

Gospel Conversations — Week 2: Building on a Foundation

Rev'd Benjamin Giffone, PhD — Redeemer Presbyterian Church — Spring 2025

- What are the elements of coming to faith?
 - Sense a need, God-shaped hole
 - Crisis
 - Longing
 - The message of the truth
 - Person who cares enough to tell them (a loving witness)
 - Transformation of the Holy Spirit; regeneration/rebirth
 - Time
- Both/and
 - Propositions *and* narratives
 - Truth *and* love
 - Meeting physical *and* spiritual needs
 - Conversion *and* ongoing discipleship
- Jesus and the Jewish People (Jn 8:31–59)
 - What is the obstacle to belief
 - Cf. Lk 3:8 – Abraham’s children from stones?
 - Rom 2:12; 3:1–2
- Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26–40)
 - What are the needs/crises/longings present in the non-believer character?
 - How well does Philip do at “bearing witness” to God’s truth to outsiders?
 - What are the elements and signs of the eunuch’s conversion? How does it happen, and how do we know?
- Peter, Stephen and Paul speak to Jewish audiences (Acts 2; 7; 13)
 - Rooted in scripture
 - Convicting: 2:22–24, 36; 7:48–53; 13:38–41
- Paul in Synagogues
 - 15:21 Moses has an ongoing presence in every city (weekly synagogues)
 - Acts 9:20; 13:5; 13:14–15; 13:43; 14:1; 17:1; 17:10; 17:17; 18:19–26; 19:8
 - At the river in Philippi – no synagogue (Acts 16:13)
- Paul rejected
 - 13:42–52 Pisidian Antioch: Some Jews accepted, some rejected
 - 18:1–17 Kicked out of the synagogue at Corinth
 - Jerusalem Council 15:21
- Overview
 - What are the needs/crises/longings present in the non-believer characters?
 - Who are “already-God’s-people” in the story? How well do they do at “bearing witness” to God’s truth to outsiders?
 - What are the elements and signs of conversion? How does it happen, and how do we know?
- Thinking beyond Jewish people to also the de-churched: What do these stories teach us about how to have gospel conversations? Can you think of some examples?