

## EXPAND YOUR WITNESS (Leader's Guide)

### Acts 8:26–40

#### OPENING QUESTION

Have you ever faced a situation where you had to stand up for something you believed in, even when it was difficult or unpopular? How did you handle it, and what was the outcome?

#### CONTEXT

The Book of Acts shows how Jesus' followers, initially an insular group, were called to bring the Gospel to the whole world (Acts 1:8). Early Christians began to move outside their communities only when persecution drove them into non-Jewish areas (Acts 8:1). Among those scattered was Philip, a Greek-speaking Jew described as "full of the Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:3-5). In Samaria, Philip preached about Jesus, baptized new believers, cast out impure spirits, and healed people, bringing great joy to the city (Acts 8:4-7). Then, the Holy Spirit directed Philip to a less-traveled road leading to a deserted area, where a significant encounter was about to unfold.

#### READ ACTS 8:26–40

#### DISCUSS

Who initiated Philip's journey to the desert road, what kind of ministry was Philip sent out of in Samaria, and what does this suggest about God's guidance in evangelism?

Leader Note	<i>Highlight how God uses both angels and the Holy Spirit to guide Philip, suggesting that God's guidance is essential in evangelistic efforts. Point out that Philip was by all metrics experiencing fruitful ministry in Samaria, and yet God called him to a desert road to witness to a single person. Encourage students to reflect on how they might be attentive to God's leading in their own lives and they can trust God's guidance.</i>
-------------	--

What can we learn from Philip's approach when he meets the Ethiopian eunuch?

Leader Note	<i>Note Philip's willingness to follow the Spirit's promptings, his respectful approach by asking a question, and his readiness to explain Scripture. Emphasize the importance of being prepared and sensitive to the Holy Spirit's guidance in conversations about faith.</i>
-------------	--

In ancient times, eunuchs often held significant roles in royal courts, serving as trusted advisors and administrators. Their inability to father children made them loyal and non-threatening to royal lineages, allowing them to achieve substantial power and status. Despite this, eunuchs were marginalized and excluded from many religious and social communities. For example, Jewish law barred them from entering the assembly of the Lord (Deut 23:1). Considering the eunuch's significant role yet simultaneous marginalization, how might these factors have affected his understanding of himself, others, and his openness to the message of the Gospel?

Leader Note	<i>His openness to the Gospel message can be seen as a response to the inclusive nature of the message of Jesus, which breaks down barriers of race, status, and physical condition. Highlight how the Gospel offers a message of belonging and identity in Christ that transcends societal and religious boundaries. Encourage students to consider how they can reach out to individuals who may feel marginalized or overlooked, offering them the inclusive love and acceptance found in Jesus.</i>
-------------	---

What is significant about the eunuch's question, "How can I understand unless someone explains it to me?"

Leader Note	<i>This highlights the role of a guide in the process of understanding Scripture. Discuss the importance of being available to help others understand the Bible and share the message of Jesus.</i>
-------------	---

## REFLECT

As we reflect on the story of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, we see a powerful example of how the Gospel transcends social and religious barriers, welcoming those who have been marginalized and excluded. This narrative challenges us to consider how we can embody this radical inclusivity in our own lives. Just as Philip was guided by the Holy Spirit to reach out to the eunuch, we are called to extend the message of Jesus to those around us, regardless of their background or status.

1. How can we be more attentive to the Holy Spirit's guidance in our daily interactions, especially when it comes to sharing our faith?
2. What are some practical ways we can reach out to and include those who might feel marginalized or excluded in our community?
3. Reflect on a time when you felt like an outsider. How did someone's acceptance or inclusion impact you, and how can you offer that same acceptance to others?
4. In what areas of your life can you practice more radical inclusivity, and what steps will you take to make this a reality?

## **PRAY**

Lord, thank You for showing us the power of Your inclusive love through the story of the Ethiopian eunuch. Help us to be guided by Your Spirit, reaching out to those who feel marginalized and sharing the Gospel with boldness and compassion. Amen.