

Some Other Way?

Joe Slater

By most standards, a better man than Cornelius would be hard to find. Acts 10:2 informs us that he was “a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.” Yet, before he obeyed the gospel, Cornelius was lost! Peter told him “words by which you and all your household will be saved” (Acts 11:14).

Most of us have friends, relatives, and neighbors like Cornelius – good, God-fearing, morally upright, sincere, religious people who have not obeyed the gospel of Christ as the New Testament teaches. We hesitate, especially in our politically correct age, to affirm that they are lost. We wonder, “Might not God accept people by some other way?”

Let’s view this picture from another angle. Rather than asking, “What must I do to be saved,” let’s ask “Where must I be located to be saved?” Paul said that salvation is “in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:10). In fact, all spiritual blessings, most notably redemption, are “in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3, 7). “There is now therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:1). These and many other passages show where one must be located to be saved (redeemed, uncondemned): “In Christ Jesus.” Now, what does the Bible say is the transition point from being outside of Christ to being “in Christ”? Only two passages deal with this, and both say we are “baptized into Christ” (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27). There is no alternate route!

Some will protest that this reasoning is arrogant and self-righteous. Legion are those who say, “We have no right to say someone is lost because he doesn’t see

things our way. Salvation is by grace, and an all-powerful God can save whomever He wishes however He wishes.”

Let’s get a few things straight: 1) It is God, not I, who says that people outside of Christ are lost (2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9); affirming God’s word is not arrogant, but disputing it is. 2) “Seeing things ‘our way’” is not the point! Neither you nor I had anything to do with devising the plan of salvation or writing the Scriptures. See things God’s way, not “our way”! 3) No one is disputing either the infinite power or the grace of God. Saving someone outside of Christ has nothing to do with grace or power. It has to do with God’s nature (holiness; truth), and it has to do with the absolute necessity of the atoning blood of Christ. If one sinner can be saved outside of Christ, then so can all others, so the death of Christ was unnecessary and vain. One ought to think long and hard before advancing that position!

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One Phone Call Can . . .

Show your concern

Learn of a need

Encourage the downhearted

Lift the depressed

Cheer the sad

Comfort the lonely

Reassure the suffering

Promote a good work

Render a service

Via Thayer, MO

Finding a Treasure

An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, 'Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza.' So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure (Acts 8:26-27).

Interestingly, the city Gaza, to which this treasurer was traveling, means "treasure." Thus, there was a treasurer headed toward a city that means "treasure" and he is about to receive a surprise treasure.

As the treasurer was traveling he was reading aloud the prophet Isaiah. When Philip heard him reading he asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” (Acts 8:30). The treasurer answered, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him” (Acts 8:31). “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture he preached Jesus to him” (Acts 8:35).

“As they went along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?’” (Acts 8:36). “And he ordered the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him” (Acts 8:38). “When they came up out of the water...the eunuch...went on his way rejoicing” (Acts 8:39-40).

What a great blessing to find a treasure! That is especially true if it is a surprise find. It is even more a blessing if it is a valuable treasure. Jesus said, “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again, and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field” Matthew 13:44.

Have you found the treasure of the kingdom of heaven? Finding that treasure should be the goal of every person. Let us begin at the scripture where you are and teach you about Jesus so that you can find that treasure.

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