

t H E P a t T E r N

going deeper

Last week's "going deeper" sidebar focused on how God uses stories to show us things instead of telling us outright.

Another thing you can do with a story is "try out" principles gleaned from clear teaching passages by seeing how they jive with the narrative unfolding. Today, you're learning about Holy Spirit *nudges, interruptions, cues, bumps, and also prompts* by studying two passages: one from Acts 8, and another from Mark's Gospel in chapter 10. But there are more, so...

You try it: Take your new/refreshed understanding of nudges, cues, interruptions, bumps & prompts and see how they fit with **Acts 3:1-10**. Can you see evidence (either stated or implied) of each? What can else can you learn about cooperating with God in delivering miracles from this passage?

Are miracles too mysterious and far beyond us to comprehend or cooperate with?

A miracle is God's will wrapped in God's love accomplished by God's power.... to meet a need.

Locate the need, and you've found the scene of a miracle waiting to happen.

Philippians 2:5,4:

"Miracle agents can develop new sensitivities." (Wilkinson)

The pattern: God interrupts us, inviting us to focus on someone. They signal a need. We engage them. They open up. God invites us to respond to his leading. He does something special.

Nudges: A shift of awareness that opens us up to God's guidance.

"This is significant." Often vague and general.

Interruptions: When someone disrupts our routine as a part of God's plan.

Cues: The person signals and/or clarifies their need.

Bumps: When we inject a question or comment that invites the person to clarify their need (share their heart).

Prompts: "Your ears will a voice behind you saying, "This is the way, walk in it." (Isaiah 30:21)

Prompts are specific instructions about what to do and say to move things along or deliver the miracle.

Deliveries: Do what God puts on your heart and leave the results to him.

* Don't get caught up in the precise wording and order. Think of these words as ingredients in a spiritual recipe.

Acts 8:26-38:

Mark 10:17-23:

FOR YOU

Do the Bible Study in the “Going Deeper” column on the previous page.

FOR COUPLES

Take a twenty minute block of time to talk about Sunday’s message. Focus on what stood out to you, challenged you, encouraged you, etc, and why. Pray with each other when you’re done.

FOR PARENTS

Sometimes we don’t give our children enough credit and forget that the Holy Spirit can use them in powerful ways. Here are a couple of suggestions for helping them along that path as you build a foundation for outreach and ministry in their lives.

Preschool parents: When a family member (brother, sister, other parent) is having a hard time this week or needs help with something, point it out to your child. “Is daddy having a hard day? How can you tell? What do you think we could do to help him or cheer him up?” Do it together, then praise them for being so kind and helpful, just like Jesus.

K-6 parents: Explain a simplified version of today’s message about how God gets our attention because he wants us to help people. Pray that God would show them people and situations where they can show kindness or offer help, then ask them about it throughout the week.

Youth parents: Discuss what stood out to you about Sunday’s message, and why. Pray for each other, that God would nudge and prompt you to obey him when he interrupts you. Check in later that week about any “God-moments” you or they noticed & what you did (or didn’t) do about them.

Older/grand parents: Initiate a conversation with a grandchild or your own son/daughters about a moment in your life when God led you to make a difference in someone’s life.

FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Briefly re-cap Sunday’s message, then use these questions to guide discussion as needed:
2. What stood out to you about Sunday’s message, and why?
3. Brad described a “nudge” as “A shift in awareness that opens us up to God’s guidance.” Have you ever experienced a “nudge” from God? Explain.
4. What might help or hinder us from tuning in to God’s nudges?
5. Brad described a “prompt” as specific instructions from God about what to do or say to move things along or deliver one of his miracles. Have you ever experienced a “prompting” from God’s Spirit? Explain.
6. Why do you think we don’t experience more promptings from God’s Spirit?
7. Re-read the story of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:26-40. What else do you notice about this miracle and how Philip was led by the Holy Spirit?
8. What can we apply to our lives from this passage?
9. Pray together about being faithful to God’s nudges and promptings.