

PHILLIP'S STORY

A dramatic monologue

I didn't feel worthy of taking the position they were calling me to take. I was just a sinner who had been saved by grace. If they had known my past, I am sure they would have pursued a more qualified person for the job. They chose seven of us on that day. Steven was the first of us martyred for his belief in Jesus.

They estimated the crowd was over three thousand the day that the Apostle Peter declared that Jesus has risen from the dead just as it had been prophesied by the prophets of old. There was quite a ruckus for a bit. The teachers of the law were accusing the Apostles of being phonies and spreading lies about the Jewish nation. The leaders could not explain away what happened on that day of Pentecost.

After the leaders accused the people that had gathered there to worship of being drunk, Peter stood up with the other eleven and told them they were witnessing what the prophet Joel said about pouring out of His Spirit on His people in the last days. I think the crowd was shocked when Peter quoted the prophet. He had just been a fisherman. The people there that day felt that Spirit

move all through their body. Some wept like children when they felt the guilt of all their sin being taken away.

There were people getting baptized for several hours after Peter's message. I knew it had to be from God, there is no way the Apostles could have spoken all those languages. It is hard to believe, but there were people who chose not accept God's Spirit. The movement in Jerusalem caused such a commotion the Roman government had to get involved. The Jewish leaders were too afraid to do anything to the Apostles. However, once the government sided with the Pharisees and the Sadducees, a lot of new believers had to get away from Jerusalem.

It all started with that guy at the gate, who had been lame, and he was healed. It was a story to be told, okay. This guy had been lame all his life. He asked Peter for money, and Peter sarcastically asked him if he looked like he was rich. Peter then took the man by his arm and helped him to his feet. When the guy realized he was healed he just held on tight to Peter then he jumped all over the place with joy.

That sure opened a can of worms for the leaders of the Sanhedrin. Now there were several people coming from all around to be baptized into the new family by the

Apostles. I don't know how the Apostles were able to go as long as they did before enlisting the help of a few new ministers. The Apostles were doing miracles of healing to all who needed. More important, the people were being healed spiritually.

Then one day it exploded right there in the streets of the city. It was after Peter and John had been arrested and put in jail by the Sanhedrin the first time. When they were discovered preaching in the middle of town the next morning, the leaders wanted to have them stoned. One of the men stood up to defend them.

Gamaliel, a Pharisee, reminded the council of past movements that had faded out. He told them if this movement was from God, they could not stop it anyway. The council was still angry, but they sent Peter and John away, not before having them flogged.

Although the movement had been persecuted beyond belief, it grew larger every day. God's Holy Spirit filled more and more believers with a boldness to use their Spiritual gifts. As the church body grew, some men besides the Apostles began to preach the gospel. These men were not feared by the Pharisees or the Sadducees, like the Apostles were. One of the boldest was my friend Stephen.

The day the leaders had Stephen stoned, what was left of the new believers were scattered across the surrounding area. All but the Apostles left the city. It was a factor in the multiplication of Christians in the area. By moving the believers to another area, the movement grew bigger in every new area.

I was called by the Spirit to go to a city in Samaria. I began to preach about Jesus and His ability to heal the people both physically and spiritually. The work that God did in that city brought great joy and hope to the region. It brought great joy to me as well. There was a guy in town that had been a sorcerer, I would call him a con man. When he saw what the real God was doing in their town, he knew it was not just sleight of hand. At first, I didn't know what to think about the man's reaction or the results. We baptized him there, along with any others that wanted to be baptized. There were so many that came I thought it was the whole town. We baptized both men and women. I was afraid that Simon was just wanting the attention he had lost, since the people had begun to follow us when we shared Jesus. After we baptized him, he followed us around for a while.

The movement was so strong that the Apostles were made aware of the things God was doing in that town.

They sent Peter and John down to check out the city. I was amazed that the two most famous Apostles would come to this rinky dink city. They were mobbed by the new believers when they came in the outer gates. The crowd that we had been baptizing turned their attention to the two Apostles. Peter and John were laying their hands upon them and they were being filled with God's Holy Spirit. It was the wildest thing I had seen since that day in Jerusalem, before we all scattered out of fear. The people were singing and crying tears of joy. I noticed that Simon wandered over their way. They were doing more than healing people, they were changing people. That is what happens when you receive God's Holy Spirit. You are changed, you are now a child of the Living God.

When Simon asked Peter if he could purchase what they were doing so that he may change people too, he was called out by Peter. His real intentions were revealed. Peter was pretty harsh with Simon. I asked Peter later on why when we baptized the people here, they were not changed like the people that day on Pentecost? He told me it was because the people didn't receive the Holy Spirit the way others did that day when the Spirit overtook the room. The people being filled now were being filled individually. He said he was sure there would be other

days like that day in Jerusalem, but the Holy Spirit is meant to be given only to true believers. The joy the people were experiencing before was from the relief of their sins being taken away. Now that they were filled with the Spirit, the joy would last forever. I thought to myself, it wasn't the water that saved them, but their belief in Jesus and His sacrifice. I think Peter and John began to see that God's love has no boundaries for nationality, or heritage, or any other qualifying factor other than belief in the one true God, and the sacrifice He made with His Son Jesus. I heard from friends later on that the two Apostles stopped at several more villages in Samaria on their way back to Jerusalem.

Not long after all those people were filled with God's Holy Spirit, something happened to me that I still don't really understand. I had witnessed some amazing things happen since the Holy Spirit had filled us believers, but this was a close encounter of a different kind. I guess God decided the movement in the city I was located was complete enough for me to move on. He sent an angel to speak to me. The angel told me to leave this area, and head down to Gaza. He said take the desert road down to Gaza, which was a little unusual, it is called the desert road for a reason. There was more traffic than usual on the

road. Most of the people heading south like me, had just come from worshipping God in Jerusalem. The majority of new believers in Jerusalem had scattered down as far as Gaza when the Romans allowed Jesus to be crucified. I just figured God wanted me to go down there to the people, so they too may be saved.

I passed a few little towns along the way and in between two of those towns a real fancy carriage approached me from behind. As the carriage passed the Spirit of God said I should catch up with him. I heard him reading from the prophet Isaiah. I must have caught his attention because they paused there in the road. I asked him if he knew what he was reading? At first, I could not tell if he was being sarcastic or really curious. I certainly didn't look like a scholar with all the dust on my feet.

He asked me how could anyone understand what was written here. He suggested that he would need someone to explain what it meant. Then he invited me into his carriage. I explained to him that I was no scholar, but just a sinner, saved by God's grace. He had secured a copy of the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. I knew he was either very wealthy or a thief, those copies are rare and expensive.

He read the passage Isaiah had written about the coming Saviour. The man had just come from Jerusalem so there is no telling what the leaders there told him. Although there were a great many priests that became followers of Christ, the main leaders of the Sadducees and the Pharisees were still teaching against the prophecy being fulfilled.

I explained to him this Lamb that Isaiah wrote about was Jesus. We went over some other truths that proved Jesus was the Messiah promised through the prophets. Born in Bethlehem from the prophecy of Micah was just one of those that had been fulfilled. He sat there hanging on every word I told him about Jesus. I told him of the woman at the well, and of her restoration through Jesus, even though she was an outsider. I told him that even though he was living rich life here on earth, Jesus told His followers beware of storing up treasure on earth that are vulnerable to theft by man or varmint. Store up treasures in heaven that cannot be stolen from you.

After I had joined him in the carriage, the Spirit just kept telling me what to say to him. He knew enough about his heritage to know that Isaiah was a prophet. Meeting this man was a miracle from God for sure. He was one of the queen's eunuchs. Being just a servant, he would have

not been allowed to go on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. I know the queen must have trusted him, because he was in charge of her money. For the queen to allow a servant to travel that far, and to let him use the carriage, she must have really respected his faith in God. I think God must have had big future plans for him.

He was so excited about hearing the good news of Jesus he wanted to be baptized. We were close enough to some water, and he insisted that we stop. I ask him if he truly believed, and he told me he believed that Jesus was the Son of God. I had seen very few that reacted to the baptism with joy that he expressed when he was filled with the Spirit. He left in his carriage for home. He would now be prepared to share the good news with others throughout the land whether they were of his heritage or another. I went on to Azotus and began to preach there. I worked my way back to the town of Caesarea witnessing many people coming to know Jesus as their Saviour. They were baptized not only with water, but with God's Holy Spirit.

This monologue is based on the scripture in the Bible found in Acts chapter 2 through Acts chapter 8

1. God calls the faithful. Acts 6:5
2. God multiplies the flock Acts 8: 5-8
3. Not all who come are there for the right reasons. Acts 8: 9-24
4. God wants to restore the lost who call upon His name. Acts 8: 34-38
5. God gives you new missions upon expiration of the old one. Acts 8: 39-40.