

Words of

Truth & Reason

Acts 26:25

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Philip Taught an Ethiopian

*What was a man from Ethiopia doing near Jerusalem?
Find out what he learned when he met Philip.*

Have you read Acts 8:26-39, where Philip studied the Scriptures with the man from Ethiopia? You should!

In verses 26-34, Philip met him by the miraculous help of the Holy Spirit. He heard the Ethiopian reading from Isaiah and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”. The Ethiopian understood that he was reading a prophet who was writing about someone; he simply was not sure who was being written about so he asked Philip his question.

In verse 35, Philip answered his question by preaching Jesus which included topics like sin, repentance, baptism, the kingdom of God, and

authority of Jesus Christ. This is always what Philip preached when he preached Jesus (Acts 8:5, 12-13).

In verses 36-39, after hearing about Jesus, the Ethiopian’s next question was “What hinders me from being baptized?” Clearly, he had faith in Jesus and was willing to repent of sin. After he confessed his faith, they both went down into the water, and he baptized him. The Ethiopian was baptized into Jesus and His death by faith in the working of God to save him, so he rejoiced after his baptism and returned to his home (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12).

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Author & Editor: David Halbrook

Lessons From Philip & the Ethiopian

By reading Acts 8:26-39, where Philip taught the man from Ethiopia, you should learn these important lessons:

1. The Holy Spirit spoke through words not feelings The Spirit told Philip where to go. Today, many people say the Holy Spirit guides them by inner feelings or “illuminating Scripture.” The Holy Spirit has always used clear words to direct men and does so today by Scripture. His words there are sufficiently clear, not requiring constant “illumination” or internal, supernatural explanation. When some part of Scripture is not understood, we can learn by studying with others. That’s why we print these articles, offer to study with you, and want your feedback.

2. Philip preached Jesus How did the Ethiopian know he needed to be baptized? Philip preached Jesus to him! Today, “preachers” talk about Jesus, sin, and salvation but leave out this baptism that saves (1 Pet. 3:21). Examine what you hear!

3. What is baptism? Philip could pour or sprinkle water on the Ethiopian inside the chariot, but baptism required them both to go down into and come up out of the water. This helps us see that pouring or sprinkling water is not baptism. Baptism means immerse, or submerge. Have you accepted the baptism of Jesus?

Have You Not Read?

*What have you seen displayed at typical manger scenes?
Does what you often see match what you can read?*

When the Pharisees asked Jesus a question, He sometimes asked them whether they had read the Scriptures. That was a bold question to ask religious leaders! It is worth asking today when we see manger scenes with three wise men.

Matthew 2:1 says, after Jesus was born...wise men from the East came.... God did not say how many wise men came. Human tradition adds to God's word, saying there were three and naming them. These men came to Jerusalem telling the news that the King of the Jews was born. After speaking to Herod they went to Bethlehem, and when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child (Matt. 2:11). Did you catch that? They saw Jesus at the house, not in the manger.

Those who display such manger scenes show that their faith is a mixture of Scripture and human tradition. When you realize that none of the apostles or churches in Scripture observed a "holy day" for Jesus' birth, you must wonder why it is so common today. If you do not think this matters, have you not read God's warnings in our article below? If not, then please do!

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"Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?"

Matthew 15:3

You are invited to:
Sunday AM Bible classes:
10:00AM
Sunday AM Worship:
10:45AM
Sunday PM Worship:
5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes
& Worship: 7:00 PM

God Warns About Human Traditions

Have you not read God's warnings concerning human traditions? Not all traditions are sinful but making Christmas a holy day of the church is sinful because:

1. In Matthew 15:3, Jesus warns of human traditions which transgress the commands of God. Christmas does this when it is viewed as equally or more important than the weekly Lord's Day. Do you see the harm in man declaring a day to be holy and then elevating it alongside, or above, a day God declares to be holy? When men make Christmas and the Lord's Day equally important they transgress God's law by their traditions. Matthew 15:9 tells how serious this is.

2. In Colossians 2:8, Paul warns of empty deceit. A religious lie is empty deceit. Christmas is typically called "Jesus' birthday," but God did not tell us the day of Jesus' birth. It is empty deceit to say "Christmas is Jesus' birthday." It is well-known that The Catholic Church chose December 25 to replace a pagan holiday. To claim December 25 is the day of Jesus' birth is nothing more than empty deceit.

There is more study and discussion of this topic at our website. Send us your comments and questions on this topic either at our website, by mail, or by phone.

Questions from this issue's articles:

1. What was the Ethiopians first question after hearing Philip preach Jesus?
2. When was included in Philip's lesson when he preached Jesus?
3. What errors are most common at modern manger scenes?
4. What "empty deceit" is commonly taught during the "Christmas season" ?

* Mail your answers to the church of Christ in Quail Valley 4104 E. Harrison St, Batesville, AR 72501
OR, e-mail your answers to **TruthAndReason@suddenlink.net**

* If you have a comment or question, call (793-6700; 569-4491) or visit our website **WWW.QVCOC.COM**

* All past and current issues of *Truth and Reason* are available at our website—tell a friend!