

027 - An Everlasting Name - Acts 8:26-36

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 56:3-7

Sermon: "A Foreigner and Eunuch Saved" Acts 8:26-36

Benediction: Ephesians 2:12-13

I. This Foreigner and Eunuch's Situation

A. He was a foreigner; not that he was a foreigner in his own country; but as regards Israel, he was an alien; he was a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel

B. He was a eunuch; that is, he had undergone a physical mutilation that opened the door for him to have power and wealth (27)

1. someone subjected him to a horribly painful, humiliating mutilation of his flesh, involving at least castration, and perhaps complete emasculation; it had been someone else's sin that did that to him, but now he owned it

2. this cutting off of part of his body was the defining moment of his life, setting the course for what his life would be

3. because he had undergone this mutilation, he was allowed to enter the service of the queen; eunuchs were highly valuable servants to kings and queens

a. a eunuch has little temptation to sexual violations regarding the queen and the other women of the palace

b. a eunuch has little temptation to put himself on the throne, since he can have no dynasty

4. in the course of time, he had risen in rank until he was the queen's chief treasurer

C. But that mutilation that had opened the door for him to places of power and wealth during his lifetime also cut off his hope for the future

1. He could have no children; when he died, that would be the end

2. His name would not be remembered; no grandchildren would remember his name in their stories or their genealogy

D. APPLICATION: Perhaps you see something of yourself in this foreigner and eunuch's situation

1. Are you a stranger to God's church? You didn't grow up going to church. You don't know much of what the Bible says. Being in the assembly like this, you feel very much like a foreigner.

2. Have you had things done to you in this life that make you feel unworthy to be included in God's church? Have you done things to yourself that make you feel very far away from God and His people?

3. Do you have some kind of physical deformity or disability or disease that makes you feel like you can never be quite right anymore?

4. Or maybe can you see that nothing really bad has been done to you in this life, and you aren't really a stranger to God's church; but your own sin, your rebellion against God's law has left you separated from His favor; you see yourself as far off from God and heaven?

5. If you see yourself as somehow reflected in this foreigner and eunuch, then maybe you will see some parallel's between your religious experience and

II. This Foreigner and Eunuch's Religious Experience

A. As all men do, he knew there was a God, and that he wanted that God to be pleased with him

B. Evidently he found no fulfillment in the religion he had grown up in, whatever that was

C. He had come to know about the God of Israel

1. What providence of God was it for this to happen?
 2. What grace it was for God to make Himself known to this man so far from Jerusalem!
- D. He had undertaken a tremendous journey to worship in Jerusalem
1. He had taken leave of his duties for months
 2. He had traveled a thousand miles
 3. Is that what you have done? Have you gone to church, read books, watched preachers on TV, and done other things to try to get what true religion is?
- E. He had not found what he needed in Jerusalem
1. He was a foreigner, a gentile, not an Israelite, and so not allowed into the temple; only into the outer courts of the gentiles; what was the situation there? It was supposed to be a house of prayer for all nations, but the chief priests had made it a den of robbers; there merchants and bankers were set up to make a profit from the travellers to Jerusalem; they would sell animals for sacrifices, and would change foreign currency;
 2. The same physical mutilation that kept him from having children excluded him from becoming a full member of the assembly of the Lord, also! (Deuteronomy 23:1)
 3. If he heard the teaching of the Saduccees in the temple courts, what would that have given him? No hope for anything but this life.
 4. If he heard the teaching of the Pharisees in the synagogues, what would that have given him? More religious rules to follow.
 5. The only hope for him in Jerusalem? That he be circumcised---that he have more of his flesh cut off!
- F. He could not understand the scriptures
1. Apparently he had bought a copy of the Old Testament scriptures, or at least the prophet Isaiah while in Jerusalem; this would have been expensive, but he was not short of money
 2. But when he went to read the scriptures, he could not understand
- E. APPLICATION: Is some of this sounding very familiar to you?
1. You feel like a foreigner to God and His church
 2. But when you try to find the truth in church, or books, or TV programs
 - a. You see arguing between factions and denominations of churches
 - b. You get messages about health and wealth in this life
 - c. You get messages about keeping this rule or that rule
 3. You try to read the Bible, but you don't really get what you're reading
 4. Well, that was the Ethiopian's religious experience, too

III. The Great Love of God for This Foreigner and Eunuch

A. God had promised long before that He would bring the foreigner to His holy mountain, would make him joyful in His house of prayer, and would accept his sacrifices; God had been loving this foreigner all along

B. God had promised long before that the eunuch would not forever be a dry tree, with no children by whom his name would be remembered; instead, God would make of him a monument in His house, with an everlasting name; what God would do for him would be better than having sons and daughters; in the evil of this world, part of his body had been cut off, which had led to his being himself cut off from so much, but God in love would give him a place in His temple, and an everlasting name that would never be cut off!

C. But as yet the foreigner and eunuch could not see how this could be; he did not understand what the scriptures said; so God sent a preacher of the good news to him,

personally!

D. APPLICATION: Do you see it? The bible says that God loves people who do not love Him. This is grace, God favoring people who do not deserve His favor, but only His wrath. God loves the unlovely, the unlovable. God loves men and women, boys and girls, who are messed up by the sinfulness of this world; despite the damage done to them by this world and even the damage done to them by the consequences of their own sin.

V. The Amazing Salvation of this Foreigner and Eunuch

A. God moved this man to procure a copy of the scriptures and to read it

B. God sent a preacher to him, who asked him, "Do you understand what you are reading?" (30)

C. God granted this great man the humility to admit that he did not understand, but needed a guide; he invited the preacher to sit with him and teach him

D. Through the preacher, God showed this foreigner and eunuch how the scriptures he was reading point to salvation in Jesus Christ (32-33)

1. As a sheep, He allowed Himself to be taken, not fighting against it

2. In His humble state, He was deprived of justice

-The Son of God has in His character perfect justice

-The Son of God is infinitely more powerful than any creature

-But in order to glorify God by saving sinful people, He had humbled Himself to become a man

-As a man, He was deprived of justice by men, being condemned to death as if guilty, when He was innocent

3. He has no children, because He was killed without having any

-No one can speak of the children of Jesus of Nazareth, for He had none

-He was killed without having had any

4. Philip went on from there and proclaimed Jesus to this man

-It is Jesus who allowed Himself to be arrested by corrupt men

-It is Jesus who allowed Himself to be considered guilty, taking upon Himself the guilt of guilty sinners like the Ethiopian

-It is Jesus who was killed to take the penalty that the Ethiopian deserved because of his sin

-But it is also Jesus who was raised to life, and is now seated on the throne of heaven, and is granting forgiveness to all who turn from their sins and trust in Him

E. God granted to this man faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance from sin unto life; he gave outward expression of this by asking for baptism

1. the man asked the rhetorical question, "What hinders me from being baptized?"

2. by being a foreigner and a eunuch, he was hindered in several ways from being a full member of the nation of Israel

3. but what hindered him from being baptized, and being a full member of God's New Covenant Church?

-being a foreigner? NO

-being a eunuch? NO

-having sinned in Adam, when Adam sinned? NO

-having sinned himself, in rebellion against God? NO

-having lived in ignorance, not understanding about Jesus before? NO

-having attempted a false version of religion in Jerusalem? NO

-NO, for someone who has heard about the death and resurrection of

Jesus Christ, and, having heard, believes in Jesus, turning away from sin and toward God, there is nothing to separate him from God, nothing to keep him from being baptized

F. APPLICATION: Now, what hinders you from being baptized?

1. By being baptized here, please understand that I mean being baptized because you truly trust in Jesus Christ; you have become His follower; you have turned away from your sins to obey God in Jesus Christ
2. The fact that you didn't go to church as a kid, and so are a stranger to church--does that hinder you? NO
3. The fact that you have had horrible things done to you by sinful people---does that hinder you? NO
4. The fact that you have done horrible things yourself---does that hinder you? NO
5. No, dear one; nothing hinders you! Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins; turn away from those sins to follow Christ; be baptized, and see this promise fulfilled in you:

Revelation 3:12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

The Least Likely Person May Be Saved

The Least Likely Person May Be Saved Through Your Telling Him of Christ

Hodgins:

“Evangelism and bible study are never to be separated.”

JRY:

I think the importance of this event and the record of it is its fulfilment of Isaiah 56:3-7, showing that in the Kingdom of Heaven, the foreigner and the eunuch have just as much a place as the Israelite.

JRY:

Is there something about you that makes it seem impossible for you to be part of Christ's church?

JRY:

Do you fear injury or sickness in your body, or your children's bodies?

Revelation 3:12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

Verse 33

Gill:

the sense of the words, as they are here cited, rather seems to be this; when he was taken and bound by the Jews, and detained by them a prisoner, and arraigned before the high priest, and at Pilate's bar, and false witnesses suborned, which was his time of humiliation and affliction; when he was reproached, blasphemed, buffeted, and spit upon, justice was not done him, right did not take place, but was removed from him, and he was treated in a most unjust and unrighteous manner:

Clarke:

He who was the fountain of judgment and justice had no justice shown him (mercy he needed not) in his humiliation; viz. that time in which he emptied himself, and appeared in the form of a servant.