

# The Use of Scripture in Evangelism and Missions

By Beau K. Brewer

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Read the comments related to Acts 8:35 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How does obedience empower your heart for evangelism?

### Assignment Two

Read the comments related to Acts 8:25-27 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What comes to mind when you consider the use of your testimony mingled with Scriptures in a witnessing encounter? How does Scripture strengthen your testimony?

### Assignment Three

Read the comments related to Acts 8:30-31 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What are some questions to ask and listen for while sharing the good news? What are some pros and cons to this method of evangelism?

### Scripture to Memorize

*"And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."* Matthew 24:14

### Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand more of the value and importance of using Scripture in evangelism and missions.

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## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

The translation work of Robert Moffat, a celebrated missionary linguist of southern Africa, brought the Bible to the dialect of the peoples. One African convert said, "We have never heard of such a thing . . . but now we not only hear with our ears, we see with our eyes, we read it, our children read it. . . . We thought it was a thing to be spoken to, but now we know it has a tongue. It speaks and will speak to the whole world" (Cited by Edwin W. Smith, *The Shrine of a People's Soul*, 1929, 190). God used Moffat to bring the Scriptures to a people who had never heard about Jesus.

How can Scripture empower your evangelism throughout your city, state, nation and the world?

**Read** Acts 8:25-35 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 35. beginning with this Scripture.** Philip had spent adequate time with Jesus' apostles and was familiar with the Scriptures that spoke about Jesus. Philip was prepared to preach Jesus to an Ethiopian man.

On this particular day an Ethiopian treasurer who was returning to his homeland from worshipping in Jerusalem was reading from the Isaiah scroll about the suffering servant. Philip explained how the text from Isaiah spoke about the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. This gave Philip an immediate beginning place to introduce the Ethiopian to Jesus. After Philip had explained the Scriptures, the Ethiopian believed that the Scriptures spoke about Jesus, God's only begotten Son and risen Savior. The Ethiopian trusted Jesus for his salvation that day.

Scripture is alive and active (see Hebrews 4:12). When a disciple uses it properly in a gospel presentation, it speaks to the heart and mind of the person by the work of the Holy Spirit.

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now share an answer to the question: How does obedience empower your heart for evangelism?

### On Your Own

In the space below, write the names of some people around you with whom you need to share the gospel. Write down some Scriptures you can use to share the gospel with others. When everyone is finished, the group can share their responses.

### **Studying the Passage**

**Verse 25. testified.** While traveling back to Jerusalem through Samaria, Philip evangelized and demonstrated that he had great faith in Jesus Christ by sharing what he knew about Him. Philip's witness to the Samaritans came from a personal experience with a personal Savior. Samaritans were disliked by the Jews, and Jewish travelers often avoided the northern region (known as Samaria) if at all possible. **spoken the word of the Lord.** Philip had a specific message about Jesus from the Word to deliver to the people.

**Verse 26. Rise and go toward the south.** God guided and directed Philip in a vision through His angel messenger, an equivalent to the Spirit. Philip was told to go witness in an unlikely place. **to the road.** This road was deserted, seldom traveled, and likely the last place to water cattle before making the lengthy trek into Egypt. In obedience, Philip got up and followed directions.

**Verse 27. he rose and went.** A believer's response to God should always be immediate. Philip moved immediately into place. He did not stand around or question the authority of the message he received from God's angel. Instead, he got up and went to the exact place God directed him. Philip did not even know with whom he was going to be meeting on this road. He only knew what God had instructed him to do. Philip's obedience came from walking as closely with Jesus in spirit as when Jesus had been physically present. **He had come to Jerusalem to worship.** This Ethiopian had traveled a distance to celebrate and worship during Pentecost in Jerusalem. However, he probably had found himself rejected, considered unworthy or unacceptable to enter the temple.

In sharp distinction, John 3:16 proclaims an open-door policy with regard to salvation. The key word there is "whoever." God's salvation is for every person. God wants to have personal relationships with each person. Can you imagine being barred from a church because you were not from the right family or race?

### **Assignment Two Feedback**

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share answers to these questions: What comes to mind when you consider the use of your testimony mingled with Scriptures in a witnessing encounter? How does Scripture strengthen your testimony?

### **On Your Own**

In the space below, write your testimony with some Scriptures intertwined into your salvation story so that you can be ready to share with someone. When everyone is finished, the group can share their testimonies with one another. Remember to keep testimonies short and simple.

## Studying the Passage

**Verse 30. Do you understand what you are reading?** When a disciple shares the gospel of Jesus Christ, he must also ask the person if he understands what he is reading and hearing. Philip assumed nothing with this Ethiopian as he climbed into his chariot. The Ethiopian had been reading from Isaiah, an ancient text with crowded and hard-to-decipher Hebrew letters, but with no understanding.

Many high school English students struggle with understanding Old English literature classics such as *Beowulf* or Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Though the written alphabet is readable, most need a guide to glean the spectacular literary brilliance of these classics. The same issues can arise while witnessing! Hence, the need to stop and clarify as you share the good news.

**Verse 31. How can I, unless someone guides me?** The Ethiopian recognized his confusion. He realized that he was reading without basic understanding and that he needed a Christian guide. Isaiah 53:7-8 does not render a complete picture of the gospel of Jesus Christ, but Philip began guiding the Ethiopian with his explanation of this Scripture since it was already pressing on the Ethiopian's mind and heart. Even the early disciples needed Jesus to open their minds to the truth found in the Scriptures (see Luke 24:45).

## Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share answers to these questions: What are some questions to ask and listen for while sharing the good news? What are some pros and cons to this method of evangelism?

## On Your Own

In the space below, write some questions you can easily use to begin a gospel conversation with others. When everyone is finished, the group can share their responses.

## **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

## **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

## **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

## **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

## **Prayer**

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

## **At Home: Nail It Down**

For many reasons believers need to share the good news of Jesus Christ directly from Scripture.

1. God's Word speaks to the hearts, minds, and souls of people (see Hebrew 4:12).
2. God's Word is authoritative (see 2 Timothy 3:16).
3. Jesus almost always used Scriptures when sharing the good news with people.

Scripture speaks to people's hearts. Wise disciples let those being witnessed to read the Scriptures for themselves. You might not have an answer for every question and you might even stumble all over your rehearsed presentation, but the words that will stick with the lost far longer than yours will be the words of Scripture resonating in their hearts.

In what ways can you improve your evangelism through Scripture today, tomorrow and for the rest of your life?

Like Moffat, your providing an understanding of Scripture can guide a lost soul into the kingdom of God today and change eternity forever. Make it a part of your regular quiet time to memorize verses, prepare your gospel presentation and pray for opportunities to share the gospel with the lost.

### **Follow up Question**

*What Scriptures do you use when you share the gospel?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.