

(The Linnell)

"THE WAY MADE PLAIN"

Acts 8:35

Our text is a story that clears up all of the (conversions) described in the Bible. Smucker met man "I'm told you went to the Ball game instead of ch. This morning - that's a lie - and here's the fish to prove it!"

All of the evils that exist were present in the eunuch. The man was the victim of a terrible institution. He was a withered branch, a dry stick, without hope of issue or family. He must have been a gifted man because even though he was a eunuch - he was a treasure of the state. As the treasurer of the United States. Of this ancient nation of Ethiopia, under Candace, the Queen. He must have had wonderful conversion to truth. Somehow he was converted to the (one and only) God - coming to Jerusalem to worship. He had found a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He is returning in his chariot to the capitol. And he is reading aloud the (53rd) chapter of the book.

Now the Lord was merciful to this man - he sent Phillip the evangelist down, into the desert to stand by the roadside. That goes through Gaza. When the chariot came, the attendant driving the horses, the treasurer in the chariot, reading aloud the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, the Holy Spirit said to Philip - join thyself to the chariot.

When the eunuch invited Philip, to come and sit with him - he was reading this.

Isaiah 53:6-8 - All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord hath layed on him the iniquity of us all. And who

shall declare his generation - for he was cut off out of the land of the living.

The eunuch turned to Philip and said - Acts 8:34-35 - I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man? Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

There are some wonderful truths here - but it is very simple. As we approach the Christmas Season, it is very necessary that we should say a word about making the way plain. Or people will never be able to find their way to Bethlehem. And to the Christ who was born.

I. THE GOSPEL IS THE PREACHING OF JESUS

First, understand the simple story of Jesus. Paul described the Gospel, in these words. (I Cor. 15:1-4) More over brethren, I declare unto the Gospel which I have preached unto you, which also you have received and wherein ye stand. By which also you are saved if you keep in memory what I have preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received. How Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and he was buried, and he arose again, the third day according to the Scriptures."

The Gospel is a simple story of Jesus. Missionaries go across the sea to preach the Gospel. What does he preach? He preaches about Jesus.

If a man stands in the pulpit after the service is over, and one goes out to

the door and says, that preacher preaches the Gospel. What does he mean? He means that he preaches Jesus. The Gospel is the story of the Lord Jesus. Jesus born of a virgin - Jesus going about his ministry doing good. Jesus dying on a cross for our sins. Buried in the tomb. The third day Jesus raised from among the dead. Forty days later, Jesus ascending up into Heaven. Jesus at the right hand of God. And some triumphant, golden tomorrow, Jesus coming again.

That is what you preach when you preach the Gospel. And Philip opened his mouth and began to preach, unto him Jesus.

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I read sometime ago about a preacher that was learned, gifted, educated, and Sunday by Sunday he preached in a rich fashionable church, and he talked to them about literature, economics, philosophy, and science. One day a little girl came to his office and said that her mother sent for him because she was sick and dying. And she wanted him to come and tell her how to die. The pastor put it off, for he found that the child lived in an area we would call slums. The little child insisted that the mother had sent, and finally, he followed her down to the slums of the great city. Through the stairway to the darkened room, to the bed of a dying woman. He took his place by her side and said - you have sent for me - now what can I do. The mother replied, I cannot live, I am dying, and I am not ready. Will you tell me how to die. Will you tell me how to meet God. Would you tell me how I can be saved.

The fashionable preacher who for years had spoken about philosophies,

and speculations began to speak to her in such terms. And he thought that he had been preaching this through the years. The poor woman was disappointed - she did not understand his explanations. The preacher bowed his head and cried, oh God, help me. When he prayed, there came back to his heart, the memory of his Godly mother. How she had taught him as a little child, a simple story of Jesus. The preacher began to tell the dying woman about Jesus. How we were lost, and how Jesus came down from Heaven to teach us the way. How he died for our sins. How he was raised and ascended to glory. That he waited there for those who put their trust in him. When he began to talk about Jesus, explaining the simple story, of how if you trust in him you will be saved, and that he is waiting now to receive us, she began to nod her head. Oh yes, I can trust a Saviour like that, she said.

- Do you know what happened - the next Lord's Day he stood in that fashionable church and before all the people he described to them what had happened. He ended the explanation, my dear people, I want you to know - I got that woman into the kingdom of Heaven that day, but what is more, I got in myself. That is the Gospel. And however we may expound and preach, the very heart of the Gospel is always the simple story of Jesus. And he preached unto him Jesus.

II. SALVATION HAS A PLAN

It is trusting Jesus.

Now the way of Salvation is plain. And the simple way is trusting.

Now if you go through the whole Bible and underscore wherever the Bible

tells a man how to be saved, when you finish going through the Bible and looking at all of the passages - you will have an amazing fact. God tells a man how to be saved - and he always tells it in one simple sentence.

Example - John 1, we read, he came down unto his own. And his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave ye power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." V. 11-12. One simple sentence.

John 3:14-15 - As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish but have eternal life." One sentence.

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." One single sentence.

John 5:24 - Verily, verily, I say unto you - he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life - and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

Rom. 10:9-10 - If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with a heart man believeth unto righteousness. And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

When a man or a person comes down, and openly confesses his faith in the Lord Jesus, there is no exception to that. Wherever God tells us how to be saved, he always does it in one simple sentence.

I read the story of a preacher who was told about a 13 year old boy in the hospital who was dying. He was asked to go, and to tell him how to be saved. He went in the room - he was under an oxygen tent. He asked the nurse, could he speak to the boy. The preacher put his head under the oxygen tent with the boy, and said son, they tell me you know that you aren't going to live long. That is right, I am going to die. And they tell me that you are not a Christian. I've never been saved. And then he said, I want to tell you how to be saved. And I want to tell you how to die. And I want to tell you how to meet God. The preacher read to him those simple passages of Scripture that we have just brought to you. And the boy said this - (is it that easy). And the pastor replied, son, it is easy for you. But not for him, you see, he took our sins and bore them in his own body on the tree. He suffered for us and by his stripes we are healed.

Salvation is easy for us because the battle has already been won. He preached unto him Jesus.

III. CONVERSION IS A COMMITMENT OF LIFE

Now this is the thing that happened on the road that day to this eunuch. You remember the Scripture that says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. And in 2 Tim., I know whom I have believed and am persuaded

that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Chapter 1:12. Many years ago missionaries preached to the blanket Indians and to the plain Indians and there was a preacher who had a tent and pitched it in Western Oklahoma. He was preaching the Gospel to the blanket Indian tribe. And the story is, as the meeting progressed, and as he was preaching the Gospel, those Indians in one of the services - the chief came down and stood in front of the missionary. Looked into his face. Missionary, Indian Chief give his Tommi-Hawk to Jesus. And he layed it at the missionaries feet. The missionary paid no attention to him, but just kept on preaching.

The Indian Chief arose the second time, walked down to the front, and said missionary - Indian Chief giveth blanket. And he layed his blanket at the feet of the missionary. The missionary kept on preaching about Jesus and paid no attention. He arose a third time and went down, outside the tent. Tied his pony to a stake, of the tent, walked back and looked at the missionary and said -- missionary, Indian Chief give his pony to Jesus. That was the last possession that he had. The missionary paid no attention to him. And kept on preaching about Jesus.

The next time the Chief arose, came to the front, he knelt in front of the preacher, looked into his face - missionary, Chief give himself to Jesus.

This is what it is to be saved. We do not bribe our way into the kingdom of Heaven. We just give ourselves in faith, and in trust, and in committal. And Jesus puts your name in the lamb's book of life. And Philip preached unto him Jesus. And there was a great committment connected to his conversion.

IV. OBEDIENCE TO THE COMMAND OF JESUS

You will notice that entrance into the church in the family of God, comes through obedience. Even the Great Commission says this. "Go to the people, baptize them in the name of the Father, and the Son. So there is the spirit which comes and blesses us. And it adds us to the body of the Lord and we become a member of the body of the household of faith. It is a baptismal work of the Holy Spirit. There is also the baptism in water, the outward sign of salvation - is water baptism. We are baptized into the body and the family of Christ.

Let us read Acts 8:36-39 - see here is water. What doth hinder my being baptized? Our entrance into the church and into the body of Christ, is in our baptism. Simple, obedience.

And the man said, (I want you to baptize me.

V. THE CHALLENGE TO PRAISE JESUS

As we look and see what happened - he went on his way (rejoicing) This is the challenge of every Christian. Jesus is everything. And we love him. There is a poem which goes --

I entered once a home of care,
And penury and want were there,
But joy and peace with all,
I asked the aged mother whence.

Her helpless widowhood's defense,
She answered - "Christ is all."

I saw the martyr at the stake,
The flames could not his courage shake,
Nor death his soul appall.
I asked him whence his strength was given,
He looked triumphantly to Heaven
And answered - "Christ is all."

I stood beside the dying bed,
Where lay a child with aching head,
Waiting Jesus' call,
I saw him smile, ~~tw~~^{As} sweetest may,
And as his spirit passed away,
He whispered - "Christ is all."

I dreamed that ~~horri~~^{horr} time had fled,
The earth and sea gave up their dead,
A fire dissolved this ball,
And I saw the church's ransom throng,
I caught the burden of their song,
T'was this, t'was Christ all in all.

And he preached Jesus unto him.