

How teachable are you?

During a recent trip to Colorado Springs, my wife Candy and I visited a beautiful park called the Garden of the Gods. As soon as we arrived, we set out on a hike past enormous red rock formations that jutted hundreds of feet out of the ground. The scenery was beautiful, but after walking for about 90 minutes, the two of us agreed that we had seen all that we needed to see.

Heading back toward the parking lot to leave, we noticed a woman standing by the park's main entrance. She was a volunteer, there to lead a free 45-minute nature tour for anyone who was interested. Candy and I looked at each other with a glance that said, "Why not?" Soon, along with about a dozen other visitors, we were walking along listening to Judy the tour guide.

A Second Look

We walked over the exact same trails Candy and I had hiked a few minutes earlier, but this time Judy opened our eyes to all kinds of details we hadn't noticed before. She talked enthusiastically about the wildlife that lived in the area, including big-horn sheep, black squirrels, and rattlesnakes. She identified magpies, hawks, and rock doves flying overhead. She pointed out an enormous beehive nestled into the side of the mountain, and a nearby apricot tree that attracted the bees with its blossoms. She explained how the yucca plant survives in the dry climate. She took some seeds from a shrub, crushed them in her hand, and let us smell the pungent aroma. She gestured toward a towering rock formation that looked like two camels kissing. She showed us a place where falcons nested in the cleft of the rock, and described how these birds can swoop down on their prey at 200 miles per hour.

Candy and I were amazed at all the interesting things we had missed simply because we hadn't known where to look. Altogether, our hike with Judy the tour guide took half as long as our previous walk, but we learned far more from her than we could have discovered on our own. All it took was a knowledgeable person who volunteered to walk with us and share what she knew.

What important lessons do we miss because we set out on our own, unwilling to learn from wise teachers who

show us? Do we have a teachable spirit like Nicodemus, who came to Jesus for a night-time question and answer session? Are we like the Ethiopian eunuch, who invited Philip to sit with him in his chariot and help him understand the Scriptures he had been reading? Are we like the well-educated Apollos, who went to the home of Priscilla and Aquila so these humble tentmakers could fill in the gaps of his knowledge about the ways of God?

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A Humble Attitude

The stubborn Pharisees resisted Jesus' teaching with cynical questions and political agendas. Instead of heeding the miraculous signs he gave them, they kept demanding more. Instead of listening to the powerful testimony of the blind man whose sight Jesus had restored, they threw him out and said, "How dare you lecture us!" (John 9:34). Instead of welcoming the Messiah they claimed to await, they rejected him and gave their approval when he was nailed to the cross.

King David fell into sin when he became proud and self-sufficient. He found his way back when he prayed, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

When we come to the Lord with a humble, teachable attitude, he will be our guide. And we'll find a lot more joy in the journey than if we try to hike down the path-

way alone. ■

David Faust / Executive Editor



have already walked the path before? Does our pride get in the way? Are we open to everything the Lord wants to

Photo: Mark Jones. Mark ministers with First Christian Church in Columbus, Indiana.