



ACTS 8:26-39

STARTING SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

It can be difficult to talk to people about the Lord. In fact, some people will say it is actually impolite to talk about religion or politics with people you do not know very well. And yet that is a task the Lord has given us. How else are we going to fulfill His command to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20)? So how can we go about starting spiritual conversations?

Be attuned to guidance from the Lord (Acts 8:26) In other words, we approach life differently, asking ourselves, “How is the Lord guiding me today?” That results in a different approach to work, school, time with our family, and even travel. As an ambassador of the Lord, how does God wish to use me today? That is the approach we see of Philip. He listened as the Lord guided him along his way.

As you go, look for people with whom the Lord is working (Acts 8:27-29). Philip saw a man who went to Jerusalem to worship, and Philip noticed that he was reading the Bible. The Lord told Philip to go to the man. What do we notice as we observe those in our environment? Perhaps we see someone with a Bible or some kind of spiritual or religious material. It might be that learning of someone getting married, having a child, or having a sick loved one is an example of God at work. At any rate, just like Philip observed the man from Ethiopia reading the Scripture, we want to be on the lookout for signs that God is at work with someone and to respond to the Lord’s nudging.

How do we know that the Lord is really working with someone? We can **engage them by asking questions and gauging interest (Acts 8:30-31)**. Philip did this by simply asking if the man from Ethiopia understood what he was reading.

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He responded by inviting Philip to explain the passage. We might ask a question about whatever we observe. For example, if we see someone with a Bible, we might say, "I see you have a Bible. What are some of your favorite passages?" Or if we learn that they have an ill loved one, we might say "I heard your husband is ill. Could I pray for him?" If the person is not interested, we move on, but if they are interested, we might find that Philip's approach is helpful.

Focus on the Scripture and its meaning (Acts 8:32-34). If the person indicates a favorite passage, we might read it and explain the meaning. If someone asks us to pray for a loved one, we might point out a Scripture like James 5. We try to get to Scripture and to a way to discuss its meaning with the person to continue the spiritual conversation.

Our goal is to proclaim the gospel (Acts 8:35). To do so we look for an opportunity to discuss the concern or the question they have in light of all of the Scripture. That is what Philip did, and that is what Christians have been doing ever since.

It is my prayer that all of us will become more effective at starting spiritual conversations and in turn making disciples of Jesus Christ.

JEREMIAH **29**
INITIATIVE

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