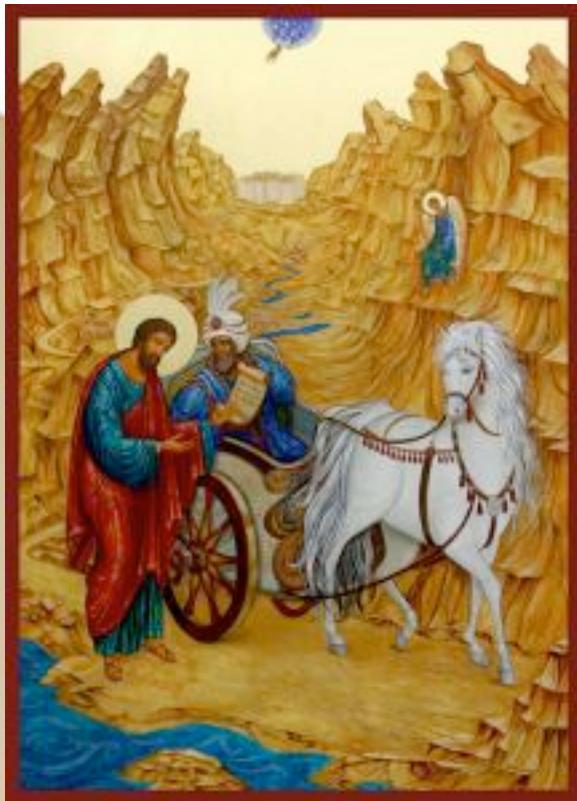


April 21, 2013

Lesson 34: Philip Baptizes an Ethiopian



Acts 8:26-39

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he

was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.” The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

Philip Baptizes an Ethiopian

Acts 8:26-39



What is a EUNUCH????

Eunuchs were men who were either by birth physically deformed or else forcibly castrated. These men served royal families because they could be trusted. A man who couldn't produce an heir wouldn't be a threat to overtake the throne and could be trusted to guard the harem. In Jewish law, however, the deformation of these men meant that they could not be full members of the worship community. So the fact that this man is a foreigner and one who would have been excluded from full participation in the Jewish community makes the point of this story even more dramatic- In the kingdom of God

ALL ARE WELCOME!

April 21, 2013

The Big Story Truth: God uses ALL of us to tell the good news of Jesus! We never know when it is that God will ask us to share the story!

About the Scripture Passage: Philip was one of the disciples that we heard about in our Scripture passage last week who was put in charge of helping with food distribution. (It's like the equivalent of helping serve a potluck in the church kitchen.) But as he was out and about going about his business in the middle of the week, he got some surprising instructions. He was on the road when he saw an Ethiopian man who was reading the book of Isaiah from the Bible. The instructions from God were to go up and say hello! Even more than that, God had put Philip in the right place at the right time to tell this man about the Good News of Jesus' resurrection. Since this Ethiopian was a court official, he was in a position to be able to take this news back to Ethiopia and to tell everyone in his home country about Jesus. To this day, the Christian church is strong in Ethiopia and claims this story as one of the founding moments for their church.

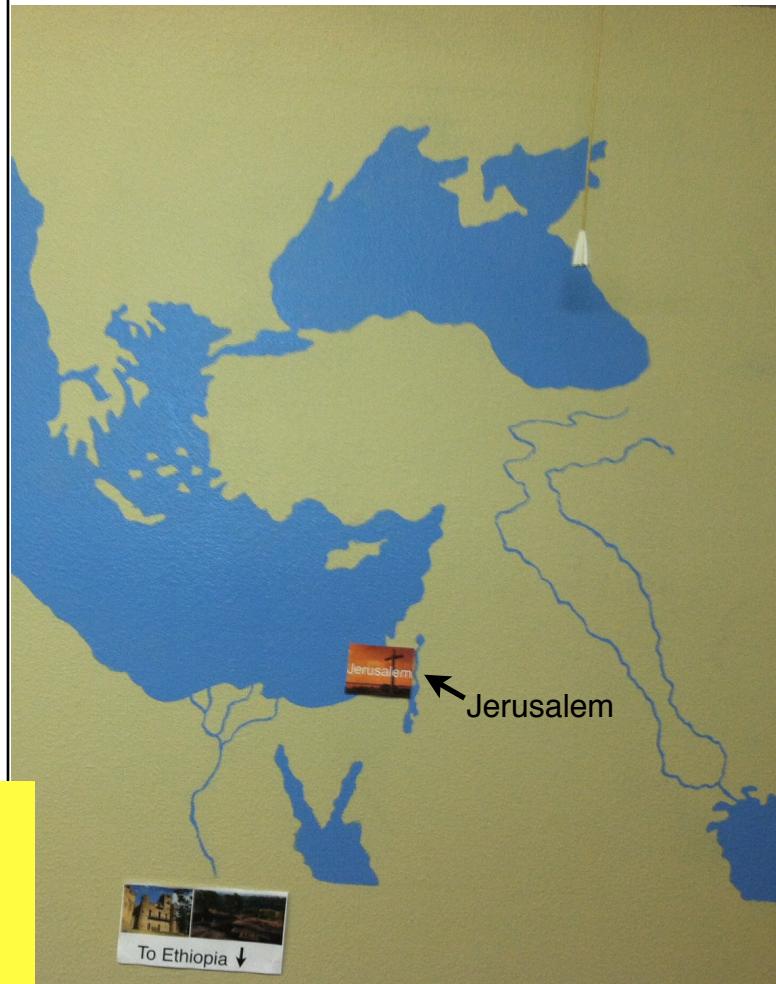
Philip sharing the gospel story with this one man and this man sharing the good news of Jesus back home had a huge impact on history and even still to this day!

Making the Connection: This story is a perfect example of how someone just going about their daily routine suddenly was given an opportunity to share about Jesus- and because he did, history was changed forever! Our kids have opportunities daily to share about their faith, to answer questions about why church is so important to them, to tell others about Jesus. This lesson is an opportunity for us to lift up the importance of their ministry! Who knows how history will be changed because of what they are empowered to share!!!

Where in the World Are We? All throughout the season of lent, we were journeying toward Jerusalem. We spent Holy Week in Jerusalem... now we are journeying out from Jerusalem to the rest of the world. Here Philip is on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza (he's headed South). If your class is using a wall map, now is the time to take down the magnified view and look at the whole region of the world as a whole. Put up the labels for Jerusalem and Ethiopia. Help the kids appreciate just how far this man was traveling and how far the Gospel is going to spread because of this one conversation!

For Your Reflection:

Who first told you about Jesus? What opportunities have you had this week to share about your faith? Did you take them? If not, what stopped you? If you did, what do you hope and pray is the result?



Preschool/Early Elementary

Materials Needed:

- Large world map or globe
- Spark Story Bible
- Guest Speaker (See Activity Below)
- Cardboard tube (like toilet paper roll- 1 per student)
- Construction paper and/or other craft supplies (glitter, stickers, etc.)
- Aluminum foil
- Streamers or ribbon
- All-purpose white glue or tape
- Scissors

Before the Kids Arrive:

If you have invited a guest to visit your classroom, make arrangements with them for what time they should arrive and visit with them ahead of time about the type of questions you and the class would like them to talk about. Be sure to have a chair in your room that is a comfortable size for an adult guest. Set the map or globe out on the floor or table so that you can gather around it.

Experiencing the Story:

Welcome the children into the room. They probably will notice the map/globe out on the table right away and want to look at it. Encourage them to look. Point out where we live on the map and some other places that they might be familiar with. When all the students have gathered, ask them about places that they have traveled. Take some time to find these places on the map/globe. What is the furthest place they have traveled to? How did they get there? Did they drive a car? Did they fly in an airplane?

Tell the kids that today we are going to hear the story of a man who was traveling a very long way from home! He was in a whole different country! But they didn't have cars or planes in Bible times, so he had to travel a different way. Open the Spark Story Bible to page 510. Show the kids the picture of the Ethiopian man in a chariot. Have they ever heard of a chariot before? (If so, ask them what they know about a chariot). For the others, explain that a chariot was kind of like a cart pulled by a horse that a person could ride in! Chariots were a lot of times used by important people. It just so happens that the man riding in

the chariot in our story today was very important! He worked for the queen of Ethiopia. Show on the map/globe about where Ethiopia would be (it's in the northwestern part of Africa). He was traveling very far from home. He was traveling near Jerusalem (point to where Jerusalem would be in the middle east). That was a long way to go without a car or a plane!

Well, it just so happens on his trip that he met one of Jesus' friends, a man named Philip. Let's read the story! Read "Philip and the Ethiopian" (pages 510-513 in the Spark Story Bible.)

Talk with kids about the question on page 513. What would you say if someone asked you the question that the Ethiopian man asked, "Who is Jesus?"

Activities:

1. Invite a guest speaker to come to your class to talk about how they would answer the question "Who is Jesus?" A "Grandma" or "Grandpa" might be a great person to invite! (If you need help thinking of someone to invite, ask your pastor!) Talk ahead of time with that person about the lesson that you will be doing and that you would like them to share a little bit about their faith with the preschool class. (You might even share the sample questions below with them ahead of time so they can prepare answers that the preschoolers will appreciate!) Your class might prepare some additional questions before the visitor arrives or you might lead the discussion with the guest. Some questions might include things like:

- How old were you when you first heard about Jesus?
- Who told you about Jesus?
- How did you learn more about Jesus?
- Why is Jesus important to you?
- What do you most want other people to know about Jesus?

2. Make Microphones: Students decorate a cardboard tube with paper, crayons, glitter, stickers, or any other craft materials. Wad up a piece of aluminum foil into a ball. Make sure it is big enough to stick out of the end of the tube. Glue or tape the foil into the top of the cardboard tube. Glue ribbons or streamers on the other end of the tube. Give students the assignment to use their microphones to interview their family and church member family this morning about who Jesus is. If they encounter someone who doesn't know about Jesus, tell kids that its their turn to share the good news! Make sure

everyone has a chance to practice interviewing and sharing with classmates and teacher before they leave Sunday School today!

Upper Elementary/Middle School

Materials Needed:

- Spark NRSV Bible for Each Student
- 60 Second Challenge Card (1 for each student)
- Smash Books
- 3 Wooden Dice (4 if you are going to use the optional challenge!)
- Situations handouts cut out (or a marker) to put on dice
- Any fun/funny props you might want to include

Before the Students Arrive:

Review the lesson; prepare the situation dice by taping (or writing) each phrase on each side of the 3 dice. Try a few rolls on your own to come up with a few helps or examples in case the kids need your encouragement. Set out the smash books around the table so kids will have their smash books in front of them as soon as they enter the room. As each child enters the room and is seated, slip them a “60 Second Challenge” Card.

Experiencing the Story:

As students come into the room, and find their smash books, hand them a “60 Second Challenge Card.” The card reads, “If you only had 60 seconds to tell someone who Jesus is... what would you say? Think about it. When your teacher says go, your 60 seconds are starting. Write what you would say in your smash book.” When everyone has gathered, say “Go!” Give the kids one minute to complete their challenge. When they’ve finished, ask them about what they wrote. Was the challenge easy? Hard? Why did they choose to say what they did?

Tell the kids that today our Bible story is about someone who suddenly found themselves in a situation where they were asked about Jesus. Without warning, this guy named Philip had to answer that question and because he did, history was changed forever.

Take turns reading Acts 8:26-39. As you read, you may choose to interrupt and provide some context or answer questions. You may have to answer the question of what a “eunuch” is by describing how men who couldn’t have children (either

because they were born with a physical deformity or because they were injured in order not to be able to do that were trusted by kings and queens of foreign countries. This is a good time also to refer to the map. (See the introduction to this lesson for background information on this passage and location).

Tell students that Philip was just an ordinary church member, but his quick thinking in being willing to share his faith led to something very special happening. The Ethiopian man took the good news about Jesus with him back to Ethiopia. He shared the good news with the queen and officials in Ethiopia and because of what he said an entire country believed in Jesus. Even today, Ethiopia has a strong Christian heritage because Philip shared the good news with this man who shared it with his whole country!

Activity:

We never know when or where we will be when God will provide the opportunity for us to share our faith. Today's activity is to have a little fun with practicing how we can share our faith with others.

1. The student who has the biggest shoe size goes first at rolling all three situation dice. One of the dice will give the description of the person (or people) that the student is talking to. Another will tell where the conversation is taking place. The final dice will give some other bit of context. (Hopefully the situations that result from rolling the dice are somewhat humorous at times!)
2. The student with smallest shoe size is the asker for this first round. After the dice has been rolled, this asker says "Who is Jesus?" For two minutes the two have a conversation with the teller being the one to share the good news about Jesus and the asker asking questions to dig deeper and learn more about who Jesus is.
3. After the first round, the "asker" becomes the teller and another person is chosen to be the asker. The activity continues until everyone has had a chance to both ask and tell.
4. If the kids need some additional challenge for this roll playing, add another dice with the "challenge" situations on it.

When you have finished, talk with the kids about what it was like to be in the position of answering questions about Jesus and about their faith.

Was it easy or challenging? What was funny about doing this in a class setting? What do they think it would be like in real life? Have they ever had the opportunity to share their faith in real life? If so when? What was the context? What happened?

Remind kids that we don't always see the result of sharing our faith, but that we are called to tell others about Jesus when we have the opportunity trusting that God will give us the right words and will work in that our lives and in the life of the person we're sharing with!

Close with prayer.



• MAP of the WORLD •



<p>If you only had 60 seconds to tell someone who Jesus is.... what would you say?</p> <p>Think about it.</p> <p>When your teacher says “Go” your 60 seconds are starting. Write what you would say in your Smash Book.</p>	
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Your Best Friend	Your Worst Enemy	A Stranger	A Family Member	Your Coach	A Store Clerk
In School	At a Football Game	In the Mall	At the Dentist's Office	At a Golf Course	At a Waterpark
Riding in the Batmobile	Sitting at a Table	Swimming	Shoot Spit Wads	Singing	Jumping Up and Down
After someone has just died	When they are about to move far away	When you are both being bullied	When you've gotten into trouble	When someone is really sick	When parents are fighting

In
School

At a
Football
Game

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