

Prayer List

Gene
Veda
Wallace
Sheila
Judy
Rose

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 10:00 a.m.
Assembly 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

What prophet told Baasha, king of Israel, that the birds would feast on those of his household?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Samuel - 1 Samuel 16:1

Published by the church of Christ which meets at 755 Pinole Valley Road, Pinole, CA 94564, Phone (510) 724-1994, (Mailing address: church of Christ, P.O. Box 453, Pinole, CA 94564)

Pinole Tidings

www.pinolechurchofchrist.com

Vol. 15, No. 41 - July 27, 2014

Philip, A True Servant Sid Latham

Philip served tables, preached the gospel, and raised a family dedicated to the Lord. His life is a remarkable story of dedication and service under a myriad of circumstances.

Philip did what needed to be done. Later in Philip's life Luke referred to him as "the evangelist" (Acts 21:8). However, this was not always the case. The first mention of Philip's work is not that of preaching but of serving tables. He is listed as one of the seven chosen to distribute food to the Hellenistic widows (Acts 6:1-6). Philip was selected for this task because he was a man "of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3). He had equipped himself to serve God.

Furthermore, it did not matter that the service was not the most prestigious. It was a task that needed to be done and I judge that the widows who were depending on these men for their daily meals thought it pretty important work. The first lesson we might learn from Philip is that if we are to be of any use in the kingdom we need to equip ourselves. Philip's reputation, character and wisdom were

indicative of his dedication to spiritual growth. As a result he was ready when the opportunity arose. Second, it did not matter what the service was. If preaching and teaching needed to be done he did that. If it was serving tables Philip did that also. The Lord doesn't want prima donnas who only have certain tasks in mind that are sufficiently dignified to be blessed by their noble administration. He wants men like Philip who do what needs to be done when it needs to be done. Far from being the last important part of Philip's life this early record we have demonstrates that he was truly serving God while he was serving tables.

Philip preached where he needed to preach. The persecution that arose after Stephen's death forced Philip out of Jerusalem along with the other Christians (Acts 8:4–5). He went into Samaria "and began proclaiming Christ to them" A great many believed and were baptized including Simon the sorcerer. Following the work of Philip, Peter and John came up to bestow the Holy Spirit upon these new Christians and continue preaching throughout Samaria (Acts: 14–15, 25). Meanwhile Philip received a divine call to preach to one man on the road between Jerusalem and Gaza. He finds a eunuch traveling there and "he preached Jesus to him" (Acts 8:27–35). The remarkable thing about both of these events is who Philip preached to. The Samaritans were not looked upon too favorably by the Jews to say the least. As a matter of fact there were hundreds of years of bitter enmity between the two groups. The Ethiopian eunuch was scarcely better. No eunuch could be accepted into fellowship with the Jewish nation (Deuteronomy 23:1). In spite of this Philip preached to both. His ground breaking work began the spread of the gospel throughout Samaria and perhaps

introduced Christianity to Ethiopia. He seems only to have seen them as souls in need of the gospel. We would do well to learn this lesson. All men need the gospel. When we preach and teach we are sowing seed, not target shooting. It is not up to us to pick and choose who should hear the gospel, but rather to proclaim Christ to them whoever they may be.

Philip lived the way he needed to live. After leaving the eunuch he traveled on to Azotus and eventually to Caesarea preaching all the way (Acts 8:40). We hear nothing more of Philip until Paul visits him in Acts 21. Approximately twenty years had passed since he arrived in Caesarea. In that time he had been preaching and raising godly daughters. We know nothing of this period except what can be inferred. Luke calls him "the evangelist"; therefore, he was preaching. He had four daughters who were prophetesses so they must have been Christians. All of this suggests that Philip remained a sincere and godly man. Hypocrites are not able to preach somewhere for twenty years. Men who are not genuinely committed to serving God do not raise godly families. Their children and eventually those around them will see the reality and they will cease to be influential (1 Timothy 5:24–25). This brief statement in Acts 21 is the last we hear of Philip but who could ask for a better tribute to a life well lived. Over the next twenty years what will our lives be characterized by? If we determine to spend whatever time God gives us doing what needs to be done, saying what needs to be said, and living the way we need to live we will have discovered true greatness (Matthew 23:11).