

The Servant's Heart: Philip the Evangelist

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple Internet sources)

Introduction:

- A. Philip the evangelist must not be confused with the apostle Philip
 - 1. Philip the apostle
 - a. Called by Jesus a day after He met Peter & Andrew - John 1:43
 - b. From Bethsaida, home of Peter and Andrew - John 1:44
 - c. He led Nathaniel to Jesus - John 1:45-46
 - d. He along with Andrew brought the inquiring Greeks to Jesus - John 12:21-22
 - e. He was the one who asked Jesus to "show us the Father" - John 14:8-9
- B. Philip the evangelist
 - 1. First mentioned in the dispute between the Hebrew and Hellenistic disciples in Acts 6. He is one of the seven appointed to oversee the daily distribution of alms to remove all suspicion of partiality.
 - 2. He preached and performed miracles in Samaria, converting multitudes including Simon the Sorcerer - Acts 8:5-13
 - 3. Was sent to the Gaza wilderness to meet and baptize an Ethiopian eunuch, the first convert believed to carry the gospel far from Palestine - Acts 8:26-40.
 - 4. He preached in Azotus (Ashdod) and other Philistine cities along the coast on the way to Caesarea - Acts 8:40.
 - 5. He is not spoken of in the New Testament for 19 years, when he is found in Caesarea Maritima with his four daughters who prophesied; he apparently married and had a family; his children were faithful believers
 - 6. There he was visited by Paul and pleaded with him not to go to Jerusalem - Acts 21:8-14.
 - 7. History records that the following is likely:
 - a. Prior to his recorded ministry and due to his familiarity with Christ and the apostles, Philip may have been one of the seventy preachers that Jesus sent out - Luke 10
 - b. Following his work at Caesarea, he went to Tralles in Anatolia, ancient Aydin a short distance from Ephesus
 - c. It is believed that he died among the disciples at Hierapolis in Phrygia.
- C. Mark 10:42-45 - Greatness in the kingdom comes through service
 - 1. Philip was all about service; he left greatness up to the Lord

I. SERVING IN JERUSALEM

- A. Acts 6:1-7
- B. In the middle of a growing church, murmuring developed
 - 1. We often make the assumption that since everything appears to be going well in our view, it must be the same with everyone else
 - 2. The apostles took an interesting approach; they did not condemn the complainers, but instead saw to it that the problem was addressed.

3. Nothing is said about the manner of the objection; much is said about the willingness of the apostles to arrange a solution
4. Philip began his work as a servant in a controversial atmosphere
5. The need was met and the church growth was not interrupted.

II. SERVING IN SAMARIA

- A. Acts 8:5-25
- B. There was an atmosphere of persecution of the church - Acts 8:1-4
 1. This time the disciples fled the persecution, implying that self-preservation can serve the will of the Lord; we assume that everyone should be a martyr
 2. Philip goes to Samaria preaching Christ.
 - a. While the Lord said that the gospel would go to Samaria, Philip was the first to go there. As far as we know, nobody assigned Philip this work; he saw the need and went to work
 - b. Samaria is a city filled with Samaritans; Philip appears unwilling to screen the backgrounds of prospects
 - c. The first preacher to carry the Gospel to Samaritans, an action that could have brought him under criticism
- C. While in Samaria, Philip's service is tested twice.
 1. Test One - The apostles were sent to Samaria.
 - a. There is not a hint of jealousy from Philip.
 - b. Some preachers behave like competitors instead of companions
 2. Test Two - Philip was told to leave Samaria.
 - a. He was told to go leave a large, growing church to preach the gospel to one man.
 - b. How do servants act when summoned to what might appear to be a demotion? They humbly and eagerly obey.
 - c. Real evangelists are about the service, not the glory, for themselves or their friends and family

III. SERVING IN CAESAREA

- A. Acts 21:8-14
- B. Philip is married and has a family - Acts 21:9
 1. Although a faithful servant of God, he evidently had time for his family.
 2. It is wrong for a man to work to save the community and lose his family
 3. A man who serves his wife and children, demonstrates he can be trusted to serve the local church
- C. Paul visits Philip's home
 1. How should a servant of the Lord react to someone who took part in the killing of one of his companions and co-workers? (Stephen - Acts 7:58)
 2. Would we extend hospitality? Would we beg him not to go to his death?
- D. Philip welcomed Paul because servants forgive - Acts 21:12

Conclusion: May God help us all to develop the heart of a servant. In so doing, we will come closer to the image of God's Son who came in the form of a servant - Phil. 2:3-11