

# STRENGTHENING YOUR GRIP

## HOW TO BE GROUNDED IN A CHAOTIC WORLD

### STUDY FOURTEEN

## Strengthening Your Grip on Evangelism

*Acts 8:25–39*

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*As we share Christ with a world that's lost its way, we have to be winsome, wise, and, of course, willing to share. Not to mention, authentic.*

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

**T**HE words come easy when we talk to people about the forecast for sunshine tomorrow, the surprise visit from that special friend, or the way we bypassed the traffic jam on our way to work.

Tongues tie and palms sweat, however, when an opportunity arises to tell the greatest news in history. The message is elegantly simple—

*This is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

But we don't want to come across pushy. Neither do we want to look foolish or ignorant. What if the person asks a question that we can't answer?

So, we shift the responsibility of sharing Christ to the gifted evangelist or to our pastor. Deep within our hearts, however, we long to know how we might be able to point others to the Savior, who is the way of escape for captive souls. The Prince of Peace who our anxious hearts desperately need. The faithful Friend who is always near through the laughter and tears of life.

In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we'll walk in Philip's shoes as he shares the gospel with a man he'd never met before. His example offers encouraging guidelines for talking about Jesus in an attractive, significant, and confident way.



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## PREPARE YOUR HEART

In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus put words to our deepest hope:

*May Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.* (Matthew 6:10)

Let your heart express this desire to see God's will done in your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to have His way with your thoughts, tendencies, and actions as you study God's Word.



## TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

The stoning of Stephen, one of the first deacons in the Jerusalem church, triggered a tidal wave of persecution against the early Jewish Christians ([Acts 7](#)). Saul, one of the most aggressive persecutors, relentlessly dragged men and women from their homes to put them in jail for belonging to the new movement called “the Way” (9:2). The wave of persecution scattered the believers out of Jerusalem into “the regions of Judea and Samaria” . . . but it didn't dampen their enthusiasm! Everywhere they went, they “preached the Good News about Jesus” (8:1, 4).

[Acts 8](#) narrates the account of one of these believers named Philip. He went to the city of Samaria and spoke to crowds about Jesus being the promised Messiah. Many Samaritans believed the good news that Philip shared. Imagine the great revival! It was a massive movement of God among people whom the Jews had rejected. Feel the enthusiasm in [Acts 8:5–25](#), until the evangelist received a strange request from an angel of the Lord.



### Observation: Philip Shares the Good News

To begin, *observe* [Acts 8:26–40](#) carefully in various translations. Philip modeled six key principles for sharing the good news that Christians in any era can follow.

#### Sensitivity—Acts 8:26

How did Philip demonstrate his sensitivity to God's message to him in [Acts 8:26](#)?

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*Philip must have scratched his head on the way, wondering, “What in the world does God have up His sleeve as He leads me from Samaria to Gaza?” But he’s sensitive. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

## **Availability—Acts 8:27a**

Why leave a flourishing ministry in Samaria for remote Gaza? The call seemed strange, yet Philip didn’t object. How did Philip show his availability, according to the first line of [Acts 8:27](#)?

## **Initiative—Acts 8:27b–30**

Whom did Philip meet on the way, according to [Acts 8:27b](#)? How did Philip take initiative, as prompted by the Spirit of God, in [Acts 8:28–30](#)?

*When you take the initiative, one of the finest methods is the use of a question.  
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

## **Tactfulness—Acts 8:31–34**

Notice how Philip waited for an open door in [Acts 8:31–34](#). Describe how he must have felt when the Ethiopian eunuch invited him to come up.

*It is the cross that is offensive, not the Christian. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

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## Precision—Acts 8:35

Note the words that encapsulate precision in Philip’s dialogue in [Acts 8:35](#). What was the focus of Philip’s presentation?

*Be careful about getting rabbit-trailed. People have a remarkable ability to pull you off the subject of Jesus. You tell them of Christ. That is the basic assignment.*  
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

## Decisiveness—Acts 8:36–37

Having presented Jesus to the Ethiopian man, how did Philip help him understand that receiving Christ involves making a clear decision according to [Acts 8:36–37](#)? What were the results in [8:38–40](#)?

Sensitive ears, feet that are prompt to obey, and a heart that is ready to share. Philip yielded to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and told the good news to the finance minister of Ethiopia on a desert road to Gaza. Little did Philip know that God’s plan behind that strange call would spread the gospel to Africa!



### **Interpretation: Sharing the Good News**

Let’s find the meaning of our passage through *interpretation* by using resources and tools.<sup>1</sup> The verb *euangelizo*, translated “preach the gospel,” is mentioned three times in [Acts 8:25–40](#) in the New American Standard Bible. Reread [8:25, 35, 40](#). Look up *euangelizo* in the Greek lexicon available free at [billmounce.com](http://billmounce.com) and write its meaning below.

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Discover more about the term *gospel* in a Bible dictionary. Use your free access to *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary* at [biblestudytools.com](http://biblestudytools.com). There, scroll down to the section titled "The New Testament: Stage II." Read it carefully. How has this reading deepened your understanding of the gospel?

Let's take a closer look at our six guidelines for evangelism.

**Sensitivity**—Hear the internal urging from God.

**Availability**—Be ready to move in whatever direction God specifies.

**Initiative**—Start conversations with a simple yet thoughtful question and wait for an answer.

**Tactfulness**—Treat people with respect, courtesy, attentiveness, and dignity.

**Precision**—Keep the conversation focused on Christ.

**Decisiveness**—When God leads people to receive Christ, help them understand their decision.

How would you use your own words to explain each of these guidelines?

*Philip started where the man was, and he led him to the subject of Jesus. You start where they are and you bring them, in the marvelous movement of God, to the person of Christ. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

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## Correlation: Ways to Share the Good News

*Correlation* helps us discover what the Bible says elsewhere about the topic. The first gospel or *protevangeli*um may have been in [Genesis 3:14–15](#). Think about why this is called the first gospel.

The Bible narrates many conversations of individuals sharing the good news with others. Jesus spoke about the gift of eternal life to the teacher of Israel named Nicodemus, who came to see Him at night ([John 3:1–18](#)). How would you describe the way Jesus shared the good news?

In the next chapter, Jesus asked a Samaritan woman who came to draw water from the well of Jacob for water as a way of introducing her to the Living Water ([John 4:1–26](#)). How did Jesus use His tiredness and the woman's soul quest to share the good news?

Read [John 4:39–42](#). How did the Samaritan woman share the good news with the Samaritans from her village? How impactful was her testimony?

*God has you there where no one else will be, in touch with those lives no one else will be in touch with, to infuse them with the truth. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

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Sometimes, fear paralyzes us. The first disciples were afraid of being killed for sharing the good news. After they were released from prison and forbidden to talk about Jesus, how did they react in [Acts 4:23–31](#)? As a result, what happened?

God's power is available to us as we share the gospel with others. His Spirit strengthens us to accomplish God's will. He gives us the right words. He gives us boldness when our trust is in Him. By His strength, we can confidently tell people about Jesus and leave the results to Him.



## **Application: Go and Boldly Share**

We're empowered to tell others about Jesus. God's Spirit will lead the way if we follow His promptings. How can you strengthen your grip on being sensitive and available to share the good news? What would it be like to live every day with this sense of expectancy?

*When you are sensitive and when you are available, God will put those things together and you will discover in the middle of the most ordinary moment just the right person, just the right place. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

Why not take some time right now to put together a gospel presentation using the following passages: [John 3:1–17](#); [Acts 4:1–12](#); and [Ephesians 2:1–10](#)? How will you keep it simple—focused on the Savior?

*Friends, it is very important that we understand witnessing is not about church attendance, baptism, the Lord's Table, confirmation, tithing, moral goodness, taking care of one's family, and being patriotic to a nation. Christianity is being rightly related to a person, Jesus Christ. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

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## A FINAL PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your one and only Son to die for me, so I can have eternal life in Him. I make myself available to You. Open doors for me to share the good news. Give me words to boldly proclaim Your great love in an authentic way. Make me winsome. Be glorified in my life. In Jesus' name.*

## ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"

For the 2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 1981, 2025 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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