

**THE EARLY CHURCH:
PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN*
LESSON 3**

LESSON OVERVIEW

Key Point: Let Jesus' love flow.

Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Story: Acts 8:26-39

Key Verse: "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

ITEMS NEEDED

Each class needs the following:

- Ice Cream Sundaes—enough supplies for each student to make and decorate their own.
- Crepe paper—2 rolls for each class
- Bible Verse Poster (Kindergarten and 1st grade has a shorter version)

BEFORE CLASS

- Put up the Bible Verse Poster for today.
- Set out any items you need for today's lesson
- Pray for each student by name.

NOTE: Today is Volcano Day as you will see from the lesson.

OPENING ACTIVITY

SAY: Welcome to Volcano Day. Just like lava flows from a volcano, today we're going to talk about how Jesus' love can flow from you to others.

CONTROL TOOL

Anytime you say, "Let Jesus' love flow," students should shout back, "Wherever you go." Feel free to have a boys vs. girls or a side vs. side competition to see who can say it the loudest. And remember that students are going to mimic you--If you say it in an excited, energetic way, that's how they'll respond. If you say it halfway or timidly, they'll respond in a like manner.

Activity*

Instruct your class to stand in a circle or if you desire, create several circles with 8 to 10 students in each. Make sure the crepe paper streamers are easily accessible. Explain that when you say go, the leader is going call out a name and say, "[Name], here's Jesus' love." Hold the end of the crepe paper and throw the streamers to the person whose name you called. Then that student will call someone else's name and toss it to them. Be sure to tell them to hang onto the roll before throwing it. Tell the others to keep their eyes open and be ready to catch the roll. Keep going until every one is holding onto the crepe paper. If you desire, keep going until everyone has thrown it two or three times or until you run out of paper. Encourage the kids to move quickly as they "pass Jesus' love" to the others.

SAY: On the count of three, we're going to see how quickly you can throw all the paper in the trash can and have a seat in the circle. Ready...1-2-3...Go!

CONTROL TOOL

Leader: *Let Jesus' love flow* / Students: *Wherever you go!*

Discussion

ASK: What happened as "Jesus' love" flowed? (It made a web; it was funny; we got all tangled up.)

ASK: How is this like or unlike what happens when we share Jesus' love in real life? (Both are fun; it brings people together; etc.)

ASK: What might happen in your school if kids and teachers let Jesus' love flow? (Kids wouldn't get teased; everyone would have a friend; we'd be a lot happier; people would help each other.)

SAY: When we played the game, it really changed the game area. Streamers were everywhere! Imagine how people who love Jesus can change their schools—even their world—if they let Jesus' love flow every day!

Illustration*

SAY: When you share Jesus with others, His love flows from one person to another—sort of like a wave. In fact, we’re going to see how fast we can make a “wave” flow across the room. Start the “wave” on one side and let it move across the students with each person standing and throwing up their arms as it passes. Then see how fast your students can do it—You can even choose a volunteer to help guide it.

Do the wave again, but this time, as the wave goes around, have the students shout out the name of a place they go.

SAY: If you have given your life to Jesus, you can share God’s love with others wherever you go.

CONTROL TOOL

Leader: *Let Jesus’ love flow* / Students: *Wherever you go!*

BIBLE LESSON

SAY: In the past we’ve learned about how Jesus and his disciples showed God’s love, but it wasn’t always easy. Not everyone believed that Jesus rose from the dead. They thought that Jesus’ followers were lying. One man, named Saul, whom we will learn more about next week, arrested Christians and even had some of them killed for following Jesus. As a result many of Jesus’ followers left Jerusalem to find safer places to live. The book of Acts tells us about a follower of Jesus named Philip. Listen to what happened to him.

Tell your students to get their Bibles ready for a Bible Drill.

Ready...Acts 8:26...Go!

Read from your Bible Acts 8:26-39.

Ask your students to follow along with you and remind them that their Bibles may not use the exact same words (because there are different translations) but that they have the exact same message. Also tell your students to listen very carefully because afterwards you are going to ask them some questions about what they heard.

Divide your class into two teams and take turns asking each team the following “Listening Questions.”

Listening Questions

Who told Philip to go south on the road? (An angel)

From where was the man in the chariot? (Ethiopia)

What was the name of the Queen of the Ethiopians? (Candace)

What did the Ethiopian do for the Queen? (He was in charge of all the treasury of the Queen)

From where in the Bible was he trying to read? (The book of Isaiah)

What did the Ethiopian do after do after Philip left? (He went on his way rejoicing)

(NOTE: If any of your students ask what a eunuch is, simply explain that it was a man who was unable to have children that served a royal family. Don’t make a big deal out of this and don’t bring it up unless they ask.)

ASK: **When would this have happened—before or after Jesus’ life?** (After—the Gospels come first in the New Testament. The book of Acts follows them.)

LESSON ACTIVITY

Tell your students to find a partner. *(Remember to help students so that none ever feel left-out.)* Instruct them to choose who will represent Philip, the one who knows Jesus—and who will be the Ethiopian, the stranger from a far away country who doesn't know Jesus.

SAY: Ethiopians, since you're from a distant land, go sit in that far corner over there. *(Point to one of the corners of the room.)*

SAY: Since Jerusalem wasn't safe, Philip had gone to Samaria to teach people there about Jesus. *(Send all the Philips to an area of the room that you will designate as Samaria.)* While Philip was in Samaria, an angel came and said, "Go south down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza." Philip obeyed. *(Lead the Philips toward the Ethiopians.)*

SAY: When Philip got there, he saw the Ethiopian riding in a chariot. Now, the Ethiopian was a very important man and Philip saw that he was reading something from God's Word. *(Tell the Philips to go stand next to their Ethiopian partners.)*

SAY: The Ethiopian didn't understand what he was reading in the Bible.

Have the Ethiopians REPEAT after you: "It doesn't make sense to me." "I don't know what this means."

SAY: The Ethiopians didn't understand what was written in God's Word, but Philip understood.

Have the Philips REPEAT the following after you:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, / and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, / so he did not open his mouth. / In his humiliation / he was deprived of justice. / Who can speak of his descendants? / For his life / was taken from the earth."

ASK: **Who is this talking about?**

SAY: Philip knew the verse was about Jesus. It was telling how Jesus would be killed even though he hadn't done anything wrong. Remember, Jesus was perfect, but He died to make a way to take away our sins. So Philip sat in the chariot and told the Ethiopian all about Jesus. If you're a Philip, sit next to your partner and tell him something you know about Jesus.

SAY: The Ethiopian was so excited about what Philip said that he committed himself to Christ and wanted to get baptized as soon as he could. So when the chariot passed some water, Philip baptized him. The Ethiopian wanted to show that he was a follower of Jesus.

SAY: On the count of three, I want everyone to return to the circle. Ready...1-2-3...Go!

CONTROL TOOL

Leader: *Let Jesus' love flow* / Students: *Wherever you go!*

Discussion

ASK: **Can being baptized get a person to heaven?** (If you want, ask your students to raise their hands for yes, and then for no. You might be surprised by some of their answers.)

ASK: **Can you name anyone we have recently had in a Bible lesson, who believed in Jesus, who wasn't baptized, and who went to heaven?** (The thief on the cross next to Jesus.)

ASK: Was the criminal on the cross who believed in Jesus (whom we learned about several weeks ago) baptized? (No.)

ASK: Who remembers what Jesus promised him? (Today you'll be with me in paradise [heaven].)

SAY: Baptism doesn't get a person into heaven. Instead it's the first big step of following Jesus once a person has given his life to Him. Baptism comes after salvation as a symbol that God has already saved you.

CHALLENGE VERSE

Get ready for some Bible Drills

Ready...Matthew 5:14...Go!

ASK: Do you think a volcano with lava on it could be seen from far way. (It can be seen from very far away.)

SAY: When you live for Jesus, His life and love will shine through you. Even from a distance people will notice that there is something different about you. By how you talk and by how you live, Jesus' love will flow through you to others.

CONTROL TOOL

Leader: *Let Jesus' love flow* / **Students:** *Wherever you go!*

ASK: How did Philip share Jesus' love with the Ethiopian? (He told him about Jesus; He taught him about God's Word; He helped him to understand the Bible.)

ASK: How can you share Jesus' love at school? At church? At home? Elsewhere? (I can tell people about God's Word; I can be a friend; I can tell what I know about Jesus.)

ASK: Do you think it was hard for Philip to help the Ethiopian? Why or why not? (Yes, because he didn't know him; Yes, because the Ethiopian could've been mean to him; No, because Philip trusted God.)

ASK: When is it hard for you to let Jesus' love flow at school? (When my friends think it's weird; When I'm around kids I don't know; etc.)

CONTROL TOOL

Leader: *Let Jesus' love flow* / **Students:** *Wherever you go!*

Dismiss to Small Groups

SAY: Right now it is time for our small groups, so I'm going to dismiss you one row at a time.

Dismiss rows of chairs to the tables in the rooms. Give them specific directions where to go.

SMALL GROUP

Craft/Snack Activity—*Ice Cream Sundae Volcanoes*

While your students create and eat, ask the following questions:

SAY: Your sundae is sort of like a volcano except with chocolate flowing down the side.

ASK: What should you let flow out of your life? (Jesus' love)

ASK: How is a volcano kind of like our verse for the day? (The both have a light on a hill.)

ASK: Who remembers what our verse today meant?

ASK: Where would today's Bible story be found on the Bible Book Chart?

ASK: Why is the book of Acts called "Acts"? (Because it's all about the "acts" of the disciples and others like Paul who later followed Jesus.)

ASK: What is the name of the book that comes after Acts? (Romans)

WRAP IT UP

The following can be done in either small groups or in the large group by coming together again at the end of your time.

Bible Skills

Get ready for some Bible Drills

Explain that today they are going to be looking for New Testament books of the Bible. You may want to do these drills in front of your Bible Book Chart.

Ready...The book of Acts...Go!

Ready...The book of Romans...Go!

Ready...1 Corinthians 13:4...Go!

Read this verse aloud after it's found.

(If you have more time, feel free to look up other books as well.)

KEY: This is God's kind of love and when you love people the way He does, they will know there is something different about you. That's what it means to be a light—You couldn't miss a city on a hill or a volcano erupting, and people will take notice of someone who is living for Jesus by sharing His love and life.

CONTROL TOOL

Leader: *Let Jesus' love flow* / Students: *Wherever you go!*

Prayer Time

Take prayer requests and pray for your students

EXTRA TIME

Help your students memorize today's verse.



“You are the light of the world.
A city on a hill cannot be
hidden.”

Matthew 5:14