

- We are currently working our way through the book of Acts in our daily Bible reading, and it is a familiar read for most of us I'm sure. However, there is something to be said for rereading that which we might be familiar with. Just as it is with movies or other books, it seems that we see things for the first time even after the "umpteenth" time. This is especially true in Acts because of the great details that Luke provides for us in this account of the early church and Christians.
- One such story that we could continue to learn from is the account of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch of **Acts 8:26-39**. Many a man and Bible class teacher has preached a lesson or taught a class from this text and has done so in numerous ways. Tonight, I would like to make some simple observations that came to mind as I was reading through the Text. This is certainly not an exhaustive list, but the hope is that this will help us to be encouraged and strengthened in our faith and maybe open our eyes to something we might not have ever seen or recognized before.

4 Things I Learn from the Story of Philip and the Eunuch

I. Opportunities to teach are everywhere.

- A. Sometimes, we try to wait for teaching opportunities that are perfect situations.
 1. We want to be in our comfort zone.
 2. We might not want to really go out of our way.
 3. We don't really want to put too much effort into teaching the Gospel.
- B. In the New Testament, we see people being taught in all different types of locations and settings.
 1. Jesus taught multitudes all over the place. (On a mountain, in homes, by bodies of water)
 2. Paul taught the gospel in many different places and in many different conditions.
 - a) Paul taught Lydia and her household by the river. (**Acts 16:13-15**)
 - b) Paul taught the Gospel while in imprisoned. (**Acts 16:16-34**)
 - c) Paul taught the Gospel to Felix while in custody. (**Acts 24:24**)
 - d) Paul taught the Gospel to Agrippa while on trial, as well. (**Acts 26:27-29**)
 3. Paul's confidence and faith in God didn't waiver and he jumped on any and all opportunities to share the Gospel with those around him.

II. Honest seekers will find God and the Truth.

- A. The Eunuch was returning from Jerusalem and was reading from the Prophet Isaiah. He wasn't sure of what the text meant and he asked Philip to explain it to him.
 1. Isaiah was not referring to himself. He was referring to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
 2. This is very similar to what Peter quoted from David back in **Acts 2**.
 3. It was common for the inspired writer to write in such a way that seemed as if it made reference to himself, but it a prophecy of the Messiah in reality.
 4. Philip explained Jesus to the Eunuch beginning at this text.
- B. Eunuch was sincerely searching after God and the truth, and the Lord provided a way for Him to learn the Truth.
 1. The Lord sent Philip to the Eunuch for him to be taught. (**v.29**)
 2. Jesus, while peaching the sermon on the mount, told the altitude that those who seek God will find Him if they will receive Him because God wants what is best for all people. (**Matt. 7:7-12**)
 3. We know that God wants all people to be saved (**II Peter 3:9**), so it makes sense that He would provide the truth to those who are seeking it. Do we necessarily know how He does that? No, not necessarily, but we can have trust and confidence that God will do what James writes in **James 1:5-8**. We must have that faith that God will provide for those who truly want Him.
 4. That doesn't mean that we will not have to put any effort into growing. We might have to do some digging and ask some questions like the Eunuch did of Philip. (**vv.30,31**)
 5. And we must always rely on God's Word and go back to it every time in order to know what God desires for us to know.

III. Teaching Jesus does not have to take a long time.

- A. Philip's approach to teaching this man was pretty simple. He wanted to teach this man about Jesus, and he did just that by beginning at this text in Isaiah. This seems to be a common approach to evangelism for the Apostles and 1st Century Christians.
 - 1. Peter preached that one sermon in **Acts 2** and many were baptized.
 - 2. We see the same thing happening in **Acts 3 & 4**, as well.
 - 3. Paul seemed to be able to convert Lydia and the Jailor from one occasion of teachings.
 - 4. Paul himself was converted after being taught by Ananias. (**Acts 9**)
 - 5. Cornelius and his household were converted after the teaching from Peter. (**Acts 10**)
- B. We can confidently assume that these people didn't know every single thing about God, the Christian life, or the church, but they were still able to obey the Gospel and they could learn from there on.
 - 1. Some seem to approach evangelism as if the prospect must know a large amount about the church and authority before they can obey the Gospel. (studies that begin in authority and end with Jesus and obedience)
 - 2. There isn't necessarily anything wrong with that, but we just don't have any sort of example that shows this to be the approach of the Apostles and Christians of the first century.
 - 3. The example we've have seem to focus on Jesus and His sacrifice. If the person obeys the Gospel and they truly want to follow Jesus, then they would submit to His will in all areas.
 - 4. Of course, denominational teachings have made this difficult because we often have to break down false teachings in order to build up the truth, but I believe the approach of Philip can still be greatly effective today.
 - 5. But evangelism is an art and not a science, but don't think that you have to take a super long time to teach someone the Gospel and what they need to do to be saved.

IV. Baptism is an urgent act of obedience.

- A. Upon Philip's teaching of Jesus to the Eunuch, they came upon some water and he asked the chariot to stop and requested to be baptized. We don't see many teaching the urgency or importance of baptism, today, but the Eunuch seemed to recognize it as being important and urgent. Why would he think that way and command the chariot to stop if...
 - 1. ...baptism wasn't necessary for the forgiveness of sins and could be done at a later time?
 - 2. ...a person was saved by faith alone?
 - 3. ...a person was saved by saying the sinner's prayer?
 - 4. ...sprinkling or pouring water is just as good as immersion?
- B. The teaching of Jesus by Philip must have included the necessity and urgency of baptism because how else would the Eunuch have had the mind to stop where they were and take care of that right then?
 - 1. It makes sense when we consider other conversion stories and how almost every single one specifically mentions an immediate baptism.
 - 2. The Jews of **Acts 2**.
 - 3. The people of Samaria in **Acts 8**.
 - 4. Saul in **Acts 9**.
 - 5. Cornelius and Her household in **Acts 10**
 - 6. Lydia and her household in **Acts 16:15**.
 - 7. The Philippian Jailor in **Acts 16:33**.
- C. The Eunuch saw the importance, he obeyed, and he was able to go on his way with his new life rejoicing!

We can read the same story time and time again, but thankfully the depth of God's Word continues to allow us to see new things time and time again. An open mind and an open Bible are just what God needs in order to lead us to a deeper and fuller knowledge of His will. May God help us to always have a hunger and desire for His Word and never be content with our current knowledge, but always seek to better ourselves in His Word.