

Learn to Teach!

Philip and the Ethiopian

Acts 8:26-40 NIV

Bible Lesson & Activities for Children



THE **SUNDAY SCHOOL** STORE

Learning Along the Road



The story of Philip and the Ethiopian is a fascinating encounter among many in the book of Acts. Through it we see how the Holy Spirit guides us and equips us to carry out His work. It is important for us to have the courage and willingness to share the Gospel with others, and God helps us do that! This lesson explores the story of Philip's meeting with the foreign man and reminds children that God uses us to teach others about Him. Just as we learn when others show and teach us things, we can pass along what we know about Jesus.

God loves us and has done remarkable things in our lives. Knowing that good news should inspire us to pass it onto others. With Philip and the Ethiopian, we see how the contagious enthusiasm of good teachers helps us to understand and inspires us to continue to spread the Gospel message. The great news is that we are not alone in these efforts. The Holy Spirit promises to help and guide us, just as He did with Philip.

Passage: Acts 8:26–40

Target Audience: Kindergarten–6th grade

Materials Needed: Construction paper; cardboard tubes; glue; markers or crayons; tape; scissors; decorative supplies; string; paper cups; instruction manual; dominoes; maps; Bibles.

More Resources Online

- Watch the [video demonstration of the object lesson](#).
- Watch the [video example for the craft projects](#).
- Watch the [video Bible story "Philip and the Ethiopian"](#) from Saddleback Kids Club
- Watch the [video Bible story "Got Questions for God"](#) from Crossroads Kids
- For more free illustrations, visit [Christian Clip Arts](#) and [Ministry-To-Children](#)

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Greet children and discuss methods of learning...

Hello, children of God!

How do you learn? Let's say you want to make something or put something new together. Where can you go to find out how to do it? A lot of things come with some sort of instructions or direction manual. But sometimes those are challenging. For instance, I have a guide here for how to use something. *Show written instructions for something that are difficult to follow (IKEA furniture, for instance...), or maybe even in another language.* But I can't figure out what these things are telling me to do. What's it supposed to mean? So maybe the manual doesn't help so much. Where else can you turn? Maybe YouTube has the answer! You can always look for a video of someone else walking through instructions. Then again, even those are not always so simple. And they have all of the equipment and skill already, not to mention the magic of video editing to make things look easy! What about having someone teach you? Isn't it easier to figure out how to do something when someone else is walking you through it and explaining it? I guess this is why we have school, after all. We need someone who knows and understands more than we do and can guide us.

The same is often true when it comes to understanding God's Word and His ways. We don't just automatically know everything we need about our faith. Of course, it's important to read the Bible and pray, but there are times when we might still find things that confuse us or are difficult to comprehend. We need other people who can come alongside us and teach us. The great thing about our lives as Christians is that God uses us to help one another. He gives us leaders and teachers to aid us in understanding. He also leads us to teach others! The Holy Spirit guides and equips us with the tools we need to share our

faith and pass on the good news to other people. In this way, we continue to spread the Gospel throughout the world, just as Jesus commanded.

Throughout the Bible we see people sharing God's love and grace to others. This is especially prevalent in the book of Acts, which tells the story of the early Christian church and how it spread. One interesting account describes a man named Philip and an encounter he had with an Ethiopian. Philip was traveling from Jerusalem to a place called Gaza, and was actually led by an angel to do so. As he was going through the desert, the Holy Spirit told him to go talk to a man in a chariot. This man was an Ethiopian who worked for the queen.* Philip approached the man and noticed he was reading something. He asked if the man knew what he was reading about, and the Ethiopian responded that he needed help understanding. Philip had the opportunity to explain to him who Jesus was. The Ethiopian noticed there was water nearby, and decided to be baptized! In fact, he was so excited that he wanted to tell everyone else he knew about the good news. The Holy Spirit helped Philip pass on the good news, which helped many others as well.

This is an amazing story, and it reminds us that we, too, are called to share the Gospel with others. God helps us to learn about who He is. He enables us to know and share with those around us. The Holy Spirit guides us to find other people who need to hear about the Lord. We can trust Him and give thanks for His work in our lives. We can also help other people understand who He is so that they can have His love and peace in their lives. God helps us learn, and He helps us teach others about Him, too!

*Note: Feel free to skip over the "Eunuch" element, unless working with older students. It might only inspire awkward questions...

Prayer: (Invite the children to repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for helping us learn and teach about you.

Please guide us to share your good news with those around us

And help us to understand your Word.

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Game & Activities Suggestions

(10 minutes)



This passage describes a Spirit-led meeting between two strangers, resulting in new faith. It reminds us of the importance of telling and teaching others about God's love. Get students thinking with some opening activities. Some possible ideas include:

- Chariot races: Have students team up in groups of three for a "chariot race." Two kids will go in front of the third to be "horses. The student in the back will be the "chariot driver" and hold the back of a jump rope. The "horses" will each hold a handle of the rope, and keep the group together. Race around a field or large area with the groups kept together by the ropes.
- Pass it on: gather a group of students and provide one or two rolls of crepe paper streamers. Have students pass the roll from one to another, calling out names as they go. Watch how the color (streamer) makes its way around the circle. When we share God's love, it can "travel" around the world!
- Chain reaction: Grab some dominoes (the game, not the pizza) and set up a long stack of them. Observe how knocking over one creates a reaction that topples the other ones. In the same way, when we tell people about Jesus, we can create a chain reaction that spreads the Gospel around to many others.
- How do you do it? Show children a series of instructions to put something together or use a new object. The more challenging, the better! After allowing them to try for a bit, come alongside the students to demonstrate how to do things. Emphasize how it's often easier to understand things that are taught directly or modeled.
- All the children of the world...In the account from Acts, Philip shares the gospel with an Ethiopian man, reminding us that we are to share the good news with everyone. Discuss with students missions that your church supports, or simply look at maps and statistics of global ministries and congregations. God wants everyone to know about Him!

Explain to students that this lesson is about someone who was led by God to tell others about Him. That is called "evangelism," and it's a job we all have as Christians. The good news of Jesus is not a secret to be kept, but a treasure to share!

Main Bible Teaching (15 minutes)



This passage is from the book of Acts, and features a memorable encounter between two people. It's an account that can definitely be acted out through miming or role playing, but is great just to read through, as well. You might have students take turns reading these verses, or read them out loud and pause to explain what is being said.

Acts 8:26-29 NIV *Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (27) So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, (28) and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. (29) The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."*

This is quite a remarkable passage, as we see Philip spoken to twice by God's spirit. He is told directly what to do and how to approach a man who needed to hear God's word.

Explain to students that Philip was an evangelist. He was dedicated to spreading the message of the gospel to others. In this case, an angel told him to go down to a desert place, to a road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza. (Indicate the placement on a map, for older students.) He met up with a man who was an Ethiopian. The Holy Spirit told Philip to go join the man on his chariot.

*Side note: how in-depth you venture with this detail will depend on your audience and maturity level. You can certainly mention that the Ethiopian was from another country, and that he worked in the queen's court. The "eunuch" reference might raise some tricky questions from younger students. You might just say that this was someone who was not allowed to get married or have a girlfriend, and often not respected.

Ask: Have you ever had the opportunity to talk to someone about Jesus? Who do you share with?

Acts 8:30–31 NIV *Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked. (31) “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.*

The Ethiopian man was reading a scroll of Isaiah’s words. This scroll probably would have cost him a lot of money, which shows that he cared about God’s word and wanted to know more about it.

Philip had the boldness to go up and speak to this man. He’d never met the Ethiopian before, but was willing to ask him if he understood the words of Scripture that he had. Although this was someone in a powerful position, Philip knew he needed to hear the good news, too!

Ask: Would you be nervous about talking to someone new that you’d never met before? How do you start those conversations?

Acts 8:32–34 NIV *This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. (33) In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.” (34) The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” (35) Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.*

God really opened the door for Philip to share the Gospel. The Ethiopian was reading a passage that prophesied directly about Jesus. The man wanted to know who the words were about. Philip knew this was the perfect chance to explain what He knew about Christ, and the man was ready to hear it. God had prepared his heart to understand when

someone explained to him. Sometimes God's word is difficult to comprehend, but He gives us people who can guide us.

Ask: Who helps you know more about the Bible?

Acts 8:35–38 NIV *Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. (36) As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" (38) And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.*

The Ethiopian was ready to respond to the Gospel. Philip had facilitated this preparation, but it was God doing the work in his heart that helped him believe. After Philip helped him understand, he was so excited about the good news he'd heard that he decided to be baptized. Right then and there, they found water and Philip baptized him!

Ask: Have you been baptized? When and how?

Acts 8:39–40 NIV *When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. (40) Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.*

This is another interesting part of the story, because the Spirit carried Philip away to another place. He didn't walk or ride a chariot or take a bus. He was just carried away! He continued to preach to other cities, spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth. The Ethiopian, though likely surprised by the sudden mysterious disappearance, was overjoyed. He knew that his faith was not in Philip, but in God.

This is a remarkable reminder that God has a plan for people to come to salvation. He allows us to be part of that plan! The Holy Spirit helps us to learn and come to faith, and we can study God's word and grow to understand what it means. We, then, can help others understand the Bible and spread the Gospel to all who need to hear it!

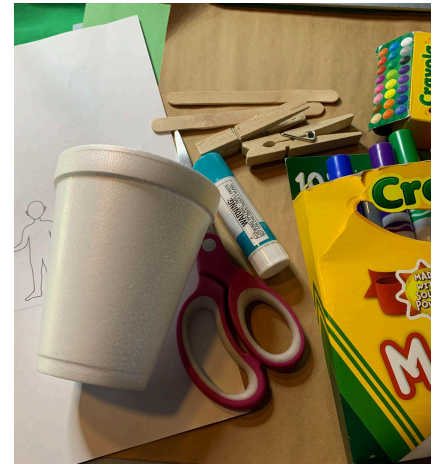
Craft one: "3D Storyboard"

You will need:

- Construction paper or cardstock
- Clothespins (optional)
- Popsicle sticks/pipe cleaners (optional)
- Cups (styrofoam or plastic)
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Glue or tape

Procedure:

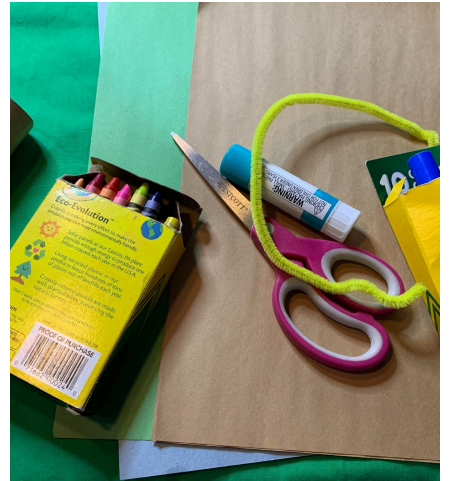
1. Draw (or color a print-out) the "characters" in the story: Philip, the Ethiopian man, and a horse. Cut the pictures.
2. On a construction paper or cardstock, create the scene background. Draw or cut paper to show desert and water for baptism. Add verses and captions.
3. Cut a portion from a foam or paper cup and decorate it to represent the "chariot," adding wheels and other elements as desired.
4. Using popsicle sticks or clothespins, attach the figures to the chariot and add the horse with pipe cleaners or popsicle sticks.
5. Use glue or tape to place the whole scene together and recount the story.



Craft Two: "Scroll Message"

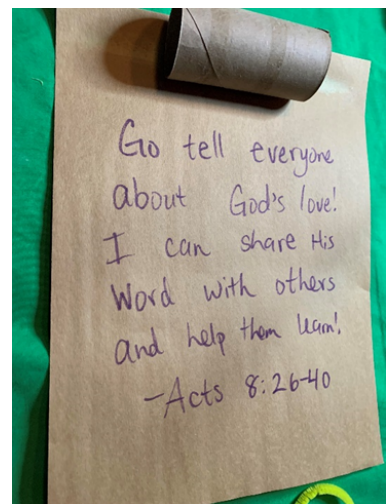
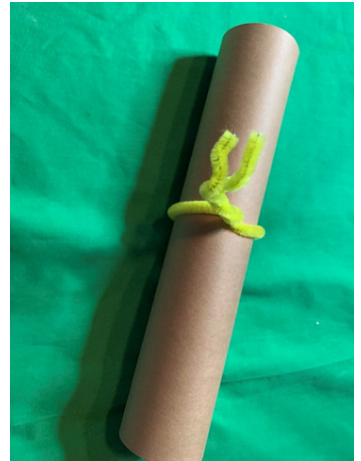
You will need:

- Paper towel or toilet paper tube
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Crayons or markers
- Pipe cleaner or string
- Scissors
- Glue or tape



Procedure:

1. On a piece of paper or cardstock, write words or verses that connect to the passage and themes.
2. If desired, wrinkle the paper or stain it to make it appear "ancient" and "scroll-like."
3. Decorate the cardboard tube if you wish, using stickers or colors.
4. Use glue or tape to attach the paper to the cardboard.
Option: use two tubes for extra "scroll" appearance.
5. Attach string or pipe cleaner around the tube as a final tie.
Open to remember the story and reflect on the Ethiopian reading a scroll.



Acts 8:35 NIV

Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.



Acts 8:35 NIV

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Word Search Puzzle

Angel - Philip - Spirit - Gaza - Jerusalem - Candace

Ethiopian - Chariot - Prophet - Eunuch - Baptize - Gospel

B	U	Q	G	P	G	O	S	P	E	L	G
V	P	C	A	N	D	A	C	E	P	R	V
R	R	P	H	Z	C	I	Z	Q	H	S	F
C	O	K	J	A	A	U	C	A	I	S	B
T	P	N	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M
Y	H	W	E	T	H	I	O	P	I	A	N
J	E	A	U	F	S	S	O	R	P	D	T
S	T	W	N	X	B	A	P	T	I	Z	E
F	V	X	U	B	J	D	N	I	H	Q	V
I	F	F	C	Z	V	T	A	G	R	G	S
X	E	V	H	S	X	U	L	Q	E	I	K
G	L	F	X	A	I	E	E	N	D	L	T

Word Search Answers

B	U	Q	G	P	G	O	S	P	E	L	G
V	P	C	A	N	D	A	C	E	P	R	V
R	R	P	H	Z	C	I	Z	Q	H	S	F
C	O	K	J	A	A	U	C	A	I	S	B
T	P	N	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M
Y	H	W	E	T	H	I	O	P	I	A	N
J	E	A	U	F	S	S	O	R	P	D	T
S	T	W	N	X	B	A	P	T	I	Z	E
F	V	X	U	B	J	D	N	I	H	Q	V
I	F	F	C	Z	V	T	A	G	R	G	S
X	E	V	H	S	X	U	L	Q	E	I	K
G	L	F	X	A	I	E	E	N	D	L	T