

Ev221 Sharing Your Spiritual Journey

Lesson Ev221-4 The Holy Spirit Will Lead You

Each of us grew up hearing our mother or father or teacher giving us instructions. We learned that doing what they asked was the best way to please them. Perhaps you now have your own children, and you want them to obey your directions too. In previous lessons you learned about how God has delivered us all from the bondage of sin. He did this through the death of his Son Jesus on the Cross. In this lesson you will learn how the Holy Spirit will lead you to help others to accept Christ as their Savior. If you learn how to hear his voice and you choose to obey, God will use you to witness to others.

The Bible tells story about how God was at work in the life of an African queen's official. He was in charge of her treasury in their country of Ethiopia. He was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had gone to worship. The Spirit of God directed a devout man named Philip, to go to a certain road leading to the south. The Spirit told him to go up to a chariot that was on its way out of Jerusalem.

The first principle of witnessing is that evangelists need to be sensitive to the Spirit's leading. Ask yourself, "Am I living so close to God that I can hear the voice of his Spirit in the same way Philip did?" The Holy Spirit will also lead you to the people he wants you to tell about Jesus.

As Philip got close he heard the queen's official reading from the Scripture. "Do you understand what you are reading?" asked Philip.

The second principle you can see here, is that often God is already at work in the lives of people. We are all created in his image and therefore he loves us and wants us to become a part of his family. It's important to try to discover how God is working in the lives of others we might encounter. So the Ethiopian was already reading from God's Word.

In response to Philip's question about understanding what he was reading, he asked, "How can I understand unless someone explains it to me?" He was reading from an Old Testament scroll from the prophet Isaiah. Philip recognized what he was reading. It was chapter 53, which talks about God's "suffering servant." The passage describes the Messiah, God's anointed one: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth" (Acts 8:32-33).

The man asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about?" Philip patiently explained him in detail how this chapter in Isaiah was really a prophecy about Jesus Christ. Hundreds of years earlier, Isaiah had written that Jesus would be crucified, like a lamb led to the slaughter. He would come to die for our sins.

The third principle clearly taught in this passage is that stories from the Bible help people believe in Jesus. The queen's servant had gone to Jerusalem to worship God. He was already seeking for spiritual truth from God's Word. People may seek God through religious rituals,

such as pilgrimages and reading sacred writings. They still need someone to explain the truth to them. When you are obedient to God's leading, like the deacon Philip, you will see much fruit in your witnessing efforts.

The Ethiopian responded by dedicating his life to Christ. When they came upon some water there, along the road they were traveling, he said to Philip, "Look here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?"

Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."

The man answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." He gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away. The Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:34-39).

What things in your life make it hard for you to hear the Spirit's voice? Is he leading you to others who are seeking, but don't yet know Jesus? Evangelism is all about being sensitive to the way God is already working in the lives of people. It is being eager to be used by him to bring people to know Christ. Memorizing the Scriptures and spending time in prayer will help you learn to recognize God's voice. As you seek to know his will and walk closely with him, you will hear the Spirit prompting you. He will tell you where to go and who to speak to.

This story is **important** because it shows that you must listen closely to God's Spirit. He will lead you to the right people, at the right time, for you to tell them the gospel story. When the timing is right, you will see your efforts result in conversion and even baptism.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that God will perform the miraculous in our lives when we obey Him. Philip was led by the Spirit to meet and witness to the Ethiopian. Then the Spirit removed him from the situation to minister further in another town. Great signs and miracles followed his ministry.

Review Questions:

1. What was the queen of Ethiopia's servant doing in Jerusalem? [Pause 5 seconds.]
A. If you said that he went there to worship, you are correct.
2. Which part of the Bible was the Ethiopian reading? [Pause]
A. If you answered, "The 53rd chapter of the Book of Isaiah," you would be correct.
3. Why was that Isaiah chapter 53 important to the story the Ethiopian read? [Pause]
A. If you answered, "Because that chapter describes God's suffering servant – the Messiah, or anointed one," you answered correctly.
4. What role did baptism play in the story, and why might this be important to you in your evangelism? [Pause]
A. If you said, "It shows the importance of being baptized as soon as possible after conversion," you are right.

Your **assignment** is to listen to this lesson several times until you can share the story of Philip and the Ethiopian servant with several other people. Think about how you can be more sensitive to the Spirit's leading when it comes to sharing Christ with others. Pray and ask God to use you over the next few days to share the story of Jesus's love and redemption with someone who doesn't know him. As you continue to pray and are sensitive to the Spirit's answer to your prayer, see if you can hear clearly what he is showing you concerning someone in need of the gospel. What were the fruits of your efforts and why do think this is so?