

What is my reaction when the “unlikely” show up to church?

6 Attitudes Towards the Kinds of People Jesus Save:

1. **Be Uncommon in Spiritual Perspective:** V1-3, Saul imposing havoc on the early church and approving of Stephen’s death. There was an uncommon situational perspective, V4, they were scattered but preached the word everywhere they went. The persecution was an opportunity to share the Gospel in new places. There was an uncommon privilege perspective, they were preaching the word everywhere and seeing converts to Christ.
2. **Be Expectant of God’s Power to Save:** V5, Philip went to Samaria, although most Jews didn’t interact with Samaritans (Jesus did: John 4:1-42) because of a deep-hearted hatred for them going back centuries, but Philip did. Samaria opposed the rebuilding of the wall in Ezra 4:7-16. Israel in two under Jeroboam into the northern 10 tribes with a capital in Samaria and two Southern tribes with a capital in Jerusalem, 1 Kings 11:30-40. Christ broke down the walls between Jew and Gentile, Eph. 2:14-18. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe, Rom. 1:16.
 - a. V5, Philip preached Christ to Samaria and there was great joy among the people in what the Lord was doing there with the Gospel being preached in Samaria (V8).
 - b. There was great joy for sinners who came to salvation and great joy for those who trusted in good works- that through Christ, all are saved by faith, Rom. 5:1-6, not by the yoke of Moses (The Law), Acts 15:10, the Gospel of faith in Christ, Acts 15:6-21.
3. **Be Ready to Receive Those Who Come with a Generous Spirit:** not believing every profession of faith, but willing to receive those who have confessed Christ. V9-10, Simon the Sorcerer was a magician doing magic and had a great name among the people, many believing that he had the power of God. Philip baptizes Simon and Simon attaches himself to Philip as Philip continued to perform miracles and preach Christ, V12-13.
 - a. V14, Philip continued for a time with Simon close to the ministry (V13). Peter and John came to see the testimony of Samaria receiving Christ and to lay hands on the new believers to receive the Holy Spirit, V16-17.
 - b. Why did they need to receive the Holy Spirit (V16)? Why had not the Spirit been given to them yet? Eph. 1:13, the seal of the Holy Spirit is given to believers. Acts 10:46-47, the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit before baptism.
 - i. The gift of the Spirit was withheld for a time so that both Jew and Gentile could affirm the power of Christ to save the Jew, Gentile, and Samaritan. As the Jews at Pentecost received the Holy Spirit and witnessed the speaking in tongues of the apostles, Peter and John could testify that the Samaritans had received the Holy Spirit as the Jews had. Other Gentiles would receive it in Acts 10:47 with Cornelius’ house and Peter there as well to testify.
4. **Be Wise About Spiritual Fruit:** Was Simon the Sorcerer saved? V18, Simon offered Peter and John money to have the gift of the Holy Spirit. There are many references from Jesus describing instant fruit of salvation with joy and excitement, but as with the Parable of the Sower, the seed on stony ground sprouted and withered, Matt. 13:1-23.
 - a. We rejoice at the profession of salvation but wait for fruits of repentance, righteousness, and faith. Will the cost of discipleship be too much, Luke 14:25-35?

5. **Be Clear About Spiritual Danger:** V20, “Your money perish with you.” Simon’s hearts was not right. Peter calls Simon to repent of his wickedness in V22. Simon is self-deceived having been baptized but desiring the purchase the power of God, not yet able to understand that salvation is given through faith in Christ, not for purchase.
 - a. Peter accessed Simon’s spiritual state. 1) Simon must repent, V22. 2) Simon can’t buy the gift of God. Simon didn’t hear the true Gospel from Philip. 3) Simon is impoverished, money is useless to possess spiritual life, V20-21. 4) Simon had a twisted heart bound up in poison and bitterness, V22-23. Simon needs to be truly saved.
6. **Be Amazed by the Opportunity of Repentance Offered to Others through the Gospel:** Was Simon eventually saved? Luke doesn’t give us the answer. The reader is confronted with the truth of their own sin. Will You believe in Christ? It is being offered will you accept it? Will you come to Christ, not with money or status, to receive Christ who died for your sin?

Will I come to Christ and repent of my sin? That question can and should be offered to all?

Further Discussion and Application

Evangelism is connecting the elect with the Gospel. What are simple questions that we can ask others about their spiritual state? Here are some questions from Simon’s example:

- Does your friend or loved one think they can obtain salvation through works or buy it?
- Is their heart wicked? Do they twist their need for salvation downplaying their sin?
- Do they feel sorry and realize the wrong they have committed against a Holy God?
- Are they ready to repent of their sin and turn to Christ?
- If they have professed faith, will they commit to learning God’s Word and joining a church to be discipled and serve? (Do they desire to bear fruit?)

How can mature believers demonstrate love to those who have professed faith? What is the fruit of those that have come to faith in Christ? What are the next steps that the new believer in Christ will need to take to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ? How can you bring them closer to you to help walk alongside them?

How can we explain the following points of God’s salvation plan?

- God created all things and is Holy.
- Man sinned and was separated from God and needed a Savior.
- God sent His Son on account of sinful man to reconcile man to God.
- Jesus was fully man and fully God and lived a sinless life, dying on the cross for sin, paying the price for our sin, fully satisfying the wrath of God to those who believe.
- All who believe (justified by faith alone) that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead will be saved?

Spend a few minutes describing these points of the Gospel with Scripture references.