

# SHINE Devotional

## Week 25 – Lesson 1



### Black Lives Matter to God

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Scripture reading Acts 8:26-27

*“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go [to]...a man of Ethiopia...”*

The Angel of the Lord only makes an appearance twelve times in the New Testament.

- 1<sup>st</sup> The announcement of the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:11).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> The announcement of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 1:26).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Assured Joseph that it was acceptable for him to take Mary as his wife (Mathew 1:20 & 24).
- 4<sup>th</sup> Announced to the shepherds the birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 2:9).
- 5-6<sup>th</sup> Appeared twice to Joseph to tell him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt. After the death of Herod, he appeared to tell them to return to Israel (Matthew 2:13 & 19).
- 7<sup>th</sup> Opened the door of the tomb that held Jesus (Matthew 28:2).
- 8-9<sup>th</sup> Appeared to release the apostles from prison, twice (Acts 5:19 & 12:7).
- 10<sup>th</sup> Smote Herod, because he did not give God glory (Acts 12:23).
- 11<sup>th</sup> In Acts 7:30, we are told that he was present in the burning bush with Jehovah when He spoke to Moses.

Each of these events were significant events that directed the advancement of the Christian faith, and affected the entire world. The Angel of the Lord only appears when a significant event is about to take place.

In our passage today, God the Father sent the Angel of the Lord to direct Philip to leave a thriving ministry, go down to Gaza in the desert, to give the Gospel to a man from Ethiopia, a black man. This man had a prominent position working for the queen of Ethiopia. Through his influence, the Gospel was taken to the land of Ethiopia. Today, there are over sixty million people in Ethiopia that call themselves Christians. That is more than 60% of the population. Many years before the radical anarchists' group “Black Lives Matter” came into existence, God let us know that black lives matter. In fact, all lives matter to God. That is why you and I need to be witnesses. When you remember that God loves everyone, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

# SHINE Devotional

## Week 25 – Lesson 2



### God Cares About Individuals

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Scripture reading Luke 15:10

*“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”*

The story of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch is profound because it teaches us that God cares about the individual. Jesus shares this same truth in Luke 15 when He tells the parable of the lost sheep, lost coin, and prodigal son. Each story deals with one animal, one item, and one individual that was lost, and the great rejoicing that takes place when that lost item or individual is found. Our passage today says, *“there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”* This passage does not say that the angels rejoice, it says there is rejoicing *“in the presence.”* The One that is in the presence of the angels of God is God Himself. It is revealed to us in this passage that God rejoices when someone gets right with Him. God cares about individuals.

In ministry, it is easy to get focused on numbers. When a church reaches a certain plateau, the goal is to get more people and reach the next level of growth. I believe when we think this way, we do our people a disservice and we do God a disservice. We are here to represent God and He cares about the individual. He cares about everyone in your Sunday school class. He cares about every member of your church. If you are a Prayer Group Leader, He cares about every member in your Prayer Group. He has sent you to minister to them individually and to show them His care and love. The purpose of the church is to represent Jesus Christ. The mission of the church is to reach people, men and women, and boys and girls with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and train them to serve Him. That does not work in masses. It works with individuals caring for individuals.

God cares about individuals, so should you. When you begin to pour your life into those around you, you will SHINE for Christ.

# SHINE Devotional

## Week 25 – Lesson 3



### Believers Must Be Willing to Share

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Scripture reading Acts 8:30-31

*“And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.”*

God miraculously sent Philip to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to this Ethiopian man. This man was obviously seeking for truth. He had been to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah God during Passover and Pentecost. He was returning to Ethiopia and Philip walked by his chariot. Philip heard him reading the Book of Isaiah and asked if he understood what he was reading. The man replied, “How can I understand unless someone guides me?” The truth of the matter is the Scriptures are a mystery to lost people. Paul said, *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (1 Corinthians 2:14). This puts a heavy burden on you and me as believers.

1. We need to know the Scriptures. That means we should be in the Word of God every day.
2. We need to learn a simple plan for sharing the Gospel. Here is a simple outline:

Five things you must know:

1. The Bible is the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16).
2. Jesus is the God of the Bible (Revelation 1:8).
3. We are all sinners (Romans 3:10 & 3:23).
4. We deserve spiritual death (Romans 6:23).
5. Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose from the dead (Romans 5:8).

One thing you must do, and that is call on Jesus (Romans 10:13).

I encourage you to memorize that plan so that you are ready to give the Gospel to everyone around you. The world is lost, and they need believers who are willing to share. When you determine you are going to share Christ with those around you, then you, as a believer, will SHINE.

# SHINE Devotional

## Week 25 – Lesson 4



### Saved People Desire to Obey

Scripture reading Acts 8:32-36

*“The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?”*

Two very important lessons can be learned from this passage of Scripture.

1. If you want to know about Jesus, you must study the Scriptures. Jesus said, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me”* (John 5:39). Philip used the Old Testament Scriptures to share with the Ethiopian man who Jesus Christ was and what He had done for him on the cross. If you want to know Christ and obey Christ, you must know the Scriptures.
2. Christians have a desire to obey God. When this man heard the teaching of the Word of God, he heard about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He wanted to do what God told him to do. He wanted to get baptized. He wanted to identify with Jesus Christ. So, he asked the question, *“what doth hinder me to be baptized?”* When the Apostle Paul got saved, his question to the Lord whom he had persecuted and rejected was, *“what wilt thou have me to do?”* (Acts 9:6). The Spirit of God produces a heart of submission. *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God”* (Ephesians 5:18 & 21).

When a person is genuinely born again, they will desire to do what God wants them to do. Immediately upon believing in Jesus Christ the Ethiopian eunuch said, “I want to get baptized.” He had a submissive heart. When you reflect a heart of submission to the things of God, you, as a believer, will SHINE.

# SHINE Devotional

## Week 25 – Lesson 5



### Baptism Is Very Important

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Scripture reading Acts 8:37-38

*“And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.”*

Baptism has nothing to do with salvation. We are saved by grace through faith alone. However, baptism does identify who I am. Baptism identifies me with Jesus Christ. When I am baptized by immersion, going down under the water, and coming up from the water, it declares that I believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism not only identifies me with the Lord Jesus Christ, but with the church I am baptized in. I have explained to people for years that if I am baptized in a Methodist church, I am a Methodist. If I am baptized in a Catholic church, I am a Catholic. If I am baptized in a Presbyterian church, I am a Presbyterian. If I am baptized in a Baptist church, I identify with the teachings of that Baptist church. Baptism is very important because it identifies me with Jesus Christ and the church where I am baptized.

Philip was a deacon of the first church in Jerusalem. He was obviously an elder at the church that was started in Samaria. He had the authority to baptize as an ordained servant of these two churches. When the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized, he became a member of that church in Samaria. He immediately went forth as a missionary to Ethiopia with a heart of obedience, which was proven by his baptism. Baptism does not save us. It identifies us. Another very important truth about baptism, is that it is always after salvation not before salvation. It is also always by immersion as we see in this example. Baptism is important because Christ commanded it.

As a new convert, if you have not followed the Lord in believer’s baptism, I encourage you to do so this week. When you obey Christ in this area of baptism, then you, as a believer, will SHINE.

# SHINE Devotional

## Week 25 – Lesson 6



### Salvation and Obedience Bring Joy

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Scripture reading Acts 8:39

*“And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”*

When you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ and asked Him to be your Lord, Saviour, and God, the Bible teaches us that the Spirit of God came to live inside of you. You were born of the Spirit (John 3:3). When His Spirit came to live inside of you, He made your dead spirit come to life. *“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins”* (Ephesians 2:1). The Spirit of God brought life to you. *“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)”* (John 7:38-39). The evidence that a person is filled with the Holy Spirit of God is that they will produce the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, and peace. Salvation and obedience bring joy.

The Ethiopian eunuch had the Scriptures. He believed the Scriptures. He needed someone to give him instruction. When he heard the instruction and understood that Isaiah was talking about Jesus who would suffer and die, then be buried, and rise from the dead for his sins, he called on Christ and was saved. He knew, however, that wasn't the end. He wanted to obey his new Saviour and Master. Philp instructed him that once a person gets saved that they need to get baptized. He demonstrated obedience through baptism, and he went away with joy. He received what he desired, which was knowledge of eternal life. He had walked in obedience to his God and there is always great joy when we have done what we know our Master wants us to do.

If you want to have the joy of Jesus Christ, I encourage you to rejoice in your salvation, walk in obedience to your Master, and you, as a believer, will SHINE.