



"How Philip Walked Across The Room"
11/8/09 * Acts 8:26-40

I. "Just walk across the room." What does Bill Hybels mean by this?

II. The idea of whether or not we share our faith with others comes down to one simple question:

Do you or do you not want there to be more _____ in this world.

Why do we want this to happen?

III. One man who walked across the room: Philip

A. What do we know about Philip from Acts 6:1-6?

IV. Three Lessons From Philip About Sharing Our Faith

Lesson 1: Sharing our faith is a _____ act of conversation that believers engage in wherever they go.

A. How should Jesus' Great Commission actually read?

___ Go and make disciples

___ As you are going, make disciples

What's the difference?

B. List 5 places where I find myself on an ordinary day where I engage people in conversation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Lesson 2: Sharing my faith should be a _____ - _____ activity.

A. Before he left, what did Jesus tell his disciples to do first?

B. "But I could never experience something like this?" True or not?

C. What do I need to do to begin to experience the things that Philip (and Bill Hybels) experienced?

D. When it comes to sharing our faith, God has already gone on ahead of us. What should I do to recognize God's activity?

Lesson 3: Sharing my faith requires that I know how to share _____.

1 Peter 3:15 - "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have."

A. What's the difference between our "testimony" and the "Gospel"?

B. Some models for sharing the Gospel:

C. The common elements of the Gospel:

My Homework for the Week Ahead:



**"How Philip Walked Across The Room"
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I. "Just walk across the room." What does Bill Hybels mean by this?

It has to do with Bill's concept of evangelism – that it ought to be as simple a thing as walking across the room and sticking out your hand to someone and striking up a conversation. Nine out of ten conversions to Jesus Christ occur because that's exactly what happened. Nothing flashy. Nothing spectacular. Just a little relationship-building, a little sharing of one's life, and out of that simple connection, God begins to do his amazing, healing work.

II. The idea of whether or not we share our faith with others comes down to one simple question:

Do you or do you not want there to be more followers of Christ in this world.

Why do we want this to happen?

Not because they're perfect, because they're not. Christians have just as much a mess inside their hearts as anyone else. We're just as broken, in need of fixing, as the next guy. But the thing about a real Christian is that they have a connection with the Chief Fixer-Upper. A relationship with the Mender of Broken Hearts. And I want this world to be filled with more and more people who have that real connection, that real relationship with Jesus Christ. Because in time, this world will be better if there are more of those kind of people around. And so I want to share my faith and hope in Jesus with others. I believe that following Jesus is the best hope this messed up world has. The best hope that *you* have to get things right in your life, in your marriage, in your career, in your relationships.

III. One man who walked across the room: Philip

A. What do we know about Philip from Acts 6:1-6?

We first meet Philip in Acts 6 when he is selected to serve on the first diaconate, to put it simply. And he is selected because he is a man who is "full of the Spirit and wisdom". Acts 6:3 tells us these were the qualifications these leaders needed to have. Full of the

Spirit and wisdom. The guy is in full-connection mode with Jesus, in other words.

IV. Three Lessons From Philip About Sharing Our Faith

Lesson 1: Sharing our faith is a natural act of conversation that believers engage in wherever they go.

A. How should Jesus' Great Commission actually read?

 Go and make disciples

X As you are going, make disciples

What's the difference?

If "Go" is a command, then Jesus is saying, "Okay, drop everything, get out there, knock on doors, talk to people in the streets, make disciples." But that's unnatural. If "Go" is a participle, then Jesus is saying, "Go on with your life, and look for opportunities throughout the day to connect people to me." This is natural. We can do this

B. List 5 places where I find myself on an ordinary day where I engage people in conversation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Lesson 2: Sharing my faith should be a Spirit - led activity.

A. Before he left, what did Jesus tell his disciples to do first?

Right before he left the earth, Jesus told the men he was leaving in charge to not do anything until the Spirit of God came upon them. "Just go back to Jerusalem, and wait," he said. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses."

B. *“But I could never experience something like this?” True or not?*

The fact that you’re even in the orbit of Grace is evidence that God is nudging you along by his Spirit. You just need to grow in your faith to the point where you begin to recognize that. You say, How? Well, look at Philip. What’d we say about him back in Acts 6:5. He was full of the Holy Spirit and full of wisdom. I believe Philip found witnessing to be easy because he was full of God. And how do you get that way? It’s nothing mystical, friends. You hang out with Jesus. Philip spent so much time with Jesus through all the various ways we mentioned earlier that he just knew his Savior’s voice when he spoke through his Spirit.

C. *What do I need to do to begin to experience the things that Philip (and Bill Hybels) experienced?*

Personally, I wish God were a little more direct with his communication. A phone call or email would be nice now and then. But I have yet to meet someone who had God write on their Facebook wall. Usually it’s whispers and nudging. Which can be hard to read. We see through the glass darkly, the Bible says. But as we begin to act on some of those promptings and nudges, there will be times when we say, “Well, that was dumb, what was I thinking,” but more and more, as we regroup and debrief and keep on connecting with Jesus, there will be more and more occasions when we’ll look back and say, “Wow, that was God.”

D. *When it comes to sharing our faith, God has already gone on ahead of us. What should I do to recognize God’s activity?*

Remember your Dick and Jane. *Stop, Look and Listen.*

By engaging people in thoughtful conversation, you’ll be given clues as to whether or not this is a divine appointment. Did Philip rush right up to the Ethiopian and ask, “Hey, you want to get saved?” No, he *stopped* and made himself available to God. He *looked* and took in the scene. And then he *listened*. And what did Philip hear? Verse 30 - *“Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet.”* Aha, we’re getting warmer to determining if this is a divine appointment or not. So

now does Philip pop the question, “Hey, can I share with you the 4 spiritual laws?” No. He needs to listen more. So he asks a polite, thoughtful question. *“Do you understand what you’re reading?”* The Ethiopian says in reply, *“How can I, unless someone explains it to me?”* So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.”

Notice, at no point here does Philip press the issue. Philip is not obnoxious in the least. In far too many witnessing situations that I have observed in my life, it has been the Christian who is forcing the issue and the unbeliever who is back on his heels. Bad form. Confrontational witnessing seldom ends up well. What good is it to win an argument and lose a soul? Observe here Philip’s gentle approach, and as the conversation progresses it is the Ethiopian who invites Philip to share more. And so learning how to listen is to zero in on those verbal cues people give which indicate if they’re on your spiritual wavelength or not. If they’re with you, it will be obvious by the things they say and the questions they ask. They will actually give you permission to share. “Come, sit with me in my chariot.” If they’re not with you, if they’re not interested, if you’re doing more talking than they are, drop it. Philip has stopped, looked, listened and look at the results. He is letting the Spirit of God lead him.

Lesson 3: Sharing my faith requires that I know how to share the Gospel.

1 Peter 3:15 - “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have.”.

A. *What’s the difference between our “testimony” and the “Gospel”?*

My testimony is my personal story of how Christ met me. These stories vary as the colors of the rainbow. The gospel though is an explanation of the central truths of our faith. Though the outside packaging of the “Gospel” may differ, those central truths and elements will be there.

B. *Some models for sharing the Gospel:*

The “Do”-“Done” model.

The Bridge.

The Four Spiritual Laws.

C. The common elements of the Gospel:

Plan: God created us to have a relationship of love and trust with us.

Problem: We broke God's laws and broke God's hearts with our sin and selfishness. Now we are separated from God, because he is holy and we are not.

Provision: God in Christ came to earth to pay the price for my sin. He was sinless, yet traded in his perfect life for my sinful life.

Process/Promise: Now by repenting of my sin and independence, God can forgive me and "adopt" me back into his family, back into a relationship of love and trust with Him. By the power of His Spirit within me, I now become a follower of Christ

My Homework for the Week Ahead: