

## **The Uncomfortable Road to Life (Acts 8:26–40)**

**Time:** 60–75 Minutes

**Purpose:** To explore how God invites ordinary people into extraordinary participation in His mission, especially through crossing boundaries, confronting prejudice, listening to the Spirit, and welcoming those who feel excluded.

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### **Icebreaker (optional), 10 min.**

Share briefly: **Tell about a time when something you initially didn't want to do ended up becoming a significant blessing or opportunity.**

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### **Scripture Reading (5 minutes)**

Read Acts 8:26–40 aloud together.

Ask participants to listen for:

- What surprised you in the story
  - What they learn about how the Spirit works
  - What they learn about Philip
  - What they learn about the Ethiopian official
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### **Discussion Part 1: Philip and the Desert Road (15 minutes)**

Philip leaves a fruitful revival in Samaria to travel a lonely desert road because God directs him there. He continues to learn to “be comfortable with being uncomfortable”

#### **Questions**

1. What do you think made Philip willing to leave a successful ministry in Samaria and go where God sent him?

2. The sermon suggested that Philip's experience among the Samaritans had already "cracked open" some of his assumptions and prejudices.
    - Why might that have made him more ready to hear God's voice?
    - Have you ever noticed God using uncomfortable experiences to expand your perspective?
  3. What are some "desert roads" we encounter today?
    - Places that seem inconvenient
    - Relationships that require courage
    - Situations where the outcome is unclear or grief producing
  4. Why do you think God often does new things outside our comfort zones?
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### **Discussion Part 2: The Ethiopian Official (15–20 minutes)**

The Ethiopian official was powerful, educated, wealthy, and influential. Yet he also carried deep wounds and experienced exclusion.

#### **Questions**

1. What stands out to you most about this man?
  2. What do you think the promises in Isaiah 56:3-4 would have been so meaningful to him?
  3. The sermon emphasized that God sees and welcomes people who have wounds, losses, or experiences that make them feel like outsiders.
    - Why is this aspect of the Gospel so important?
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### **Discussion Part 3: Crossing Boundaries (15 minutes)**

One major theme of Acts is the movement of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Samaria and ultimately to the nations.

#### **Questions**

1. What boundaries might God be asking our church to cross today? (Here are some ideas if people are slow to answer: Cultural, Political, Generational, Economic, Gender.)
2. How do you feel when you approach a boundary? Most people feel scared or how much work it will take.

3. How might the Spirit and our community help you to cross boundaries for the abundant life promised on the other side of the barrier?
  4. How can our church become a community where people from very different backgrounds genuinely belong?
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### **Personal Reflection and Prayer (10–15 minutes)**

Take a few moments to be quiet and write.

Invite group members to consider:

- Is there a person God may be placing in my path right now?
- Is there a prejudice, fear, assumption, or comfort zone that God wants to challenge?
- Is there a “desert road” I have been resisting?
- What would faithfulness look like this week?

### **Prayer Together**

- Help you hear the Spirit’s leading
  - Give courage to cross relational boundaries
  - Increase love for people who are different from you
  - Show each person their next step of obedience
  - Help the church reflect God’s welcoming heart for all people
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### **Challenge for the Week:**

- Spend intentional time with someone outside your normal circle.
- Have a meaningful conversation with a neighbor, coworker, or acquaintance.
- Pray daily for an unreached people group.
- Ask God each morning: **“Who might you want me to notice today?”**