

Who was Philip in the Bible?

There are four different Philips mentioned in the New Testament. King Herod the Great had two sons from two different wives named Philip ([Luke 3:1](#); [Matthew 14:3](#)). Philip the apostle was one of Jesus' twelve disciples and Philip the evangelist was one of the original deacons of the church in Jerusalem.

Throughout history the apostle and evangelist have been confused as the same person, but they are, in fact, two distinct men who both helped to spread the gospel in the early days of the church.

Apart from being listed with the disciples, the majority of Philip the apostle's appearances in the Bible are recorded in the Gospel of John. Like fellow disciples [Peter](#) and [Andrew](#), he was from the town of Bethsaida in Galilee. Jesus sought Philip out and said to him, "Follow me" ([John 1:43](#)). Philip went to find his friend [Nathanael](#) and said, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" ([John 1:45](#)). Both Philip and Nathanael became Jesus' disciples.

Although the Bible does not give a detailed account of Philip the apostle's life, it does describe a few significant moments he was present during the life of Jesus. While Jesus was preaching on the mountainside to a great crowd of over 5,000 people Jesus asked Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" ([John 6:5](#)). Philip replied, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little" ([John 6:7](#)). Later on a group of Greeks wanted to meet with Jesus and presented their request to Philip, who told Andrew, and together they told Jesus. Jesus responded to them with a prediction of His death and teaching about serving and following Him ([John 12:20–26](#)). On the night of the Last Supper Jesus told His disciples that no one can know God the Father except through faith in Jesus Himself. Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father. Jesus answered him, explaining, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" ([John 14:9](#)). In addition, Philip was present with the other disciples when Jesus ascended into heaven ([Acts 1:13](#)). According to tradition, Philip the apostle was martyred while serving as a missionary in what is now modern-day Turkey.

Philip the evangelist was most likely one of the seventy-two followers Jesus sent out to share His message in [Luke 10:1](#). He would have heard the teachings of Jesus and been empowered by the Holy Spirit to spread the gospel. However, he is first mentioned by name in [Acts 6:5](#). The new church was growing rapidly. A complaint arose about the distribution to widows in the community. The apostles knew that they had been called specifically to spread the gospel and that mission needed to be their focus. So they had the church appoint seven wise believers from among them to help oversee these responsibilities. Philip the evangelist was one of the seven chosen for this role.

After Saul attacked the believers in Jerusalem, Philip the evangelist became a missionary in Samaria. He healed many people of evil spirits and they believed in God and he baptized them ([Acts 8:4–13](#)). An angel of the Lord told Philip to head south on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. On the road, he met a eunuch from Ethiopia who was a court official of the Ethiopian queen. The Spirit told Philip to approach the man's chariot. Philip did and heard the eunuch reading from the book of Isaiah. Philip asked if he understood what he was reading; the eunuch

wondered how he could unless someone guided him and invited Philip to sit with him. Philip explained that Isaiah was predicting the coming Messiah and went on to describe how Jesus had fulfilled that role and died for our sins. The eunuch believed and was baptized by Philip right then ([Acts 8:26–40](#)). Then Philip was carried away by the Holy Spirit and found himself in Azotus. He continued to preach in all the towns he passed through until he settled in Caesarea. Philip had four daughters who become prophetesses. He is last mentioned in the Bible when Paul and Luke visited him many years later ([Acts 21:8–9](#)).