LIFE GROUP GUIDE

Rise and Go

Philip, the Ethiopian Eunuch and the Everyday Mission of God

A warm, practical 30-45 minute gathering for groups who want to move from hearing the Word to living it.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

You do not need a title, a platform or theological training to be used by God - only a willingness to rise when He says go.

The Bridge Church | Sermon by Grant Askham | 9 August 2026

WELCOME

This week we travelled the desert road with Philip, an ordinary man through whom the Holy Spirit met an Ethiopian official who was genuinely searching for truth. The sermon does not present a task reserved for a few gifted people; it presents normal Christianity. God speaks, an available person obeys, a prepared person is met with Scripture, Jesus is proclaimed, faith is expressed in baptism, and the mission continues. As you talk together, let the story move from the page into the ordinary places where God has already placed us.

READ THE WORD TOGETHER

> **Acts 8:26, 29, 35, 36, 39-40 (NIV)**
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> *"Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. The eunuch went on his way rejoicing. Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and travelled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.*

Before the discussion, have several people read Acts 8:26-40 aloud in sequence. The sermon specifically encouraged Life Groups to recover this practice: hearing the Word of God together before exchanging opinions about it.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON SUMMARY

Leader: briefly draw these threads together, without opening discussion yet. The purpose is to help everyone arrive at the same central message before the three questions below.

Normal Christianity: Acts shows the Holy Spirit working through ordinary, available people. Stephen and Philip were not presented as a spiritual elite. Every believer is called to take part in making Jesus known, while remaining humble enough to receive biblical guidance and correction from the messengers God places around us.

A living Word and a clear command: The Ethiopian's journey from Cush echoed Zephaniah 3:10, and his reading of Isaiah 53 became the

doorway to Jesus. God's Word is alive in real lives. When God told Philip, "Rise and go," it was a command, not a negotiation. The sandbank illustration made the point: there are times to act on a clear instruction before every explanation is available. God sends us from Jerusalem-like places of strengthening into Gaza-like places where people need the gospel.

A prepared appointment: Philip obeyed, met a searching man on a desert road, and then ran toward the need. God had already been at work in the Ethiopian. We are stewards of the opportunities, influence and resources entrusted to us; we do not have to manufacture impressive ministry moments. We need responsive hearts, eyes that notice need, and the willingness both to offer and to receive help in understanding Scripture.

Jesus, faith and an ongoing mission: Philip began with the Scripture already open and told the Ethiopian the good news about Jesus. Our testimony matters, but it cannot replace the Bible or the clear truth that salvation is found in Christ alone (Acts 4:12). The Ethiopian believed, was baptised and went on his way rejoicing. The Spirit carried Philip away - a moment Grant linked with the future hope of 1 Thessalonians 4:17 - and Philip continued preaching from town to town. The week's pattern is simple: ongoing obedience leads to ongoing instruction, ongoing instruction to ongoing fruitfulness. Our mission field is our own backyard, workplace, school, family, friendships and neighbourhood.

KEY SERMON POINTS

- The Holy Spirit works through ordinary believers who make themselves available to serve and to be sent.
- God speaks and gives clear instruction; faithful obedience does not always wait for every explanation.
- God prepares people and appointments ahead of us; we are called to notice, run toward need and serve as trustworthy stewards.
- Scripture belongs in community: we both offer and receive wise, biblical help so that we do not drift into error.
- The gospel begins with Scripture and leads clearly to Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, then to faith expressed in obedient response.
- Ongoing obedience brings ongoing usefulness. Every believer's everyday sphere is part of God's mission.

THREE DISCUSSION TOPICS

Allow about five minutes for each topic. This is the group's main 15-minute conversation: invite every voice, make room for quiet reflection, use the follow-up line only if helpful, and resist the urge to turn this part into another sermon.

1

When God Says "Rise and Go"

Philip was an ordinary believer who served where there was a need, then obeyed a clear instruction without receiving the whole explanation. The sandbank illustration challenged the instinct to demand every reason before acting. Where might comfort, overthinking or a resistance to biblical guidance be keeping us from responding to what God has already made clear? What could wise, prayerful obedience look like this week?

Bring it home: *What helps us distinguish a faithful response to God's Word from a vague feeling, and how can we encourage one another without pressure or control?*

2

Meeting People God Is Already Drawing

The Ethiopian was already seeking God, reading Isaiah and fulfilling a prophecy spoken long before Philip arrived. Philip ran toward the need, while the Ethiopian humbly invited a guide into his chariot. Where might God already be stirring questions, hunger or need among the people in our own spheres? How can we become attentive servants who both offer help and receive the biblical wisdom God sends through others?

Bring it home: *Think quietly of one person or place. What is one small, respectful way to show up this week with prayer, practical care, Scripture or a willing ear?*

3

Opening Scripture, Pointing to Jesus, Going On

Philip began with Isaiah 53, explained the good news about Jesus, and saw faith move toward baptism and joy. Then Philip continued preaching from town to town. What does this story teach us about speaking of Jesus clearly, encouraging an obedient response, and letting a meaningful spiritual moment become an ongoing life of mission?

Bring it home: *What gospel truth or Scripture could you become more ready to share, and how could our group help one another remain joyful and fruitful in ordinary life?*

PRAY TOGETHER

Move naturally from the conversation into prayer. Ask different people to pray briefly around these themes, leaving room for any personal needs raised during the discussion.

- For ears that hear the Holy Spirit, hearts that respond without delay, and humility to receive the guidance or correction God sends through His people.
- For eyes to recognise people God is already drawing in our homes, workplaces, schools, friendships and neighbourhoods, and courage to run toward need with love.
- For a deeper confidence in Scripture: that we would read it together, understand it faithfully and point people clearly to Jesus Christ, the only Saviour.
- For those who are seeking, for genuine faith to take root, and for every needed step of obedient response, including baptism where appropriate.
- For ongoing fruitfulness: that our group would become everyday messengers who keep carrying the gospel onward.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

I am an ordinary messenger in God's extraordinary mission. When He says go, I will rise, go, open the Scriptures and point people to Jesus.