Lesson 4

Memory Verse: Acts 8:37 - “. . .And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

Scripture References for study: Acts 8; Acts 21:8-9; Isaiah 53:7-8

**INTRODUCTION:** After Jesus ascended back to Heaven, the church that He started there in Jerusalem began to thrive. It grew to thousands of members. But as time passed, those Christians began to be persecuted for believing in Jesus. God allowed this to happen so that the Gospel would spread to lands further than those just around Jerusalem. One of the members of that first church in Jerusalem was an evangelist (one who preaches and leads others to Jesus Christ) named Philip. When persecution began, Philip, too, left Jerusalem and moved to Samaria and began preaching there. God used Philip in a mighty way there in Samaria - a city where most Jews did not want to live - even winning a sorcerer to Christ who went everywhere Philip did learning about Jesus. But God had another plan for Philip. . .

I **TRAVEL PLANS ISSUED** (Acts 8:26)

The Lord told Philip to leave Samaria and go to a place called Gaza, a desert area many miles away from his home. Unlike Jonah who did not obey, Philip immediately left his home and traveled to Gaza.

II **DESTINATION AND DEPARTURE** (Acts 8:27-29)

A. Obey first
God did not tell Philip all the details of his trip, only to go. Arguing or questioning God when He tells us to do something is disobedience. Obedience is just doing what He says with no questions asked, knowing that He is well able to take care of you and equip you for the job at hand.

B. Instructions second
It was not until after Philip arrived in Gaza that he was told what to do next. Philip saw an Ethiopian man riding in a chariot. This man was no ordinary man, he was a eunuch (men employed by a king or queen and made to not be able to have any children) who had great authority for Candace, the Queen of Ethiopia. He was in charge of all of her treasures. His chariot must have been beautiful and rich looking. This man was on his way home from Jerusalem. He had gone there to worship. He was trying to read the book of Isaiah. The Lord then told Philip to run up next to his chariot and speak to him. Philip did not hesitate to go. The importance of this great man or his fancy chariot or anything did not
hinder Philip. He just knew he must obey when God tells him to do something!

III ARRIVAL (Acts 8:30-40; Isaiah 53:7-8)

A. The meeting
Philip ran along side the chariot and heard the Ethiopian eunuch reading the Bible. Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading. The man answered ‘No, I need someone to guide me.’ He then asked Philip to come up into the chariot and explain it all to him. The man was reading Isaiah 53:7-8 and wondered Who the verses were talking about. WOW! This was a great opportunity for Philip to tell him that the One the verses were speaking of was none other than Jesus Christ! Right there Philip preached to him about Jesus and how He died on the cross to save us from sin and that we can have a home in Heaven if we would only ask Him to forgive us and to save us.

B. The results
Right there in that chariot, the Ethiopian eunuch accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour. They came to some water and the man asked Philip if he could get baptized. Of course he could! They stopped the chariot and Philip and the man when “down both into the water” and Philip baptized him. This man knew already that he could never serve the Lord properly unless he had followed the FIRST step in being obedient to God and getting baptized. This of course had nothing to do with his salvation, but he wanted to show that he was obedient to God and to let others know what had happened to him on the inside.

C. The disappearance
As soon as Philip and the man came up out of the water, the Bible says that “the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip” and the Ethiopian man never saw him again. But the man was so happy and excited about being saved and baptized that he went on his way rejoicing. Philip, however, must have had a tremendous trip! Imagine traveling on God’s “Airline.” As soon as Philip was taken from Gaza, he was found at a place called Azotus by Caesarea. Philip never stopped to question what was going on, he just started preaching again in the city where God had placed him. He ended up in Caesarea and there he lived for many years. In fact, after Paul got saved and began preaching in different cities and countries, he went to visit the famous Philip, the evangelist and his fine family in his home in Caesarea.

TEACHER SUGGESTIONS: Salvation and baptism is emphasized in this lesson.
This is a great example of the simplicity of salvation and the need for immediate obedience in following the Lord in believer’s baptism. As always, adjust your teaching according to the age group in your class but always give a clear presentation of the gospel. Show excitement in your teaching. Know the material so well that you do not need to read from your notes.

PASSPORT: Issue the “Gaza” and “Ireland” stamp for passports of students who are present. Be sure to show the travels of Philip on the map.