitment to the walk of Christ into this world.

° 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. Romans 10:9, 10

c. The Ethiopian man became a disciple of Christ

• Just imagine that the Ethiopian man going back to his country and begin telling others about what happen to him on the chariot. He would have told someone, but who. This is the part of the bible where we are just left imagining.

° 4 And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. 6 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” Matthew 11:4-6

V. Phillip was carried away by the Holy Spirit – 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

a. Phillip went to the next town to carry on the mission

° 15 And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. Mark 16:15, 16

b. All of this was started by an angel of the Lord guiding Philip

1. Verse 37 is omitted in some of the earlier manuscripts. Which would mean that he was a silent convert. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Verse 37 is omitted in some of the earlier manuscripts. Which would mean that he was a silent convert. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)