Preschool–Grade 6

Philip and the Ethiopian

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Believe on Jesus and be baptized. The man from Ethiopia heard about Jesus, believed, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing.
Bible passage: Acts 8:26–40. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." *Acts 8:35 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, a blue towel or blue paper, 5 index cards, a marker, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 5 cards (see part 4). Lay the blue towel at one end of the room. Put a bookmark in your Bible at Acts 8.

1. Opening game: Guide Me (5 minutes)

Kids work in pairs. One child closes their eyes. The other is the guide and walks next to them, saying only words: "Two steps forward. Turn left. Stop!" The guide leads their partner to the blue towel "water" without touching anything on the way. Then they switch. Ask: *Was it hard to get there with your eyes closed? How did your guide help?* Say: "Today we will meet a man who was reading God's Word, but he didn't understand it. He said, 'How can I, except some man should guide me?' And God sent him a guide."

2. Bible story: See, Here Is Water (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Acts 8, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

After Jesus went back to heaven, His followers told everyone about Him. One of them was named **Philip**. Philip went to the city of Samaria and preached about Jesus, and many people believed (Acts 8:5–6, 8:12).

One day the angel of the Lord told Philip, "Arise, and go toward the south," to the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. It went through the **desert**, a dry, empty place (8:26). Philip got up and went.

On that road was a man from **Ethiopia**, a country far to the south. He was an important man. He worked for Candace, the queen of Ethiopia, and he was in charge of all her money (8:27). He had come all the way to Jerusalem to worship God, and now he was riding home in his **chariot**, a cart with wheels. As he rode, he was reading the book of the prophet **Esaias**. That is the Bible's old way to say Isaiah (8:28).

God's Spirit told Philip, "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." So Philip ran to the chariot (8:29–30)!

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The story continues: Philip heard the man reading, and asked, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" That means, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The man said, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" He meant, "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him (8:30–31).

The man was reading about someone who was led like a sheep, and like a lamb that stays quiet while its wool is cut (8:32). He asked, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this?" That means, who is the prophet talking about? (8:34). **Read Acts 8:35 from your Bible:** "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Say: "Isaiah was writing about Jesus! Jesus did not fight back. He let Himself be led away to die for our sins."

As they rode along, they came to some water. The man said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" That means, "Look, here is water! Is there any reason I can't be baptized?" (8:36). Philip said that if he believed with all his heart, he could. The man said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (8:37).

The man told the chariot to stop. They went down both into the water, Philip and the man, and Philip **baptized** him (8:38). When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away, and the man did not see him anymore. And the man went on his way **rejoicing**, which means very happy and glad (8:39). Philip went on preaching in all the cities until he came to Caesarea (8:40).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who told Philip to go to the desert road? *(The angel of the Lord, Acts 8:26)*
2. What was the man doing in his chariot? *(Reading the prophet Esaias, Isaiah, 8:28)*
3. What did Philip tell the man about? *(Jesus, 8:35)*
4. What did the man say when they came to water? *("See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" 8:36)*
5. How did the man feel when he went on his way? *(He was rejoicing, glad and happy, 8:39)*

4. Memory verse: Open and Point (5 minutes)

Write the verse on 5 cards: *Then Philip opened his mouth, / and began / at the same scripture, / and preached unto him / Jesus. Acts 8:35.* Explain the old words: **scripture** means God's Word written down, the Bible; **at the same scripture** means right where the man was reading; **preached unto him** means told him about. Read the verse together. On "scripture," everyone opens their hands like a Bible. On "Jesus," everyone points up. Then take one card away and say it again. Keep taking cards away until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The man from Ethiopia heard about Jesus, believed, and was baptized right away. Then he was rejoicing! God loves you very much, too. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). In this same chapter, the people Philip preached to in Samaria were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: be like Philip. Tell one person about Jesus. And when you read your Bible and don't understand something, ask a parent or teacher to guide you.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Philip and the Ethiopian word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/philip-and-the-ethiopian-word-search), crossword (vbshq.com/puzzles/philip-and-the-ethiopian-crossword), maze (vbshq.com/puzzles/philip-and-the-ethiopian-maze) or worksheet (vbshq.com/worksheets/philip-and-the-ethiopian-worksheet), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/philip-and-the-ethiopian), or **Chariot Ride:** kids line up, hands on the shoulders of the child in front, and the line is a chariot rolling around the room. When the leader reaches the blue towel, everyone says, "See, here is water!" and stops. Ask the leader a question from part 3. Then the leader goes to the back of the line, and the chariot rolls on.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for Your Word that tells us about Jesus. Help us believe on Jesus with all our hearts and obey Him. Help us tell others about Him, like Philip did. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks about being baptized: be glad and encouraging. Tell them to talk with their parents and pastor about it. Never pressure a child.

If a child asks where Philip went: the Bible says the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, and he was found at Azotus, another town, preaching (Acts 8:39–40). The Bible does not tell us more than that.

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