

How the Spirit Saves Us and Others: Providence, Purpose, Preaching, and Power

2022.06.05 Morning Sermon in Acts 8:25–40

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Main idea: The Spirit sends preachers to hearers whom He is going to bring to faith in Christ. He gives them faith with the whole heart in Jesus as He is preached by all of Scripture and adds them to His visible church on earth.

²⁵So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is desert. ²⁷So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and overtake this chariot.”

³⁰So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. ³²The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

*“He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
So He opened not His mouth. ³³In His humiliation His justice was taken away,
And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth.”*

³⁴So the eunuch answered Philip and said, “I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?” ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. ³⁶Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?”

³⁷Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

³⁸So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. ³⁹Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

Introduction: Extraordinary works of the Spirit. The angel in v26. The Spirit’s direct speech in v29. Philip’s sprint in v29–30. The teleporting in v39–40.

1. Providence

- a. The Spirit’s ordinary works are done in the same divine power and purpose
- b. The Ethiopian (v27–28): upbringing, faith, devotion, wealth, intelligence, authority, liberty, humility
- c. Location: location on the map a reminder of the intentional specificity of passage in v32–33
- d. We must use wisdom under the reality of divine intent. Join in His intent by asking for opportunities. Have evangelistic “situational awareness.” And if you are a believer, see His intent behind every part of your life through which He brought you to faith and through which He is now building you in faith.

2. Purpose

- a. The purpose of all humanity is to know Christ and make Him known. We are made in the image of God, to know God. But it is in Christ that God has fully revealed Himself. This is eternal life.
- b. We see life lived according to this purpose at the bookends of this passage (v25, 40), and it makes up the heart of this passage.
- c. Every Christian must confess with his mouth that Jesus is the Lord. Every Christian must be ready to give an answer for his hope. The two great commandments are fulfilled most of all in knowing Christ and making Him known.

3. Preaching

- a. With all that the Spirit does here, He still chooses preaching as the instrument for giving faith in Christ.
- b. There is a sense in which “Jesus” is the answer to v34 about every Scripture (cf. Lk 24:27; John 5:39,46).
- c. We ought to develop the skill of receiving from the Spirit the proclamation of Jesus in His proper connection to every passage. And we ought to develop a facility in pointing others to Christ from any passage.
- d. We are not in an age of less frequent or powerful activity of the Spirit, for we still have the preaching of the Word. But the extent to which we seek the actual working of the Spirit in ourselves can be detected somewhat by the measure to which we attend upon prayer and the preaching of the Word.
- e. If we want someone else to be saved, the Spirit will have to do it. And His appointed instrument for that is the speaking of words about Jesus from Scripture.

4. Power

- a. The Spirit exercises His power especially by the giving of the new heart (v37a) that wholeheartedly believes the truth about Jesus (v37b)
- b. The Spirit is exercising His power by taking the gospel to Ethiopia in one man. He wants to be baptized, though there is no church there yet.
- c. The Spirit gives a sign of His power, Christ’s power, both for the praise of Him Who exercises that power and the encouragement of those who are dependent upon that power.
- d. We must be unashamed of the gospel as the power of God for salvation—both as the power that saved us, and as the power that will save others. In it, God’s righteousness for us through faith is revealed. And by the preaching of it, the Lord has appointed to exercise His power to give us that faith and grow us in faith.

Conclusion: Behold the glory of Christ on the cross, accomplishing His salvation in infinite power and love! And behold the glory of Christ in the work of the Spirit ever since, applying that salvation in infinite power and love!

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Acts chapter 8 verses 25 through 40. These are God's words. So when they had testified and preached, the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem preaching, the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans. Now, an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, arise and go toward the South along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.

This is desert. So he rose and went and behold a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority Under Candice, the Queen of the Ethiopians who had charge of all her treasury and had come to Jerusalem to worship was returning and sitting in his chariot. He was reading. Isaiah the prophet then the spirit said to Philip go near and overtake this chariot.

So Philip ran to him and heard him reading the Prophet. Isaiah and said, Do you understand what you are reading? And he said, how can I unless someone guides me, We asked Philip to come up and sit with him. The place in the scripture which he read was this, he was led as sheep to the slaughter and as a lamb before, it's cheers is silent.

So he opened not his mouth in his humiliation, his justice was taken away and who will declare His generation for his life is taken from the earth.

So the eunuch answered Philip and said, I ask of you, I ask you of whom does the prophet say this of himself or of some other man Then Philip opened his mouth and beginning at this scripture preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water and the Unix said, see here is water.

What hinders me from being baptized Then Phillip said if you believe with all your heart, you may and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. So, he commanded the chariot to stand still, and both, Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him Now.

When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more. And he went on his way rejoicing, But Philip was found at Ozotis and passing through, He preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea,

So far the reading of God's inspired and aerator Please be seated.

Judging by people's appetites for films and books. People are very interested and that which is extraordinary or magical or even science fiction. And some science fiction, they say magic is just science. That hasn't been explained yet. But that goes the other way too. We use this idea of science to indulge ourselves in magic and just say that we will get there because of the greatness of our intelligence, God have mercy, But this happens, even in theology.

And reading the Bible. People are very interested in extraordinary experiences. Here, we have some extraordinary works of God. Extraordinary works of the spirit and angel of the Lord appears to Philip in verse 26 and speaks to him. And then the Spirit himself directly speaks to Philip in verse 29, go near.

And overtake this chariot Philip, who has been walking through the desert, probably quite aways. And You have a little bit of an idea although the Tennessee is not desert but it does get hot. And yet at the end of this walk, when he is told to run and overtake the chariot, he is able to kick in this sprint and be able running alongside the chariot to hear what the man is reading.

And then, at the end of the passage, Philip gets teleported, something that we are looking forward to perhaps. Well, I'll just speak for myself, although I'd be stunned. If there wasn't another one of you here, who is interested in trying out, your resurrection body. Which we conformed into the body of the Lord, Jesus, who would appear disappear from one place and appear in another Philips knot in a resurrection body.

And yet the spirit teleports him is now quite in the Southwest. And then he appears up the coast in Ashdod or a Zotus as it's called here and keeps moving up that direction. Just as Aria is all very interesting and very extraordinary, But there doesn't seem to be a lot of application to our lives of Philips experience here.

Except that the same spirit the same third person of the Trinity who operated in these extraordinary ways in the passage also operates in many ordinary ways in the passage Ordinary ways that are essential to the work that he's doing of bringing this Ethiopian to faith of bringing the gospel to Ethiopia.

And you, and I have lots of ordinary things in our lives, which we rejoice to know are ruled and overruled by the same. God, the same spirit who has been operating in the creation from its beginning, who when God created the heavens and the earth, the Father, creating by the Son, who is the Word, and who is the Creator of all things.

The Spirit hovered over the waters. When the Holy Spirit has been carrying out the work of God ever since. And so that'll be the first thing that we consider this morning will take this. These teasers, as it were that prick, our interest. And to see what the Holy Spirit is doing by way of all of these interesting and amazing things.

And we'll look closer. And notice that there's a lot of ordinary providence of God here that is also used by the spirit in this work so that we may start to recognize the providence of God in our own lives and our own encounters. And so that we may respond rightly to the fact that it's God, who overrules and overrules.

All of our lives who has written in his book, every one of our days. Before one of them comes to be who has determined how our plans will turn out the heart of man, plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps and who works all things. According to the Council of his will Ephesians 1 verse 11, a will in, which he has determined that there would be errors of God who are joint inheritors with Jesus in order that we would respond rightly to Providence.

We need to know our purpose because if everything that happens is intended by God as ruled and overruled, by God, then we need to consider what his intention is for us. So we may respond well as we recognize His providential hand in our lives and in all our encounters. And as we consider what his purpose is namely to gather to himself, all those for whom Jesus died, to bring them to faith.

Will discover that the instrument that the Spirit uses to do that is, especially preaching the proclamation of Jesus. And so, that'll be the third thing. We'll consider providence in the first place and purpose in the second place and preaching in the third place, and then praise God. This preaching works as it were because we've heard sermon recently in the book of Acts by Stephen, and it worked too.

It provoked those who are guilty of their sin and who deserved to sin more and to to to perish in their sin. God was not unjust there or frustrated and what he was doing and yet it didn't work unto salvation. Steven's sermon. Didn't, it worked unto his martyrdom?

But we'll find that this servant works and it works by the same spirit, of course, who has been orchestrating all of this because salvation is by the power of God. The gospel is something of which to be unashamed because it is the power of God, for salvation. And there is a sign, a visible tangible display that the salvation is by the power of God and the eunuch desires, the sign.

And so we'll consider this the power of the Spirit to do for the eunuch, what Simon Magus was left us hanging needing to have done for him in the previous portion to give the eunuch the new heart and so forth. So Providence, purpose, preaching, power First. Then Providence, the spirits ordinary works are done in the same divine power and purpose.

Now, you and I might be very interested in things like angels, appearing, and talking and the spirits direct speech to fill up and the running to overtake the chariot and teleportation and so forth. But there's much wonderful ordinary providence here and those who read this in the first place when they hear, behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candice, the Queen of the Ethiopians who had charge of all her treasury and had come to Jerusalem to worship was returning and sitting in his chariot.

He was reading. Isaiah don't, We ought to hear with those who first received this from Luke. How amazing it is that this man from so far away with so much authority and over, a such a different culture was here in the first place. Was here on his way back from Jerusalem.

That he had, he had been in Ethiopian, but somehow along the way in his life he had heard of the one true. God whose worship had been located in the temple in Jerusalem. Of course, the the temple. And the with the worship of the one true God, had some history with the Kushites or with the Ethiopians or the southerners as they were because the Queen of the South, the Queen whom we call Sheba.

But she would just means south had first, come to Solomon who had built the temple and had seen his wisdom and had heard of the one true God and had declared how much Yahweh must love this. People that he has given them such a king and certainly that might have been certainly might.

The that might have well been part of the reason that this Ethiopian had come to believe in the one, true God. And even more part of the reason that someone with such important duties, would be released to take such a long trip by the Queen even though he was over all of the treasury and a man of great importance and yet she had given him liberty to go worship.

He was devoted to God. He had wealth and influence among Among the Ethiopians in the spirits ordinary Providence, he had intelligence and he had studied. He could read the book of Isaiah and we don't know if he's reading it in Hebrew or Greek. Neither of, which were the native tongue of his home country, They were on the fringes of the Empire.

Perhaps, Greek is more likely but it actually doesn't matter. We celebrated a graduation yesterday for a couple of kids who had graduated high school. Here's one of the great reasons that the Spirit gives you to learn things like grammar, and to identify things like literature and the style of literature, so that you can note the meanings of a work of the meanings of a writing based on whether it's poetry, or whether it's persuasion or whether it's history.

And there's more to do in hermeneutics than there, is in your English, grammar and literature. But the spirit in his bringing, this Ethiopian to faith, part of what he did was give him intelligence, give him education, enable him to study so that he could read the book of Isaiah and make him wealthy enough to own a copy of the book of Isaiah.

It wasn't like, the recent days of the Christian bookstore. May they rest, not in peace, They're full of horrible. Writings that twist the Word of God and it wasn't like today when you could, you know order 40 Bibles for a hundred dollars if they're made poorly enough that you can just pass them out.

Would you can do? And perhaps you would like to do, Perhaps the most ordinary, most wonderful. Ordinary providence here is at the Ethiopian has humility that this man runs up alongside him probably addresses him in Greek asks him if he understands what he's reading and this guy who is accustomed to being in the Queen's court who in an ancient world in which authority dominated invited, this dirty Hebrew up into his chariot to be his tutor.

In the Bible to understand the book of Isaiah, this too is something children for you to study, not just language. But humility, that might be blessed to you so that you may may learn to learn from others. You see, the Holy Spirit had been doing a lot of work for a long time, in this Ethiopian's life before he did anything, like, send an angel to tell, Philip to run to Gaza, and then speak to Philip and tell him to overtake, the, the chariot or teleport.

Philip away to ask God, where he would do. His next preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. You see the Lord does work. All things according to the Council of His will. That's why all things work together for good and not just for a general good. For those who are called.

According to God, saving purpose for those who whom God has known loved from before the world began. And so, predestined them to be not just legally adopted as his children in his son, but even pressed into the shape of his son, as our elder has just prayed for us that the Lord would do for us as well.

So that at the last day, Jesus would be the, the firstborn among many brethren. And we would all having been forgiven through, Jesus and counted righteous in Jesus and made to be righteous like Jesus, that we would all reflect and refract his glory forever and ever. In fact, this is the generation of Jesus Christ and his humiliation.

Verse 33 says, Justice was taken away and who will declare his generation for his life has taken from the earth. You see, Jesus didn't marry and have children in his earthly life, but he has all those children whom God has given him as Hebrews two puts on the lips of our Lord.

Jesus, behold, I and the children whom you have given me. He's not ashamed to call us His brethren as the eunuch reads in Isaiah. He comes to a passage in verse 33 about how the Christ would be in one sense. A unit, he would not have physical children and yet he would then have preached to him.

The gospel of Jesus Christ by Philip and know that he may be a child of the Lord Jesus. And perhaps if they started in that scripture, he continued in that section of Isaiah and it would just be three more chapters until they were in chapter 56 and how the eunuchs who keep the Sabbath and Philip would preach Jesus there.

And say, Jesus is Yahweh. The Sabbath is about in eunuchs who keep the Sabbath. Have a name. That's better than sons and daughters. Even the fact that this man was a eunuch, and the intersection of where they were in, the Bible is orchestrated by the Spirit, even their location, so that just enough time is taken preaching Christ and the eunuch believing with all his heart that Jesus is the Christ.

The Son of God and there in the desert there appears water that they could at least step into sense, is not at all that they got immersed, and if it was Philip would have been immersed with him. You know, they're both subjects of both verbs, But in the desert, there was water.

And you can see that the calculation of the wisdom of God over ruling, all things in a macro scale and the Ethiopians entire life, and the history of Ethiopia and Sheba down to Candace and all of that in the micro

scale of how fast the chariot is going and how long, the explanation of the gospel takes and the, the priming of the spirit, bringing the man to faith in Jesus, and time to see water in the middle of a desert.

Don't you see how the divine intent to bring this one whom God had formed you to bring this one whom God had predestined to faith in Jesus Christ. So that this one would be justified, and he does that with all whom he is bringing to salvation, doesn't he? It's a one to one to one to one numerical ratio in Romans chapter 8, which means that for you, who believe in Jesus Christ, it is because the Spirit has ordered everything, not just in your life now, but for generations, and in nations.

And in the way that the gospel has spread to reach wherever you were at the time that you heard finally, in a way that the Spirit brought you to faith in that moment that God the Holy Spirit has ruled and overruled. All things to apply the redemption of Jesus Christ to you.

If you're a believer, come to this passage and have the awareness, to see His intent behind every part of your life through which he brought you to faith. And every part of your life through which he is building your faith, Even your presence here today. Whether it's through the Providence of God, that intersected your life with this congregation as a member, or the fact that you just happen to be visiting this week to hear this sermon.

So that this part of the Lord's building you up into Christ conforming, you to his image. So that those whom he is justified, he would also have glorified that God. The Holy Spirit is personally specifically intentionally causing all of these things to come out. Exactly. According to his plan and this recognition of his providence, then should give us what we may call evangelistic situational awareness.

Because you and I have a purpose. We were created for a reason. We were redeemed for a reason. If you have been redeemed, it is not so that so that you can just keep on careening. Going forward, maintain your inertia in living for whatever you want to live for.

You were bought with a price. You were redeemed for a purpose. You were redeemed to know God. You were created to know God and also to make him known. So this blends us now, from Providence to purpose, you know, some of you are security-minded to some extent. Some of you are security-minded to a great extent.

One of the things that you that you do, and you actually care to value life, like we'll be hearing Lord willing, Lord, helping us next doors. The afternoons You practice situational awareness. Well, there are many who know to practice situational awareness for our earthly security but they don't practice situation situational awareness in response to the providence of God, that there are people who have quite evidently been prepared to intersect with you at this moment.

The two things like read from books, that give you an entry into the gospel of Jesus Christ. Perhaps the the Bible itself They are troubled. So many people In our culture are troubled and they're troubles are so unnoticed. And yet the misery that they are in is because not just of their sin but all of our sin and it's an entrance into the gospel, We're so stuck in our smartphones or our books.

If we're too smart for smartphones that we miss those opportunities and intersections in the Providence of God, that we exist to know Him. And if we were created to make him known, that's what it means to be made in his image. It's part of his being made in his image that we may know him, right?

That's what God is. Like, He knows himself, he adores himself. He delights in himself. Father, Son and Holy Spirit living in that glorious fellowship glorifying one another, and delighting in one another. That's part of being made in his image. But the fact of being made in his image means that we exist to make him known that we are in the creation.

These little displays of God Little pictures of himself, And if we were created to make him known, how much more were we redeemed to make him known that? We might tell forth his praise that we might confess him whom we believe in our hearts. And so the purpose of all humanity is to know God and make him known But you can go one step further.

The purpose is to know Christ and to make him known because no one has seen God at any time. Even with all of these little pictures of God that he has put into his creation. John 1 says, no one has seen God at any time, but the only begotten from the bosom of the Father, he is the one who has exegated him.

Who has fully revealed him? You remember, not this, Philip the other Philip. The apostles. Remember had stayed in Jerusalem. This is Philip the deacon, Phillip. The evangelist when he had asked Jesus show us the Father and that'll be enough. You remember how God answered Have I been with you?

So long Philip and you don't know me. If you've seen me, you've seen the Father. And so yes, there is this imaging of God, this not just knowing him but making him known. That is the purpose of a man, But God's great display of himself as Christ. And if I purpose is to know God and to make God known, then our purpose is to know Christ and make Christ known indeed.

This is eternal life. Not only that, we would know God but Jesus Christ. The God-man, who is sent from God. The second person of the Trinity becoming a man Of course that would be blasphemy If Jesus Christ isn't also God to say, this is eternal life to know you and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent to know that God's great revelation of himself is Jesus.

Now, we see life lived according to this purpose, at the bookends of the passage Peter, and John are leaving the, the city of Samaria, and they're going back to Jerusalem to rejoin the apostles and in verse 25. But what do they do? All along the way when they had testified and preached, the word of the Lord they returned to Jerusalem.

Preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans. And then when Philip gets teleported at the end of the passage. In verse 40, he appears in Ashdod and he doesn't now go through. It's kind of near the border of Judea and Samaria. Could go either way for you. This way, you could go either way on his way back to wherever he was going.

But he doesn't cover that go through that covered ground. Now he goes up the coast to Caesarea and what does he do? All along the way and passing through he preached in all the cities until he came to Caesarea. And so there's this this knowing our purpose of just not not only knowing Christ, but making him known.

That is at the bookends of the passage. And of course it's at the heart of the passage You say, oh well that's good. Well, Peter and John are apostles. I'm not an apostle, That's all good. And well, Philip is a deacon. And although his office was, especially for overseeing service in the church, it was that the office was in service to the ministry of the word and prayers.

So that the, the deacons become witnesses to that gospel, whom their service in the church serves advances. So so I'm not an apostle and not an elder. I'm not a deacon, It doesn't apply to me, doesn't not Jesus. Says only those who confess him before men, where he confess before his father now, thank God Christ is our righteousness and His confession of himself giving the good testimony which Paul holds out as an example to Timothy, right when he's telling Timothy to give the good testimony, He says Jesus's own testimony, not just as example for Timothy but encouraging him that that is the faithfulness that has been counted for him and counted for us.

And yet there is, isn't there the the reality that whenever God saves someone in Jesus he starts making them to be like Jesus which is why we don't just believe in our heart. That Jesus Christ is Lord. We confess with our mouth, the Lord, Jesus, and believe in our heart.

That God raised Him from the dead. Romans chapter 10, Every Christian confesses with his mouth, that Jesus is the Lord. This is the great reason, Covenant children to come and become not just covenant members, but communicate members not just because of how badly you need Christ. And His feeding you upon himself that his table is one of the ways he grows you in himself, But you profess your faith publicly because you are called to declare your Savior to declare that.

Jesus as God, the Son who became a man for you and who has gathered you to himself by giving His Spirit to bring you to faith? We do this. Because all believers should confess with our mouths. That Jesus Christ is Lord. All believers, must be ready to give an answer for our hope in the context from the Apostle Peter.

It's giving an answer for why we still have hope well. We're being persecuted and we're giving an answer to our persecutor. But if to a persecutor then certainly to all others, even those who grieve without hope that we would be able to have a word in season about the one who has conquered death and the one who gives us hope for eternity indeed, with the two great commandments or to love God, with all our heart soul, mind and strength.

And to love our neighbor as ourselves is not the greatest part of each of those obediences first to know. Jesus Christ. As God In this, we know the love of God, that he gave his son for us. And this, we know love that Jesus laid down his life for us and we love him because he first loved us.

The first part, the great part of the first great commandment is to know Christ. And if that's true of the first great commandment, what about the second? Which is like it to love your neighbor as yourself to desire for your neighbor that which is best and good that which will last forever That which will stand at the judgment That which will bring him into the greatest joy.

No, by all means attend to your neighbor's security and protection and defense and liberty, and provision and shelter, and clothing and food and all those other things, but is not the first part of the second. Great. Commandment to make Christ known Knowing Christ and making him known. Is the purpose for which we have been created is the purpose for which we have been redeemed.

It is the great part of obedience to the whole law of God, that we would love him with all our heart, and love our neighbor as ourselves, which means that there's an extent to which every one of us is called to be a preacher lowercase p because the spirit uses especially the word to bring people to faith.

In Jesus Christ, He uses especially the word, You see, it's the proclamation of the praise of Jesus, who He is God, the Son from all eternity. The Creator, the king, the judge and what he has done, became a part of that creation for sinful for creatures who were his subjects because they had violated his law and he renders and receives judgment upon himself in their place.

So isn't it in keeping with the praise of the Lord Jesus, with the praise of God in the Lord Jesus. As all of our purpose that the Spirit was used, especially the preaching of the Lord Jesus as the instrument by which he brings us to faith. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God.

And what does Jesus say about the Word of God? Remember, John 5 and these wrestling with the Pharisees. And they want to say we're the real followers of Moses and he says, no, you're not Moses. Preached me, You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life but it is the scriptures that testify of me.

If you believed Moses you would believe in me. Even says towards the end of that exchange with them. How can you believe what I am saying if you don't even believe what Moses says about me. And so it's the preaching of Jesus from the Scripture, the declaration of who he is, from the scripture that is the instrument or the mechanism by which the spirit loves to give faith.

Luke 24 verse 27. You remember the the discouraged disciples are on their way to Emmaus? And the essence of their discouragement is, we're really thought he was the one. We really thought he was the one. You remember what? Jesus. Did He didn't open their eyes so that they could see the glory of his resurrection and transfigure before them.

He didn't say, I am the one. He taught them beginning with Moses and through all of the Scriptures about himself. You see the Lord. Jesus has done for you. Who read your Bible and hear it taught and hear it. Preached. He's done for you. What he did for the Ethiopian eunuch here, by his spirit.

What he did personally with the those disciples on the roads to Emmaus is that same instrument of the preaching of his word that he chooses forgiving faith. You see, we're not in an age in which there is less powerful activity of the spirit available to us. There are some who think that because the the revelation of God's words was completed as Jesus promised and John chapter 16 and of course his promise was kept.

There are some people who think that because of the age of the revealing of the words of Christ has been completed that somehow we don't have the spirit as much or in as much power and and there's a longing to go back to that and there's all sorts of twisting of the scripture because people don't know the power of the third person of the Trinity.

But it's not because he has stopped working powerfully. It's because we are ignoring the primary instrument by which he has always worked. Even here in act 8, the preaching of the Word of God and the preaching, especially of Christ. From all the Word of God, We ought to develop the skill of receiving or the habit.

Maybe as a better word of receiving, from the Spirit, the proclamation of Jesus in his proper connection to every passage. First of all, it's his word right? When Peter talks about the writers of the Old Testament, the Penmen of the Old Testament wondering who and what time they were writing about, very similar to what the Ethiopian here is writing about or asks, about He says, who the Spirit of Christ was indicating in them.

The spirit is the Spirit of Christ. We have Jesus's words which are used by Jesus's power to apply to us Jesus's redemption. So that we may be not only counted righteous in Jesus but be made like Jesus, so that we may see Jesus. And so whatever part of the Bible you're in, you already have.

Don't you one of the connections to Christ? It's his word wherever God is Creator. Jesus is that Creator wherever God is king. Jesus, is that King wherever God has judge? Jesus is that judge wherever God is Savior. Jesus is that Savior? Whatever. God commands Jesus has commanded whatever. We are condemned for disobeying Jesus is the one who can atone for that guilt and has a tone, which is counted for us, through faith, in Him, whatever we want to grow in likeness to Him, it's him to whom we want to grow in likeness.

Every time you want to grow an obedience to some command of God or in some some part of your spiritual life as you not only renew your new obedience but walk in life and walk in light and walk in love, It's all being conformed to Christ, doesn't it? Jesus right now sits on the throne of heaven, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given by him.

When we talk about proper civil government, from the scripture, we're actually talking about acknowledging who is at the top of the chain of command here. A little bit more about that, Lord helping us. And we do the fifth commandment in the evening sermon today. In other words, every passage.

Every passage is about Jesus. There's a sense in which the answer to verse 34 is Jesus in every part of Scripture, the eunuch answered Philip and said, I ask you of whom. Does the prophet say this of himself or of some other man? All the passages are about Jesus.

There's a, a story. Yes I have attended churches where they had something called the children's sermon the children here. Hopefully are saying. Well what's that? Isn't every sermon the children's sermon does not. The Lord address me through His preacher every time we come and he even says on a regular basis now children and We let you in a sequence on a secret.

Actually you've been let in at other times, we don't just mean children under 18 or 16 or 21 or whatever Every term in the sermons, a children's sermon. Because there's no child for whom the sermon is not, and there's no hearer who is not before the Living God, a child.

We're all those children aren't we? And yet there's a children's sermon illustration that I heard man was talking about children's sermons and he said we get accustomed to the the pattern that the answer to everything is Jesus. And so there was a man who's giving a children's sermon and said you know there's a four-footed creature that climbed trees and likes nuts and has a big bushy tail and you know what that is?

And you know, one two-year-old or some something along that line. Among the children doesn't know a whole lot of English or animals. We had one of our children who when he was too referred to squirrels as monkeys because they jumped around in trees. And but the two-year-old had been asked enough questions in the children's sermons to know that the answer is Jesus.

They screams out. Jesus, and one of the older children very wise and sage as older children are sometimes. You know, when you're four and the other one's two, you really know a whole lot better be very seriously. Looked at the pastor and said, I know Pastor, it sounds like a squirrel, but the answer is Jesus, isn't it?

But there is a sense in which isn't there that the answer to the question. Put in verse 34, with reference, to every single text in Scripture is Jesus because it's all from him and unto his glory and to accomplish His saving purpose and we're never going to get the understanding of a narrative, right?

And until we understand it in the history of Jesus, accomplishing his creation and redemption and we are never gonna get how to understand a command or a precept, an instruction about our life, right? Unless we know, first of all, that only Jesus has been able to do that and that he has done it in the place of sinners and only what Jesus has done can be counted as our righteousness and that our hope in being able to grow and obedience to that command is that Jesus's.

Resurrection is the life by which we walk in newness of life.

And so we need to be able To receive from the Spirit, the proper the proclamation of Jesus in every passage And the more you do that in your own reading and sermon hearing you can pray for your preacher that he would always know how to preach Christ from the passage without ignoring what the passage itself is saying.

But the more you grow in being able to receive the word that way in your private worship and your family worship in our congregational worship, the more facility, you will have The more skill, you will have in being able to speak to others from any passage about the Lord Jesus, and to proclaim Jesus to them.

Beginning at that Scripture preaching and especially the preaching of Jesus is the instrument as a the spirits preferred instrument appointed instrument. Many of us have loved ones and acquaintances who are made in the image of God and without him, and without hope, without Christ, in this world, we want them to be saved.

We pray for them and you do well to pray. Praise God. But if you desire, their salvation, then know that the Spirit who has to be the one who saves them, He uses especially the speaking about Jesus from his word, you say, well, that's not my gift. Well, first of all, you don't understand what the word gift means.

And we can't take the time to correct that right now. It is your calling And if it's your calling and you're not good at it and we're not, we're not as good as we ought to be in any of us. Any of us in any of our callings, then you work at it.

Who work at it, he uses preaching. And thank God, It's not how well we do, but the power that he exercises. So, the last place, power, the spirit exercises, his power, especially by giving a new heart. Now, supposing, that Philip was there with Peter, when Simon Magus reveals, that he doesn't understand who Jesus is, and what Jesus has done, and that salvation is entirely from from him and in him.

Then he was there to hear you have neither a part nor portion in this matter, Verse 21 for your heart is not direct or straight way, in the sight of God. Repent, therefore of this year wickedness and pray God. If perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven, you What did Simon Magus need?

He needed a new heart but who can give you a new heart? God, the Holy Spirit. Can God the Holy Spirit can. And so Philip having heard that recently, and they come to the water and the eunuch. The eunuch says, see here as water. What hinders me from being baptized Phillip says, in verse 37.

If you believe with all your heart you may You see good preaching. May cut to the heart but it may cut to the heart in a way that makes leads to the hero rejecting the preacher and the sermon. That's how Stephen got killed. It is the the merciful creative powerful work of the Holy Spirit to give that new heart.

That's why Paul and second Corinthians 4 when he's he's defending his very kind of plain ordinary speaking. That it isn't all fancy and eloquent. He says that it is God who made light to shine into darkness and God said, let there be light. Well who's the one? Who carries out the command after he said to light be and the spirit who is brooding over the waters, makes the light to be and then the apostle comes in second Corinthians 4.

He says is God who made light to shine in the darkness to make the light of the knowledge of the glory of God to shine in our hearts and the face of Jesus Christ. That's what happens here to the Ethiopian eunuch. The Holy Spirit makes the light of the knowledge of the glory of God to shine in the eunuch's heart in the face of Jesus Christ.

And so he wholeheartedly believes that. Jesus Christ is the Son of God that God. The Son became Jesus. You remember the, the preaching of the name of Jesus, and in the previous passage that God, the Son became the Christ. That he was the one that it was the creator.

That Isaiah 53, was written about that. He had just been reading Spirit exercises, his power especially by the giving of the new heart so that this new heart, wholeheartedly believes the truth. About Jesus, The Spirit is exercising, his power by taking the gospel to Ethiopia in one man. He he's not going to be joining a church in Ethiopia.

There are no other Ethiopians who have yet. Come to faith in Jesus Christ and been added to the church as indicated by this baptism. And yet, the Holy Spirit is going to go with this. Man Philip isn't Philip disappears and the man doesn't say, where'd he go? Oh no.

I needed to bring the preacher with me. Philip disappears and the eunuch is full of joy. Why? Well, part of the reason is because the fruit of the Spirit is joy, The Spirit gave him love for Christ. The Spirit gave him faith in Christ. The Spirit has given him joy in Christ and it's the spirit who's going to go with him as he now tells others about Christ and others are added to the church in Ethiopia.

God, the Holy Spirit doesn't actually need any of us, which is really comforting when you and I in our fumbling ignorance and fearfulness and missing opportunities and wrecking the opportunities that we recognize and bungling all of our evangelism. And yet. It is God the Holy Spirit who gives the new heart who gives faith in Jesus Christ who grows His church.

This is why pragmatism has no place at the synod this week. You know, if we make this decision in such a such a big church will be upset or if we make this decision then it's going to offend those people. You don't need necessarily another details. I tell you, after, I've already heard discussion like that Just please Christ serve Christ.

The third person of the Trinity. God, the Holy Spirit is the one who works by his power in the church. Why would we need big steeple church When you have infinitely majestic? Holy Spirit. Where are you worried about offending men? When God subdues men and brings them to faith in Jesus Christ by his word, the Spirit is exercising, his power by growing His church through His gospel which he attends by his creative work giving life and light to the hearts of dead.

Sinners to believe in. Jesus Christ. The gospel code is not just in Providence and according to purpose, and through the mechanism of preaching, but especially by the power of God. You see the best of means are means at best. That is God. Who exercises? The power. And so the Spirit has given the sign of this power.

Hmm. Who knows if there's anyone other than the driver for this baptism. Oh, it's by the way. It's a household baptism, isn't it? You know, there are those who list the number of household, baptisms. In the book of Acts, they probably missed. One doesn't have a way for child.

He's a eunuch is a household. Baptism right there by the chariot on the on the way to Gaza. The Spirit gives a sign of his power. This man who has a lot of authority in Ethiopia and he has Candice the Queen over him in Ethiopia yet. They stop and the sign of the authority of Jesus Christ in heaven and on earth, and the fact that He is the one who's building his church, He's being baptized into a congregation of one, just like, he's a household of one.

He's being baptized into a congregational of one, but it's a congregation that belongs to the same church as that in Jerusalem and the same church as the congregations in Samaria. It is a declaration by Christ that he is the one who saves this man, by pouring out his spirit to apply his blood And when you receive baptism it declares the same thing.

About Jesus Christ, both calling you to keep repentance and keep faith to turn to Him and encouraging you. That he is still a savior and he still attends by his power and his spirit, the preaching of His Word to make himself known. We must be unashamed of the gospel as the power of God for salvation.

Now, this Ethiopian would not get back to Kush or Ethiopia. You wouldn't get back and and tell the driver now. Don't tell anybody, what happened on the way to Gaza, the driver does not go to, you know, the rest of the chariot drivers as they're, you know, doing their chariot maintenance and taking care of the horses.

As a, you wouldn't believe what happened on the way to Gaza and then, and then after this thing out of that, that Jewish book, he made me stop the chariot. And we went down to the water. And and the guy dumped water, all over and poured it down on them.

And they rejoice that what he had done with the water. This Jesus is a guy who supposedly dead, but but they said it risen again from the dead that he had. He had poured out his spirit. And so they were pouring out this water, The chariot driver didn't have to do that.

What? He because this Ethiopian would be unashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For it is the power of God for salvation and he'd be telling everyone about the baptism. Because you know if you're not accustomed to old Jewish books, it helps to hear from the Jewish book and then and then hear about the sign and to know that the sign actually came from the dead guy because he's not dead.

He's sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high and the way that they knew that he had taken his seat on the throne was he had poured out this and that he is both Lord and Christ. The the Jewish prophet priest and king turned out to be the Creator of all the world.

And his spirit is operating, not just in Judea up north, Those crazy backward, hicks. These operating down here too, and he's bringing people to faith. In Jesus Christ, The Ethiopian would be unashamed and as baptism would help him and being unashamed as he told others about the Savior who had marked him as his own as a member of his church.

And you believe in him, you turn from your faith and you be baptized, he will pour out his spirit on you. He's the one who will give you faith, He's the one who will unite you into Christ. He's the one who will count you righteous with his own righteousness and cancel your sin, and it's guilt with his own sacrifice on that.

Roman cross. We must be unashamed of the gospel as the power of God for salvation. Both as the power that has saved us for we needed salvation and as the power that will save others. So we are not embarrassed to proclaim Him for salvation Behold, not just the glory of Christ on his cross as he accomplished or redemption, an infinite power and love Behold.

Also the glory of Christ and the working of His Spirit ever since Pentecost. As he applies that redemption to every single one for whom he died and the same power. And the same love, Not now being exercised 2000, years ago, and thousands of miles away. But in the providence that led up to your hearing him preached and the power that gave you the new heart to believe in him and that in which you serve your purpose to know Christ and to make him known.

Amen, let's pray.

Father, we thank you. Thank you for revealing yourself to us in your son, Lord, Jesus. We thank you for sending forth your spirit with your words that he is applying to us. Your redemption that he is giving us new hearts to know you and strengthening and building up our hearts by your grace, as we live to make you known.

Be glorified. We pray. Bring yourself honor and praise. But what you do with us and what you do with this portion of your word and the preaching of it, which we commit unto your glory and entrust to your use for. We ask it in your name. Amen.