

Title: Power and Wisdom of God

Text: Acts 8: 26-40

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Place: SGBC, New Jersey

In the message Sunday, I used the Ethiopian Eunuch as an example of the glory given to Christ to bring the gospel to those he justified on the cross and cause them to receive that free justification through faith. Tonight, I want to look more in depth at how Christ brought the gospel to the Ethiopian Eunuch.

First, let me remind you of what we have seen in Isaiah 53: 10, “he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days.” Because Christ obtained eternal redemption for his people on the cross, as promised in covenant by the Father to his Son, God raised Christ and gave him the glory of calling out his seed and prolonging our days. Isaiah 53: 10, “and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.”

Colossians 1: 18: And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19: For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;...John 1:16: And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

1 Corinthians 1: 21: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

The pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in Christ’s hand: Christ shall see his seed, Christ shall prolong our days by Christ sending each one the gospel and making his word effectual in our hearts.

Isaiah 53: 11: “by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is God’s righteous servant. For all whose iniquities Christ bore on the cross, Christ shall bring them the gospel and by his knowledge, shall each one receive free justification through faith in him. God gave Christ to be the Head over all things to the church that Christ might fill all in all his people.

**Proposition:** The glory of bringing the gospel to each child and making them receive free justification through faith is Christ’s by his knowledge.

God said in Isaiah 42:4: He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles [Gentiles] shall wait for his law. [his gospel]

This is that power Paul warns us that those with a mere form of godliness shall deny. “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God...But unto them which are called, [only to them] both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” (1 Cor 1: 18, 24)

**Title:** Power and Wisdom of God

**I. FIRST, BY HIS WISDOM AND POWER, CHRIST SHALL JUSTIFY EACH OF HIS ELECT THROUGH FAITH, BY CALLING AND SENDING HIS MESSENGER—Acts 8: 26: And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.**

Christ first works this work of grace in his preacher—Christ had first called Philip. Philip was an apostle, meaning Christ called him personally: Christ found Philip, and said unto him, “**Follow me.**” (Jn 1: 43), and Philip followed Christ.

Question: Why did Christ call the apostles and send them forth to preach the gospel? Why didn’t Christ just fulfill his cross work? Why did Christ establish his apostles and send them forth to preach the gospel? Why did the

apostle Paul teach Timothy what Christ had taught him, “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” (2 Tim 2: 2) Why did Christ pray for those who would believe through their word?

It is because Christ said, “I came to do...the will of him that sent me.” (Jn 6: 38) “It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” (1 Cor 1: 21) There are no apostles today. But every true preacher is called of Christ, taught of Christ and sent of Christ through the preaching of the gospel.

### **No Wisdom But Christ; No Power but Christ**

Before sending his ambassador’s to preach his word, Christ does what he did to Philip: he taught Philip he had no wisdom and power of himself; that Christ is the Wisdom and Power of God.

### **Before Christ fed the multitude**

John 6:5: When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? 6: And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

Christ was not proving Philip to know Philip for himself; Christ was proving to Philip that Philip had no wisdom and understanding in himself.

John 6: 7: Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. 8: One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, saith unto him, 9: There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

How on earth can these foolish things feed so many? Only if the foolish things are being used of Christ the Wisdom and Power of God.

John 6: 10: And Jesus said, Make the men sit down.

Think how foolish Philip thought of himself when Christ used those foolish means and fed thousands. “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise;” (1 Cor 1: 23) Christ is still feeding multitudes through what the world calls foolishness.

Application: The lesson Philip learned is Christ is the Bread, the Power and Wisdom of God, and Philip’s wisdom and power was utter nothingness. This is the lesson that we must be taught before we will believe on Christ or be used to bear witness of Christ. Have we learned that our wisdom is nothing?

### **Sir, We Would See Jesus**

On another occasion, men came to Philip saying, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” At that time, the enemies were seeking Christ that they might kill him. Philip did not want to see Christ die and Philip did not want to die. So Philip, using his wisdom, went to Nathaniel instead of Christ. When they finally came to Christ, he taught Philip, “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26: If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.” (Jn 12: 25-26)

Application: We must be taught that to follow Christ, we must lay down our life like Christ laid down his life for his sheep. Have we learned to lay down our life? Our understanding is vain; our way is vain; our will is vain. We must preach the gospel—Christ’s word, not our own. We must love Christ and his truth more than mother and father, sister or brother, son or daughter, even over our own selves. (Lu 14: 26) Else, men will twist the word of God in order to put their loved ones in heaven, who leave this world trusting in a lie, for numbers in the pew, etc...

## Greater Works Than These

On another occasion, Christ taught Philip this lesson:

John 14: 6: Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7: If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8: Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9: Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? 10: Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11: Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. 12: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” (Joh 14:6-12)

Now, that Christ has gone to the Father just as the words that Christ spoke were not of himself, but the Father dwelled in him, and the Father did the works so Christ dwells in his witnesses. As we preach, the words come forth in power into the heart of his people, not by us, but by Christ speaking into the heart. And the greater work is the miracle of grace which Christ works in the hearts of his people through the gospel we preach. It is because Christ is God over all!

Back to Acts 8. So having been made to know that Philip's wisdom was foolishness and that Christ is the Power and Wisdom of God now when **Acts 8: 26: the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go...27: And he arose and went:...**

Application: Before we can believe on Christ or be used of Christ in the furtherance of his gospel, we must be taught the power and wisdom is of God, not of us. So Christ must first call and send his preacher, **“how shall they hear without a preacher and how shall they preach except they be sent.”** (Rom 10: 15) This glory in sending his messengers belongs to Christ—

Ephesians 4: 11: And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God....

Christ only sends his preacher after Christ has made us to know, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” (2 Cor 4: 7)

**II. SECONDLY, BY HIS KNOWLEDGE AND POWER, CHRIST SHALL JUSTIFY EACH OF HIS REDEEMED THROUGH FAITH, BY SENDING HIS GOSPEL TO HIS LOST SHEEP—Acts 8: 26: the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. 27: And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch [officer] of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28: Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.**

**Illustration:** Have you ever seen the old roads that the new road bypassed?

There were two roads to Gaza: the new and the old. The new road went straight west to Gaza. The old road went south from Jerusalem then west to Gaza. In verse 26 the Lord told Philip in great detail to “go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert”

## A Predestinated Meeting

By his Power and knowledge, Christ moves his messenger and moves his lost sheep so they meet right where Christ would have them meet at the time he would have them to meet.

Examples: Philippian Jailor, Lydia, Caesar's household

God the Father predestinated all his elect to receive the Holy Spirit of adoption at the time appointed, and to receive it by the power and wisdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1: 5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,...

He does it by Jesus Christ because this is the covenant promise the Father gave to Christ upon the condition of Christ redeeming us by his own blood.

Galatians 4: 4: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5: To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6: And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7: Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Christ is sovereign to do as he will to get this gospel to each one he redeemed:

Ephesians 1: 11: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

So not only does Christ call and send his preacher, he also makes his preacher and his lost child meet at the predestinated time and place.

Application: Now is this the Christ you believe or is your God helpless to work his will? Is your Savior sovereign to save in the manner that pleases him or helpless to do so? It is one or the other! So which is it! This is how it pleased God to save his people because it pleases God for Christ to receive all the glory!

1 Corinthians 1: 25: Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men....28: And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29: That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30: But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

**III. THIRDLY, BY HIS KNOWLEDGE AND BY HIS POWER, CHRIST SHALL JUSTIFY HIS PEOPLE THROUGH FAITH, BY MAKING THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST EFFECTUAL IN OUR HEARTS BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

**Truth Not Lies**

Christ does this work only through the truth. **Acts 8: 27:** [the officer] was **from Ethiopia** and **had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28: Was returning,...**

Christ did not work this work through the idol teachers in Ethiopia. Nor did Christ use the Pharisees or Sadducees who were lost—Romans 10: 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4: For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Instead, Christ did as he said he would, Jeremiah 3: 15: I will give you pastors after my own heart which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

### **Impossible to Know Truth by Lies**

It is impossible to believe on Christ in truth if you have not been taught the truth of Christ—Romans 10: 13:...how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?

There is no calling upon God except in truth—Psalm 145: 18: The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

The Holy Spirit only teaches the truth—John 16: 13: Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14: He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

Christ said “I am the Truth—no man cometh to the Father but by me.” Would Christ teach a lie? Ephesians 4: 20 you have “learned Christ if so be that ye have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.”

Sinners are born again only with truth—James 1: 18: Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth,... 1 Peter 1: 23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever...25: And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Without the truth there is no sanctification; "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (Jn 17: 17)

7. Without truth there is no entrance into heaven...**Rev 21:27: And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth,...or maketh a lie:**

The very thing which distinguishes faith from delusion is that faith believes God's truth, while delusion credits Satan's lies—2 Thessalonians 2: 10:...they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 13: But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

So “the church of the living God is the pillar and ground of truth!” (1 Tim 3: 15)

**THEREFORE, CHRIST SENDS HIS CHOSEN MESSENGERS WITH THE TRUTH OF CHRIST BY HIS OWN SOVEREIGN POWER THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT—Acts 8: 28:** [the Eunuch] **Was sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. 29: Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30: And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31: And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.** [Only the Holy Spirit can give a sinner this teachable spirit and teach him that he needs God's preacher to guide him.] **32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. 34: And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? 35: Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.**

Philip preached to him what I have been preaching to you out of Isaiah 53 since August of last year: Christ is the Root out of dry ground. He had no form that makes men desire him. But he is the Substitute of God's elect—wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep went astray—the LORD laid on him the iniquities of all his elect people. He is the Righteousness of His people—he suffered perfectly, he opened not his mouth. For it pleased the LORD to bruise him: he made his soul an offering for sin, with his stripe we are healed. He shall see his seed, and prolong days; the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. By his knowledge—by his work on the tree and by this gospel he has brought to you now, through God-given faith in him, we receive justification already accomplished, for he brings this gospel to all those whose iniquities he bore.

### **Fruit of Effectual Calling**

And Christ makes the word effectual in the hearts by sending forth the Holy Spirit. Here are the effectual results always brought forth by Christ—**Acts 8: 36: And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37: And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**

This Eunuch experienced the time of love.

Ezekiel 16: 8: Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time *was* the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

He believed Christ was all his righteousness; all his acceptance with God.

**Acts 8: 38: And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.**

Application: If Christ works this work in your heart then you will do as this Eunuch did: **He repented** from his sins, from his vain wisdom, from self; in the heart made new by God, he believed Christ unto righteousness; he confessed Christ with his mouth; he obediently followed Christ in believer's baptism. Oh, may Christ enter your heart today and do this work!

**Acts 8: 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. 40: But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.**

What became of the Eunuch? According to Dr. Gill, and historians, he preached in Africa until the day he was killed for preaching the gospel. But he was not cut off from the Lord:

Isaiah 56:3: Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. 4: For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; 5: Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

If you do not believe Christ does this work, why? It gives all the glory to Christ. Do you or do you now want Christ to receive all preeminence?

**Amen!**