

=THE APOSTLES=

Lesson 8

The Apostle Philip

AIM: to teach my pupils the facts about the Apostle Philip.

POINT OF CONTACT: Once again, review the apostles and some of their characteristics. Ask the pupils who was the beloved apostle, who was the one who preached the sermon on Pentecost, who was the one who had two names, who was the one who was steady and a good children's worker (Andrew), who was the doubting one, etc.

INTRODUCTION: Each of the apostles had his own particular characteristics and personality. They were certainly a cross section of personalities: Andrew, the steady, behind-the-scene type; Peter, the spokesman; John, the loving one; Thomas, the doubter; etc. Philip was the conservative one. He was no "son of thunder" like James or John. He was not like Peter, who would rush in where angels fear to tread, making wild promises and rash statements or dreaming great dreams. He was the matter-of-fact disciple. He was "Mr. Average Christian." He was like the one who comes to church and says, "Let's not be too hasty about this. Let's give this thing a lot of thought before we take the plunge."

This kind of person can be helpful or hurtful; and certainly one who is this type must always be tempered with Christian love, grace and charity. A person who has these characteristics along with being a little conservative can be a real blessing. Let us notice the different things about the personality and life of Philip.

- I. HE WAS FROM BETHSAIDA AND WAS A FELLOW TOWNSMAN OF PETER AND ANDREW. It is suspected that they were friends. (It would be very wise to remind the girls and boys that they are making their best friends even now. Friends and contacts for a lifetime are being made. I am sure that Peter, Andrew and Philip did not ever think as children as they grew up together that they would ever be apostles, followers of Christ, and the great men they became. This is why it is so important that we be careful to make the right friendships. The ones with whom we are intimate in school, our associates at church, etc. should be made with the realization that we may be making lifetime friendships.)
- II. PHILIP WAS A POOR PEASANT. We have occasion to believe that Peter and Andrew were at least possessed with some material blessings, while not either was poor or rich. Philip, however, was supposed to be a very poor person. It would be wise here to say a few words about poverty. Even the poorest can be used of God. God does not need riches; He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He does not need beauty; He painted the rainbow and the rose. He does not need a strong body; He holds the worlds in place. He simply needs dedication. Poor people can have this as well as rich people.
- III. HE WAS A LOVER OF HORSES. The word "Philip" means "lover of horses." No doubt this pictured his hobby and one of the great loves of his life. He married and had several daughters; at least, this is what we think. (Stress here the importance of choosing the right kind of mate. A little child today is a man tomorrow. Though young people do not realize how close they are to marriage, they should be reminded to choose the proper kind of girlfriends and boyfriends and to have the right kind of people for their dates, realizing that marriages begin with dates.)
- IV. PHILIP HASTILY FOLLOWED JESUS. See John 1:43-46. Someone has said, "The only thing that Philip never hesitated about was his conversion." He was naturally a slow mover. He was the kind that wanted to wait and see. In John 6:5-7 we find him moving and thinking slowly concerning the feeding of the five thousand. In John 14:7-9 we find him a little slow to accept the fact that Jesus was actually God incarnate and that if one had seen Jesus, he had seen the Father; but Philip never hesitated about following Jesus. It is John who tells us everything we know about Philip. In the other three Gospels, he is just a name, one of the Twelve. In the Gospel of John, he becomes an individual, a personality—not nearly as colorful as some of the others, but a personality nevertheless. John begins telling us about Philip by telling us of his conversion. Though he was a little slow about other things and a little conservative, he was not slow to follow Jesus. (Stress to the class the importance of being saved

immediately. The decision to be saved is something we should not deliberate about; we should do it at once.)

- V. AS SOON AS PHILIP WAS CONVERTED, HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE BEING CONVERTED. He found Nathanael and brought him to Jesus. It should be the desire and work of every new Christian to start immediately trying to bring others to the Saviour. Jesus had met Philip at Bethany beyond the Jordan where John was baptizing. He won Philip's faith and called him to be a disciple, and immediately Philip thought of Nathanael.
- VI. AN INTERESTING THING ABOUT PHILIP IS, THOUGH HE WAS NOT A SOUL WINNER AND WAS NOT ABLE TO CONVINCENATHANAEL, AT LEAST HE COULD SAY, "COME AND SEE." (See John 1:46.) He represents that great number of people who are not adept at soul winning or trained at presenting the plan of salvation to lead folks to Christ but who can at least bring folks and can say, "Come and see." This is something everybody can do. Christians who cannot win souls can say to their friends, "Come and see." People who have not been trained in soul winning can say to people at work, "Come and see." Anybody can bring visitors. Anybody can say, "Come and hear my preacher. Come and visit my church. Come and see." This is an important work—a phase of the Lord's work. Philip did it.
- VII. A YEAR AFTER PHILIP'S CONVERSION, HE WAS CHOSEN TO BE AN APOSTLE. Think of that! He was a poor boy—not a spectacular fellow, and yet, he was one of the twelve. This, I am sure, seemed almost like a dream to Philip. It is limitless what God can do with one person, poor or not poor, learned or unlearned. Philip was dedicated, and God used him in spite of his lack of personality and talent.
- VIII. HE WAS IN THE UPPER ROOM WITH THE OTHERS AND HAD A PART IN PENTECOST. This means that he had become an active, proficient soul winner. Just to say to Nathanael, "Come and see," is all right at first, but we should go beyond that. We should come to the place where we can lead people to Jesus Christ ourselves. This Philip did.
- IX. PHILIP GAVE HIS LIFE AS A MARTYR FOR THE CAUSE OF CHRIST. In fact, all of the apostles did this. With the world the way it is, some of us may have this same opportunity. If we would die for Him, let us now live for Him and serve Him.

CONCLUSION: Be sure to read the different places in the Bible where Philip is mentioned. In Matthew 10:3 he is chosen to be one of the apostles. In John 1:43-48 he comes to Christ and finds Nathanael and brings him to Jesus, with the conviction that an interview with Jesus would convince Nathanael that Jesus was the Messiah. In John 6:5, 6, when our Lord was about to perform the miracle of feeding the five thousand, He first proved Philip and awoke a conception of the magnitude of the miracle by asking Philip, "...Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" In John 12:20-23, on the day of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, certain Greeks desired to see Jesus. They came to Philip, who put them in contact with Jesus. In John 14:8-12 Christ was speaking in the upper room about their having known and seen the Father. Philip appeared not to understand and said, "...Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Then in Acts 1:13 we find him in the upper room for the great prayer meeting prior to Pentecost.