

Be Clear

In *The Story of Reality*, Greg Koukl tells the story of the world thru a wide-angle lens – how the world began, how it ends, and everything important that happens in between. The story starts with **God**, our Creator, who is both a King and a Father. The most valuable thing God made was us, **human beings**. As we bear the mark of God, we are priceless. But we are also broken due to our rebellion against the King. Our friendship with Him was shattered by this rebellion.

Jesus came down from heaven as God in a human body. He lived the life we ought to live, and died a barbaric death on a cross, absorbing the anger of God that had been aimed at us for our rebellion. Jesus took our guilt and offers his innocence. We accept this trade by placing our **trust in Jesus**. We must acknowledge our rebellion and turn from it, ask the King for forgiveness, and agree to live under his authority.

At the end of the age, everyone who died will be brought back to life. Those who received the King's pardon will experience His mercy forever in heaven. Those who continued in rebellion will experience the King's justice forever in darkness. This is the true story of reality. **The Good News** about Jesus and his rescue mission is called the Gospel. Our church exists to tell everyone about this Good News.

Three Lessons About Making the Good News Clear:

1. We Have to Make _____ (Our Telling) Clear.

- a. *“Now the angel of the Lord said to Philip, ‘Go south to the road – the desert road – that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza’. So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official... This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet.” Acts 8:26-28.*
- b. The first step in sharing the Good News is making yourself available, as Philip did. We must set aside distractions and allow God to use us to touch others.
- c. The Ethiopian official had gone to Jerusalem to worship just as the Queen of Sheba did in I Kings 10. Obtaining a scroll of the prophet Isaiah, he was reading it when Philip approached. *“So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.” Acts 8:31.* Philip asked questions and carefully listened in order that he could share exactly what the official needed to hear.

2. We Have to Make _____ (The Truth) Clear.

- a. *“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice...’ The eunuch asked Philip, ‘Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?’ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.” Acts 8:32-35.*

- b. We are saved by faith in Jesus! The official believed in the true God and understood that there was something broken in himself that needed to be fixed. But he had no knowledge of Jesus. Philip explained to him that Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53 by being punished for our sins – sins that are common to every person (Psalm 14:1-3).

3. We Have to Make _____ (Our Trusting) Clear.

- a. *“As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?’ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” Acts 8:36-38.*
- b. Simply knowing about God and believing in Him is not enough. *“You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.” James 2:19.* Every person must individually place their trust in the blood of Christ to pay the penalty for their sins. They must turn from their old lives and make Christ the Lord of their lives.

If you wish to skydive, you must first receive instructions about the parachute (most rookies skydive in tandem with an experienced person). Once in the plane, however, your “trust” in the parachute is meaningless unless you actually jump out of the plane. In the same way, we must learn the facts about Jesus for it is He who saves us. Nevertheless, this is meaningless unless we actually place our full trust in Him. Have you taken this step?

Discussions Questions

Be Clear

1. Why is it important to be able to tell the story of reality? How would you explain God to a good friend? How would you explain the uniqueness of human beings? How would you explain that human beings are all broken and need to be fixed? How would you explain Jesus to someone who has never heard about him? How would you explain the idea of placing our full trust in Christ for our salvation? How would you explain the conclusion of history on our planet to a good friend? How would you describe the final judgment? What do you like and what don't you like about the way in which author Greg Koukl tells "The Story of Reality"?
2. Read Acts 8:26-40. How did Philip make himself available to meet with the Ethiopian official? How do you make yourself available for God to use in telling someone about Jesus? What distractions sometimes get in the way of your being available to share with someone? Why did the Ethiopian go to Jerusalem? What does this tell us about his belief in the one true God? How is his story similar and how is it different than the Queen of Sheba's journey to Israel in I Kings 10? How do you think the official was able to obtain a copy of Isaiah? How did Philip end up coming across his path? What did Philip ask him? Why is it so important to understand exactly where a person is at before we attempt to share the Gospel with them? How did Philip do that?
3. Read verses 32-35. What was the official reading? Why is it important to understand that we are saved by faith in Jesus? Why is the object of our faith critical? How do you think Philip explained Jesus to the official? Why was it important for Philip to also tell the official that everyone was sinful and in need of a Savior? See Psalm 14:1-3. Why did Jesus have to suffer and die? Why is it important that people understand that Jesus offers us a trade – our guilt for his innocence, and our crimes for his goodness?
4. Read verses 36-38. Why is understanding who God is and accepting the basic facts about God not enough to save us? What is taught in James 2:19? Why is it important for people to understand that we must individually place our trust in the blood of Christ to pay the penalty for our sins? Why is it important for us to turn from our sins and make Christ the Lord of our lives? How did Philip call the official to a point of decision? How have you done this with people in your life? What response has been given to you?
5. How does putting on a parachute and jumping out of a plane demonstrate what true, saving faith is all about? Why is it not enough to intellectually believe that the parachute can save you? Why is true faith found in actually jumping? How do we make this same step when we place our trust in Christ?