

Programme Suggestions

AIM: To show that God uses Christians to tell others the Good News about Jesus and that new Christians are to be baptised.

Passage: Acts 8:26-40

Memory Verse: Acts 8:35 "Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus."

Ice Breaker: Go round the group and ask each child the following question: If you were giving a Bible to someone who had never read a Bible before, and they said 'What's your favourite story in the Bible?' what would you say?

Story: After Jesus had gone back to Heaven, the disciples travelled around Judah and Samaria telling people about Him. One of the disciples was called Philip. One day, an angel from God told Philip to go to the road that goes to the south from Jerusalem. So Philip started out, and on his way he met a man from Ethiopia. Ethiopia in those days was what we now call southern Egypt and northern Sudan. This man was an important official who worked for the Queen of the Ethiopians and looked after her money. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship, so even though he wasn't one of the Jews, God's special people, he did worship God. He was on his way home, sitting in his chariot. He would have had lots of servants with him, and someone else was driving his chariot so he had plenty of time to read. When Philip met him, he was reading the book of the prophet Isaiah. (Ask the children if they have any friends who have never read a Bible before.)

The Holy Spirit told Philip to go up to the chariot. When Philip ran up to the chariot, he heard what the man was reading. "Do you understand what you're reading?" Philip asked. "How can I unless someone explains it to me?" said the Ethiopian. Then he invited Philip to join him on his chariot. He was reading a piece of Isaiah which talks about Jesus' death. "Is the prophet talking about himself or someone else?" the Ethiopian asked Philip. So Philip used the Old Testament Scriptures to tell him about the Lord Jesus Christ. He told him how he could be forgiven and have eternal life because Jesus died to save sinners. He also must have told him how God wants everyone who believes in Him to confess publicly that they believe in Jesus, by being baptised.

As they travelled along the road, they came to some water. The Ethiopian said to Philip, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptised?" He believed what Philip had told him, and trusted in Jesus to save him. So he told his servants to stop the chariot, and Philip and the Ethiopian both went into the water. Philip baptised the Ethiopian to show that he was now a follower of Jesus Christ. When they came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit took Philip away. The Ethiopian did not see Philip again, but he had Jesus with him and he went on his way rejoicing because he had found the Way to God. Philip carried on travelling around telling the Good News to everyone he met.

If Philip had not obeyed God when He told him where to go, the Ethiopian man would not have heard about Jesus. Missionaries obey God's call to go and tell people about Him. Jesus said "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always."