

028 - A New Disciple Baptized - Acts 8:34-40  
GRBC 07-01-2012

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 15:16  
Sermon: "A New Disciple Baptized" Acts 8:34-40  
Benediction: Galatians 3:27-28

## INTRODUCTION

The Lord Jesus Christ commanded His church, His disciples, to make more disciples. A disciple is a devoted student--one who loves his teacher personally and loves the truth of his teaching. He loves his teacher so much that he follows him, trying to be like him. As we studied together last time, Philip had made disciples for Jesus Christ, first in Samaria, then on the desert road. The Lord Jesus also has commanded that His church baptize those new disciples. That's where we take up the story today, with a new disciple being baptized.

Read the text: Acts 8:34-40

## SERMON

### I. A New Disciple Was Baptized Upon Hearing Jesus Preached from the Scriptures (v. 35)

The word translated "preaching" here is the Greek word *euaggelizo*--"good news" or "good message" So Philip told the Ethiopian man the good news, the good message about Jesus. And what good news it was! All the wrong that the man ever had done would be forgiven in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ had lived a perfect life, had been killed, then had risen from the dead. If the Ethiopian would trust in Jesus, turning from his sins to follow Jesus, then God would count all of his sins as already punished and forgiven, and would count his life as perfect like Jesus Christ's life. Indeed, Philip preached good news to the man!

#### A. The source material of the preaching was the scriptures

1. the two men read the scriptures together aloud
2. Philip explained how those scriptures pointed to a king and savior who was to come
3. Philip told the good news that the King and Savior had come

#### B. The focus of the preaching was Jesus

1. Jesus Himself had said that all the scriptures are about Him
2. so when Philip told the Ethiopian the good news, it was the good news about Jesus

#### C. APPLICATION: We sometimes are tempted to lose confidence in preaching from the scriptures as the method for making disciples

1. because it doesn't produce them in the numbers we would like
  - a. we look left and see people by the tens and by the hundreds going down into the water to be baptized; we look right and we see this happening frequently
  - b. then we look at ourselves, and at the other Reformed Baptist churches, and at similar churches, and we see this happening in numbers like one per year, or a few together once in a great while
  - c. I can count on these two hands the number of people we have baptized in the course of the past five years
2. because it doesn't always work as quickly as we would like

- a. we preach Jesus to people from the scriptures
- b. we do it again
- c. years go by before they trust in Christ and desire baptism
- 3. because it doesn't seem to have the power we would like to have
  - a. there are ways of preaching that produce powerful emotional effects, to where people cry, or all hold hands, or hug, or shout
- 4. but we must recall that when the Lord commanded His church to make disciples, He did not leave it up to us how to make those disciples
  - a. see Matthew 28:18-20
  - b. see Luke 24:46-47
  - c. see this verse, Acts 8:35
- 5. and we must recall what the apostle Paul wrote
  - a. Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.
  - b. Paul said that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation
    - when he preached the good news of Jesus and only a few believed
    - when he preached it and was run out of town
    - he did not switch to something else; instead, he determined to know nothing except Jesus Christ crucified

So, let us seek to make disciples by telling them the good news of Jesus Christ from the scriptures

## II. A New Disciple Was Baptized Willingly (v. 36)

A. See how eager the new disciple is to be baptized.

B. When he is told that just as Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again to everlasting life, we, too, can die to sin and be raised to walk in everlasting life, he believes it! Why does he believe it? Because the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ has so changed him on the inside that it is like he has been born again. And that Holy Spirit has taken up residence inside him. So, when he is told that the Lord and Savior who died and rose again commands that he be baptized to symbolize this very thing, of course he is willing to do it!

APPLICATION: Let us not think baptism is appropriate for anyone who does not submit to it willingly

- 1. if there is a child who is willing to do what his parents want, or willing to do whatever the preacher says, but does not will to be baptized, of his own will, then let us not think we should baptize him
- 2. if there is a person who visits this church, and claims to be a Christian, but doesn't want to be baptized, let us not try to pressure him into baptism; if he is not willing to be baptized, then he is not fit to be baptized; if the Holy Spirit works in his heart, he will be willing

## III. A New Disciple Was Baptized Truly (v. 36-39a)

A. True baptism is performed on a disciple of Jesus Christ; this person became a disciple of the Lord Jesus, then was baptized

- 1. it is plain in the scriptures that a disciple of Jesus Christ is the only true subject for baptism
- 2. but this must be emphasized because in our sin, our rebellion against God, God's churches have many times tried to baptize people who were not disciples

of Jesus Christ

- a. many people try to baptize infants; but no matter how we try to do so, we cannot truly baptize them, because baptism is performed on disciples of Jesus Christ, and these are not; so, no infant ever can be truly baptized
- b. many people try to baptize kids and adults who have walked down to the front in an invitation, and have given some kind of assent or repeated some kind of prayer; but if those dunked were not disciples of Jesus Christ, then they were not truly baptized

3. only a disciple of Jesus Christ is a fit subject for baptism

B. True baptism is performed by immersion

1. it is plain in the scriptures that complete immersion, dipping, or “dunking” in water is the only true mode of baptism; simply put, dunking is baptism,

a. in this story it comes out in two ways

-Philip and the new disciple must have understood that baptism was immersion, or the idea of stopping at a place with water would have made no sense

-Philip and the new disciple are said to have gone down into the water and come up out of it, and this makes no sense whatsoever if Philip were just sprinkling or pouring or wiping

b. in the rest of the bible, it comes out in several other ways

2. but this must be emphasized because of how so many of God’s churches have not reformed their practice, but have maintained the Dark Ages practice of sprinkling, pouring, or wiping instead of baptism

C. APPLICATION: This is a point at which many professing believers wrongly divide God’s churches

IV. A New Disciple Was Baptized with Rejoicing (v. 39c)

A. What was the new disciple rejoicing about?

1. He had known he was a sinner before God, and in danger of God’s judgment upon him for his rebellion

2. He had tried to please God through religion at the temple in Jerusalem, but had not found peace with God there

3. So he had remained burdened about his sin, and God’s anger

4. Now, He has experienced forgiveness of sins in the Son of God, Jesus Christ

5. The weight of burden has been lifted; he has been set free; he has now fear of judgment from God anymore

B. So, inside of him was a great joy; not just a feeling of happiness---such feelings come and go---but a deep, permanent, constant joy deep in the soul

CONCLUSION

This sermon is about baptism, but be very clear that the great thing that is needed by every person is not baptism, but becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ. Stop trying to make yourself acceptable to God, and trust in Him for forgiveness of sins before God; love Him with all your being; turn your mind away from sin and toward Him. Only then, when you are a new disciple of Jesus Christ, ask to be baptized.

But if you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, then be baptized! Not because I have said so, and you reluctantly will comply with what the preacher said. No, be baptized of your own free will, because it is the command of the King and Savior Jesus Christ. Do so with great joy, rejoicing

all the way.

If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ already, and have already been baptized, then take great joy whenever you think of it. Often in prayer, thank God for making you a disciple by His Spirit, and by the preaching of the good news of Jesus Christ. Seek opportunities to tell the good news yourself. In all ways do your part in the church's preaching of the good news, so that other new disciples may also find forgiveness and great joy in Christ.

This is a new disciple, a new follower of Jesus Christ. This is how disciples act!

RWP:

Act\_8:37 is not a genuine part of Acts, a western addition. Later baptismal liturgies had it.

Gill:

he had some desire after it, as regenerate persons have, after divine things, after Christ, his word, and ordinances; and that he was willing to take the first opportunity of submitting to it

Jeff Riddle:

We must guard baptism