

### MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ are ready to share the Gospel when opportunities come.

### SCRIPTURE

ACTS 8:26-40

### BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The early chapters of Acts speak to the formation of the church. It was not an easy process. Naturally, the Enemy wanted to put a halt to the church before it truly began. Because of this, persecution was widespread (Acts 8:1). But God was at work, too. Following Jesus' example from John 4, Philip proclaimed the Gospel to the Samaritans (Acts 8:4-8). But Philip didn't stay in Samaria. He obediently followed God's leading to Gaza, where he met an Ethiopian eunuch trying to understand the book of Isaiah.

Check out the *Teacher Prep Video* for this lesson: <https://vimeo.com/817783365>



**OUTREACH ROOT**  
Help students understand their God-given mission.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** We're giving you a lot of teaching material. Don't feel like you should cover everything here. You know your group better than anyone. Choose the material that will best fit your students and skip over the rest.

## OPENING

### PRAYER

Start your small group by asking the Lord to bless your discussion and time together.

*OPTIONAL: Give students an opportunity to lead the prayer.*

1-2 minutes

### OPENING QUESTIONS

- How was the week? What's the best thing that's happened? Anything major going on?
- If you could go anywhere in any time period, who would you visit, and what would you say to them?

3-5 minutes



## EXPLORE

### EXPLORE GOD'S WORD

3-5 minutes

We never know what the future holds, but we can be pretty confident that God will put opportunities in our lives to tell others about Jesus. Today we're looking at a story about Philip, an apostle of Jesus. He obeyed God's call and had unique opportunities to lead specific people to Christ. Just like Philip, God will lead us to places and people where we can tell others about Jesus. We must prepare to share our stories of Jesus because *disciples of Christ are ready to share the Gospel when opportunities come*. Sometimes we'll get called in ways that make us feel uncomfortable, but obediently following God will bring powerful opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ!

**Read Acts 8:26–30 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:**

7–10 minutes

- **Do you think Philip was afraid to follow God’s call? Why or why not?**  
We can’t know for sure, but Philip was a regular person. He was probably nervous. But that didn’t stop him!
- **How would you respond if God called you to leave your home and go to a random desert road?**  
Answers will vary. We don’t always know why God is calling us to certain places. Still, when we’re obedient to his calling, even when it’s uncomfortable or inconvenient, we might find ourselves in unique opportunities to share Jesus.
- **You might not have an angel appear and tell you what to do like Philip did, so how do you know when God is leading you to something new?**  
We can listen for God’s call through prayer and meditation on God’s Word. Sometimes God’s Spirit will make things crystal clear for us. Other times we’ll have to wait with lots of patience. Sometimes God speaks to us through other believers.



*Say something like:* When God says to go, it’s a good idea to get up and go. But that’s easier said than done! Sometimes God calls us to go to challenging places—places we might not want to go. We must learn to trust that God knows better than we do.

**Read Acts 8:30–35 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:**

7–10 minutes

- **What can we learn from the Ethiopian eunuch in this story?**  
Answers will vary. Possible answers include: he was willing to ask questions about things he didn’t understand; when he heard about Jesus, nothing could stop him from following him and getting baptized; when he went on his way, he rejoiced because of his newfound life, etc.
- **If someone came to you asking questions about God or the Bible, would you be ready? Why or why not?**  
Answers will vary. We should always be ready to tell others about our beliefs (1 Pet. 3:15), but that doesn’t mean you have to have all the answers! It’s okay to say, “I don’t know.”
- **How prepared do you think you are to lead someone to Jesus?**  
Answers will vary. Encourage students that although telling others about Jesus can be scary or they might be tempted to think they’re not qualified or capable, they don’t need to worry! God’s Spirit guides us in these situations.



*Say something like:* The Ethiopian asked Philip, “How can I understand unless someone guides me?” Nothing has changed! People still need faithful Christ-followers to show them the way to Jesus. It’s up to us to seize the opportunities we’re given and share the Gospel.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** If you have extra time, go through the next set of questions. If not, skip to the Connection section.

**Read Acts 8:36–40 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:**

7–10 minutes

- **How did the Ethiopian eunuch respond to Philip’s message?**  
He was hooked! He was so excited, he wanted to be baptized right away.
- **What does baptism mean to you? How has that been a part of your faith journey?**  
Answers will vary. Baptism is an important step in the life of the believer. It’s a public declaration that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior. Make sure students understand that although we should obey Jesus’ commands to be baptized, that act is not what saves us. Only faith in Christ—no actions we do or words we say—brings salvation.



*Say something like:* After hearing the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Ethiopian knew who he wanted to follow—and there wasn’t a minute to waste! Baptism is a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.



CONNECT & APPLY

**CONNECTION**

5-7 minutes

Show your students how Scripture connects to their lives: Use the example below OR share a personal story of how you have shared the Gospel with another person. Talk about how it went, whether good or bad.



*Example:* Famously, C.S. Lewis had lots of questions and concerns about Christianity. In fact, he was an atheist! A significant part of his faith journey was his friendship with J.R.R. Tolkien. Tolkien patiently answered his friend's questions, shared his faith, and eventually led Lewis—who would become one of the most influential Christian writers of all time—to Jesus.

- How do you share your faith with others? Is it by answering their questions? Is it by living a certain way? What works for you?

There are lots of ways to share the Gospel with others! It won't always be as easy as Philip's situation, where you just walk up to someone who is reading the Bible and start a conversation. You can share the Gospel by telling others about your faith journey, sharing what you believe about Jesus, or just living out the love of Jesus.

**MARK OF A DISCIPLE**

2-3 minutes

Disciples of Christ are ready to share the Gospel when opportunities come.

Use the *Mark of a Disciple* to reinforce the lesson and challenge students to apply it to their lives.

**APPLY IT**

5-10 minutes

How can you grow in your readiness to share the Gospel? Spend time talking to God about how you can share your faith and ask him for opportunities to tell others about him.



*Be specific:*

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Is there someone who can keep you accountable?



**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Allow students who are comfortable to share their plans for application. This may encourage or spark ideas for other students, plus add a level of accountability.



## CLOSING

### PRAYER

2-3 minutes

Take a moment to ask for prayer requests. Take time to let your students pray for each other's applications in the upcoming weeks. Spend some time praying for the courage to follow God's call no matter where it leads and the wisdom to share Jesus with those who are searching.

*Write down any prayer requests mentioned and ask your students about them at your next meeting.*

### MEMORY VERSE

*Send the memory verse graphic included in your download to your students later this week to keep the conversation going.*

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

### NOTES

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