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WARM UP

What was the last story you read or movie you saw where you didn't understand the story at all? What were they about?

WORD

Read **Acts 8:26-40**

Philip the apostle is told to go from a successful and fruitful ministry in Samaria to the desert roads of Gaza. Along this desert road he encounters an Ethiopian eunuch who is reading one of the prophetic books from the Old Testament. Upon hearing Philip's teaching and translating the text for the Ethiopian, the eunuch immediately desires to be baptised and wants to follow Christ.

NOTES

1 From Disciple Making to Desert Sojourning

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place.

Acts 8:26 (ESV)

Phillip is told to go from a time of fruitful ministry amongst crowds of people to a place where no one lived. This doesn't make sense in any logical mind, but Phillip still obeyed.

- Have you ever done something that didn't make sense to others, but because it was the right thing to do, you still pursued it? What was that thing?

2 Invited and Guided

*²⁷And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot."
³⁰So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.*

Acts 8:27-31 (ESV)

Phillip meets the Ethiopian who is reading Isaiah, but lacking in understanding. Phillip hears the Holy Spirit, who tells him to go over and join him. As we live our lives, it is important we hear what the Holy Spirit desires to say and do in us and through us.

- Have you ever done something where God has instructed you to move or speak, and you have or haven't? Can you tell us about it?
- What can we do to help us recognise God's voice more?

3 It's All About Jesus

³⁴And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" ³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

Acts 8:34-38 (ESV)

With the understanding of Scripture came a response; a deep desire to follow after God. The Ethiopian desired to be baptised and Philip was willing to get in the water and baptise the Gentile from Africa. Could it be that this Ethiopian would be one of the first converts to Christianity from Africa who would take the gospel of Jesus to the great continent because of how the Holy Spirit moved in Philip and brought him to witness? We must trust God as to where he leads us, because we never know what effects in nations and even entire continents might happen when we share our faith with others outside of our comfort.

PRAYER

- Have you been baptised in order to publicly declare your faith? If not, would you like to be baptised?
- Pray for a new level of sensitivity to the voice of the Lord.
- Pray for divine encounters with those you wouldn't otherwise meet if not for the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Pray for the boldness to obey God despite any circumstance.