

# A DEACON DELIVERS

Philip and an  
Ethiopian  
Acts 8:26–40  
AD 36–37

## OVERVIEW

### BIBLE TRUTH

The Holy Spirit works through the Word and Baptism to give faith.

### BIBLE VERSE

Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. Romans 10:17

### LEARNER GOAL

I understand that God places His name on me in Baptism.

### LAW & GOSPEL

Without faith, we cannot understand the Word of Christ.

**The Holy Spirit works through Word and water to bring us to faith in Jesus as our Savior.**

### SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

Directed by an angel, Philip encounters an Ethiopian official reading from the Book of Isaiah while riding in his chariot. Realizing the Ethiopian needs help to understand the Scriptures, Philip steps in. After instructing the Ethiopian, Philip baptizes the man and then is carried away by the Spirit to Azotus.

## LESSON PREP

**BASIC** Read Acts 8:26–40 and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

**MORE TIME** Read the leader devotion, found in the digital resource center.

**IN DEPTH** Read more about the previous evangelistic work of Philip, and others, in Acts 8:4–25.

## SUPPLY LIST

### FOR THIS LESSON

- Brass paper fasteners
- Tub of water
- Toy dishes
- Bible story books
- Pretzel sticks, roll-up fruit leather snacks
- Brown paper bags
- Arch Book *Philip and the Ethiopian*

### FOR EVERY LESSON

- Bible
- Device with prepped music
- Copies of downloadable activity page
- Copies of Enduring Faith Page
- Supply Box

# LAUNCH

Plan your lesson by reading through the options in each section. Choose the activities that will best fit your learners, and mark those boxes to guide you as you teach the lesson.

## BEGIN

- Follow the Order of Opening Worship, use the Lesson Opening, or do both (part of the planning resources in the digital resource center).
- Sing songs using music found in the digital resource center, or sing your own favorite songs.

## SAY

- How did you come to church today—in a car or van? Who likes to look at books when you ride in your car or van? Today, we'll hear about a man who lived in Bible times. He was reading a book of the Bible as he rode in his chariot—a cart pulled by horses!**
- Who are some people who help you? Sometimes you get to be the helper. How do you help people? The Holy Spirit helps us too. Let's see how the Holy Spirit helps a man named Philip talk about Jesus.**

## PRAY

Dear Jesus, thank You for bringing us to church and Sunday School to learn more about Your love for us. Amen.

# LEARN

Show your Bible, and remind the children that all the stories in God's Word are true.

## TELL THE BIBLE NARRATIVE

Choose one of the options on the next page to tell the Bible narrative.

### DO THIS!

Use one or both of the following activities to talk about the Bible narrative after you've read it.

- FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE YOUNGER** Divide your class into two groups for review of this Bible narrative. Have one group act out Philip's part and the other group act out the Ethiopian's part, using sets of two chairs together for as many chariots as you need.
- FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE OLDER** Read the entire narrative from Scripture. Then have students look up **Isaiah 53:7-8**, the passage that Philip and the Ethiopian man studied together. Talk about how awesome it is that the prophet Isaiah prophesied about what would happen to Jesus hundreds of years before Jesus was even born, and how the Holy Spirit helped Philip explain to the Ethiopian that it was all about Jesus. The whole Bible points to Jesus and shows us God's plan of salvation fulfilled in Jesus.

## TALK ABOUT IT

Choose the questions that best fit the learning level of your group.

- What was the man from Africa reading in his chariot?
- Who does Philip tell the man from Africa about?
- What does the man ask Philip to do when he sees the water?
- The Ethiopian needed someone to help him understand the scriptures. Who helps you understand the Bible?

## KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Guide discussion using these key points.

- The African man was part of the government of Ethiopia. This event was the beginning of the spread of the Gospel throughout Africa.
- Help students see how the baptizing of one person spread the Gospel to so many people. The same is true for us. We can make a difference by telling just one person about Jesus, and they tell someone, and they tell someone, and the pattern repeats until many people hear the message.
- Hearing God's Word is a wonderful gift that the Lord has given us. It brings us faith and life.



### CHRIST CONNECTION

Christ, through the Holy Spirit, has called us by the Word and Baptism to be His own and still speaks to us through His Word.

# BIBLE NARRATIVE FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

STORYTELLING DIRECTIONS: Do the action rhyme at the end of the story with children.

Philip believed in Jesus. He loved Jesus and liked to tell people about Him. One day, God sent an angel to Philip. The angel told him, “Go and walk along the road that goes through the desert.”

Philip did what the angel said. When he came to the desert road, he saw a chariot—a large cart with two wheels that is pulled by horses. Inside the cart, he saw a man from Ethiopia, a country in Africa. This man was important. He worked for the queen in his country. He took care of her money. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and now he was on his way home. He was sitting in his chariot and reading from a big Bible scroll.

God the Holy Spirit told Philip, “Go over to the chariot.” When Philip got closer, he heard the man reading out loud from the Bible. Philip went over and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

The man from Africa told Philip, “No, I don’t understand this story. I need someone to explain it to me.” Then he invited Peter to come sit with him in his chariot.

The man from Africa was reading the part in the Bible that says that Jesus would die for us. Philip told the man that the words were talking about God’s promise to send a Savior to take away our sins. Then Philip said, “God has already kept His promise! God, our heavenly Father, sent His Son, Jesus, to be born as a baby. Jesus grew up to be a man. He helped many people and taught them about God’s love. Then Jesus died on the cross and rose again at Easter

to save us from sin and to win the victory over the devil so we can go to heaven someday. Everyone who believes in Jesus and is baptized will be saved.”

The Holy Spirit worked faith in the man’s heart. Soon, they came to some water. The man said, “Look! Here is some water. I want to be baptized.” So Philip and the man got out of the chariot. They went into the water, and Philip baptized the man from Africa. Then the man got back in his chariot and went home to Africa. After that, God made Philip disappear. But the man from Africa was happy as he rode home. He was a child of God now.

God makes us His children through His Word and Baptism too. He helps us share the Good News about Jesus, our Savior.

Let’s do this action rhyme together.

The Bible is God’s Word. And every word is true. *Open hands like book.*

It tells us of God’s love. How He cares for me and you. *Point to self and child.*

It tells about God’s plan. How He sent His only Son. *Point up.*

How Jesus came to save us. How He died and rose for everyone. *Make a finger cross.*

So, let’s learn what the Bible says, each and every day. *Open hands like a book.*

Then we can tell about Jesus. We’ll know just what to say. *Point to mouth.*

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# BIBLE NARRATIVE FOR OLDER CHILDREN

An angel of the Lord told Philip the deacon to get up and go south on a road through the desert that goes from Jerusalem to Gaza. Philip went right away.

A rich man from Ethiopia was riding in a chariot. The rich man worked for Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians. He was in charge of all of her treasure. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship and was on his way home. He was reading the Holy Scriptures from a scroll.

Then along came Philip, and the Spirit said, “Go!” So Philip ran to catch up to the chariot. Philip heard the man reading a passage from Isaiah 53 and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

The man said, “No. I can’t understand unless someone helps me. Please help me. Come and sit with me.”

The Ethiopian read a passage of Scripture and said, “Tell me, who is the lamb?”

Philip said, “Jesus is the lamb.” Then Philip told him more of God’s Good News—that Jesus died and rose.

“Now I understand,” said the man from Ethiopia.

As they went along, the man saw water. “Look! Here is water! Philip, can you baptize me?” He stopped the chariot, and they both went down to the water.

Philip baptized the man from Ethiopia. What a joyful day!

When they came out of the water, the Spirit carried Philip away.

The man from Ethiopia could not see Philip anymore but rejoiced and went on his way.

Philip found himself at Azotus, and he kept preaching the Gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

# LIVE

Choose from the following activities and crafts to help connect Bible learning to life.

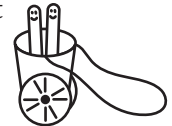
## Horse and Chariot Fun

Have children pair up and stand one in front of the other, pretending to be the horse and Ethiopian in the chariot. The first child reaches behind him to hold the hands of the second child, making “reins” with their arms. Say, **Pretend you are in a chariot going to Africa.** Play music, and have the pairs move to the music and stand still when it stops. Switch so children get to be both horse and Ethiopian.



## Chariot Craft

Cut two “wheels” out of construction paper, poke holes in the center, and use brass paper fasteners to attach to the sides of a paper cup for a chariot. (The opening on cup should be at top to hold figures.) Add yarn to the front of your chariot for reins. Draw people on two craft sticks. Use stick people and chariot to retell the story.



## Water Play

Set out a tub with water and toy dishes. Have children “wash” the dishes. Ask about other things we wash (e.g., cars, hands, clothes) and how water helps us get things clean. Say, **In church, Pastor uses water and**



**God’s Word to wash away our sin in Baptism. When you are baptized, God makes you His child.**

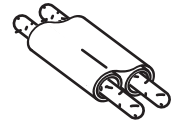
## Hide and Seek

Before class, hide Bibles and Bible story books around your room. Say, I hid some Bible books in our room. Let’s go on a treasure hunt to find them. When they are found, ask, **How is the Bible a treasure to us? It tells us that Jesus loves us, forgives us, and has made us His children forever.**



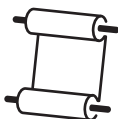
## Scroll Snack

Make scrolls by attaching a stick pretzel to each end of a piece of roll-up fruit leather snack. Roll together to serve, and have children “open” their scrolls. Ask, **How does our snack remind you of the Bible story?** Talk about how Jesus loves us and gives us pastors and teachers to teach us what the Bible says about Him.



## Bible Verse Scroll

Use brown paper bags cut into long strips as scrolls. Write today’s Bible Verse on the paper. If the children are good at copying, consider having them write Romans 10:17 themselves. Glue craft sticks to the narrow edges of the paper and then roll together like a scroll.



## Arch Book

Use the Arch Book *Philip and the Ethiopian* as a read-aloud to tell this Bible narrative. For classes with a large age difference in children, encourage the older children to read aloud to the younger children.



# LEAVE

## SAY

**Just like He did with the Ethiopian, God places His name on us in our Baptism. That’s a pretty big deal.**

## PRAY

**Dear Jesus, thank You for giving us people to help us understand the Bible and teach us about Your Word. Thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit and Baptism. Help us to share the Gospel like Philip and the Ethiopian. In Your name we pray, Jesus. Amen.**