

THE COURAGE TO LEARN **(Acts 8:26-39)**

I. He had a desire to learn.

- A. One thing that jumps out of the text at us, is that this religious man had a desire to know more about God's word.
 - 1. Can you imagine sitting in a chariot on the side of the road reading from a scroll?
 - 2. Remember this man didn't have a pocket Bible he could pull out and read.
 - 3. He didn't have a handy iPhone or iPad, or some other tablet device, with a Bible app on it.
 - 4. He was sitting there reading from a scroll.
- B. As we can see from our text, he was reading from what we know as Isaiah 53.
 - 1. Isaiah is one of the largest of the Old Testament books.
 - 2. The scroll from which he was reading was probably fairly large.
- C. Not only that, this man had just left Jerusalem where he had gone to worship God.
 - 1. He must have been a devout man, because being a eunuch kept him from entering the temple.
 - 2. He still had a desire to go to Jerusalem to worship, despite the great distance, probably at least 1,500 miles, he had to travel to do so.
 - 3. So, here he was reading God's word, despite just having been to worship God.
- D. Today, if one has the courage to learn, it starts with a desire to do so.
 - 1. Many people lack the desire to read and study God's word.
 - 2. A lot of people are content to listen to what their preacher said and what they have been told by others and believe those things.
- E. You may be sitting there thinking, I've learned the Bible and obeyed it so I can tune this sermon out.
 - 1. Have you lost your desire to learn?
 - 2. Notice what Peter wrote to a group of Christians...(1 Peter 2:2).
 - 3. You and I, once we have obeyed the gospel, can't stop learning.
 - 4. Our faith must still grow and that only comes by hearing God's word and taking it in (Romans 10:17).
- F. It takes courage to continue to learn because growth isn't easy.
 - 1. Our children have growing pains don't they?
 - 2. Growth hurts.
 - 3. Spiritually, when we grow it points out our flaws and we don't like that in general.
 - 4. But we are commanded to grow (2 Peter 3:18)
- G. Have you grown to the point where you can teach a Bible class or an

individual the gospel?

1. There are numbers of Christians who have never taught someone the simple plan of salvation.
2. There are numbers of Christians who have never taught a Bible class.

H. I'm afraid it is because many lack the desire to do so.

II. He sought direction.

- A. When Philip, having been directed by the Holy Spirit to go to the eunuch, got to him he asked if he understood what he was reading.
1. Here's where it could have gotten touchy.
 2. He could have said, like many people do when it comes to the Bible, sure I know what I'm reading.
 3. He could have told him to mind his own business.
 4. He could have said he knew because his rabbi had told him.
- B. Thankfully, he was very honest and sought direction.
1. How can I unless someone guides me?
 2. He was willing to learn and sought direction to do so.
- C. It is hard for people to admit they don't know something or don't understand something.
1. I've seen my son Blake look his coach in the eyes and tell him he understood the instruction that was just given him.
 2. He then turned around and did the exact same thing he had just done, because he didn't fully understand what he was told.
 3. He's 10, but there are adults who do the exact same thing.
- D. Talking about the gospel with someone is tricky.
1. Politics and religion are the two touchiest subjects that can be broached in a conversation with people.
 2. Most people avoid those topics because we don't want to get into arguments.
- E. However, there are some who are seeking direction.
1. There are those who realize they don't understand God's word.
 2. Some people are seeking direction to God.
- F. This eunuch is not the only person in the history of the world that wanted to know what scripture means.
- G. You may be sitting there and saying, I'm a Christian, I've headed in the right direction already.
1. Again, what are you doing for the cause of Christ as a Christian?
 2. Are you showing people the direction in which you are headed?
 3. Do you know how to do so?
- H. There are a lot of different ways to help people learn the gospel.
1. There's Fisher's of Men, Bible correspondence courses, Jule Miller videos and many others.
 2. There is just simply opening up the Bible with someone and showing them verse by verse what the Bible says about the church,

salvation and any other doctrinal issue.

- I. Do you know how to teach a class?
 - 1. Have you ever offered to be a teacher's aide?
 - 2. Are you willing to do so?
- J. Notice what Paul told Timothy (2 Timothy 2:2).
 - 1. We are to teach others so that they can teach others.
 - 2. Christianity is taught religion.
 - 3. We, as Christians, are to provide direction from God's word to others so that they can provide that some direction to others still.
- K. Not only that, but why are congregations of the Lord's people going in a different direction than they once went?
 - 1. Sometimes, we stop learning.
 - 2. We begin to trust others just like those in denominationalism do and we fail to study on our own.

III. He found distinction.

- A. This man wanted to know if the writer, Isaiah, was speaking of himself or about someone else.
 - 1. We know that Isaiah 53 is a beautiful picture of the Suffering Servant, the Messiah.
 - 2. He wanted to know who was being led like a sheep to the slaughter.
- B. Philip then began to preach to him about Jesus.
- C. This was something distinctly different from what he had just been hearing in Jerusalem.
 - 1. It was a message that the Messiah had come.
 - 2. He had been hearing that the Messiah had not yet come.
- D. Not only that, the message that Philip preached about Jesus must have included a discussion about baptism because when he came to water, he wanted to know what was hindering him from being baptized.
- E. All of this was distinct and precise.
- F. Christianity is not a mixed up bag of teaching that says one thing here, and one thing there.
 - 1. It is distinct and unique on every point.
 - 2. You don't have to wonder about things, the Bible tells us exactly what we need to know (2 Peter 1:3).
- G. When we direct people to the Bible, they are able to tell a distinct difference between what they have been taught and what the Bible says.
 - 1. Sadly, even when they don't want to obey it they still notice it.
 - 2. (Discussion about MDR with woman who said, I see it but I don't believe it).
- H. One problem that has arisen in the Lord's church is that many who profess to be Christians believe that the Lord's church is just a denomination, maybe better than the others, but still a denomination.
 - 1. The truth is, Christianity is distinct from all man-made doctrines.

2. The Lord's church is the church about which we read in the New Testament and we, those who profess to be members of it, need to be convinced of that.
- I. Notice the words of Peter (2 Peter 1:12-15; 2 Peter 3:1).
- J. We need to be reminded of the distinctiveness of Christianity so that others, like the eunuch, can see it as well.

IV. He showed determination.

- A. When taught this distinct doctrine, the eunuch determined to obey it.
- B. He pointed out the nearby body of water in which he could be baptized.
 1. This man was changing everything he had known religiously.
 2. He was determined to obey what he had learned.
- C. When you truly learn something, you put it into action.
- D. That is what this man did.
 1. He had made sacrifices already.
 2. Being from Ethiopia, he had made a change to be a Jew.
 3. Despite his inability to fully worship God because of his physical condition, he still went all the way to Jerusalem to worship.
- E. When he was shown what God wanted for men to do to be saved, he did it.
- F. We long to meet people like this don't we?
 1. We often hear that nobody wants to hear the truth any more.
 2. That simply isn't true.
 3. That is something we say when we get rejected a few times and don't want to sow the seed any longer.
- G. There are those out there who will make the determination to do right if we present them with the truth.
- H. As Christians, we need to make the determination that we are going to live right and find others who want to obey the gospel as well.
 1. We can't teach others properly if we aren't living right.
 2. We won't seek those who want to learn about Jesus if we aren't living right.

V. He gained deliverance.

- A. Because he determined to obey the teaching about Jesus, this man was baptized into Christ.
- B. Upon his being baptized, notice his reaction: he went on his way rejoicing.
- C. He could rejoice because his sins were forgiven and he was now in that same Christ about whom he had just learned.
- D. There are people all around enslaved in sin just as this eunuch had been.
 1. Those of us who are Christians were once servants of sin.
 2. We, like the eunuch, obtained deliverance from sin.
- E. Our Lord is still in the delivering business (Galatians 1:3-4).
- F. That deliverance obtained by the eunuch is still obtainable today.
- G. Brethren, do you remember when you came up out of that watery grave of baptism?

1. How did you feel?
2. Didn't you rejoice as the eunuch did?
3. Don't you think others want to feel that same way?