

# Homily 19 on the Acts of the Apostles

by St. John Chrysostom

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*The sermon tells the story of Philip and the eunuch, highlighting the importance of faith, humility, and obedience in the conversion process.*

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:7, Psalm 68:11, Isaiah 35:6, Isaiah 65:17, Jeremiah 31:31, Matthew 7:8, Acts 8:26, Acts 9:1

**Topics:** "Biblical Conversion", "Divine Providence"

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## Description

John Chrysostom preaches on the powerful encounters of Philip with the Ethiopian eunuch and Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus. He highlights the eunuch's eagerness to learn from the Scriptures, his humility in seeking understanding, and his immediate desire for baptism upon hearing the Gospel. Chrysostom emphasizes the providential guidance in both stories, showing how God orchestrates events for His divine purposes. He contrasts the receptive hearts of the eunuch and Saul with the indifference and neglect of the Scriptures seen in the congregation, urging them to value and engage with the Word of God.

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## Transcript

Acts VIII. 26, 27

And the Angel of the Lord spoke unto Philip, saying, arise and go toward the south unto the way that goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went.

It seems to me, this (Philip) was one of the seven; for from Jerusalem he would not have gone southwards, but to the north; but from Samaria it was towards the south. The same is desert: so that there is no fear of an attack from the Jews. And he did not ask, Wherefore? But arose and went. And, behold, it says, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch 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, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. (v. 27, 28.)

High encomiums for the man, that he, residing in Ethiopia and beset with so much business, and when there was no festival going on, and living in that superstitious city, came to Jerusalem for to worship. Great also is his studiousness, that even sitting in his chariot he read. And, it says, the Spirit said to Philip, Go near, and join yourself to this chariot. And Philip ran there to him, and heard him reading the prophet Esaias, and said, Do you understand what you read? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me?

Acts 8:29-31 Observe again his piety; that though he did not understand, he read, and then after reading, examines. And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. 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: in His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray you, of whom speaks the prophet this?

Of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. Acts 8:32-35 Observe how it is Providentially ordered. First he reads and does not understand; then he reads the very text in which was the Passion and the Resurrection and the Gift. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what does hinder me to be baptized? Acts 8:36 Mark the eager desire, mark the exact knowledge.

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. And when they had 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. (v. 38, 39.) But why did the Spirit of the Lord bear him away? (Hereby) the occurrence was shown to be more wonderful. Even then, the eunuch did not know him. Consequently this was done, that Philip might afterwards be a subject of wonder to him.

For, it says, he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea. Acts 8:40 This (Philip, therefore) was one of the seven; for there in fact he is afterwards found at Cæsarea. It was well and expedient therefore that the Spirit caught Philip away; else the eunuch would have desired to go with him, and Philip would have grieved him by declining to comply with his request, the time being not yet come. (a) But at the same time here was an encouraging assurance for them that they shall also prevail over the heathen: for indeed the high character (τῶν πρώτων πιστευόντων) of the (first) believers was enough to move them.

If however the eunuch had stayed there, what fault could have been found? [But he knew him not]: for this is why it says, he went on his way rejoicing: so that had he known him, he would not have been (so) delighted.

And the Angel of the Lord, etc. Recapitulation, Acts 8:26 (b) See Angels assisting the preaching, and not themselves preaching, but calling these (to the work). But the wonderful nature of the occurrence is shown also by this: that what of old was rare, and hardly done, here takes place with ease, and see with what frequency! (c) An eunuch, it says, a man of great authority, under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. Acts 8:27 For there women bore rule of old, and this was the law among them.

Philip did not yet know for whose sake he had come into the desert: (d) but what was there to hinder his learning all (these particulars) accurately, while in the chariot? Was reading the prophet Esaias. Acts 8:28 For the road was desert, and there was no display in the matter. Observe also at what time: in the most violent heat (of the day). (e) And the Spirit said to him. Acts 8:29 Not now the Angel but the Spirit urges him. Why is this? Then, the vision took place, in grosser form, through the Angel, for this is for them that are more of the body, but the Spirit is for the more spiritual.

And how did He speak to him? Of course, suggested it to him. Why does not the Angel appear to the other, and bring him to Philip? Because it is likely he would not have been persuaded, but rather terrified. Observe the wisdom of Philip: he did not accuse him, not say, I know these things exactly: did not pay

court to him, and say, Blessed are you that readest. But mark his speech, how far it is from harshness alike and from adulation; the speech rather of a kind and friendly man.

Do you understand what you read? Acts 8:30 For it was needful that he should himself ask, himself have a longing desire. He plainly intimates, that he knows that the other knew nothing: and says, Do you understand what you read? at the same time he shows him that great was the treasure that lay therein. It tells well also, that the eunuch looked not to the outward appearance (σχημα) (of the man), said not, Who are you? did not chide, not give himself airs, not say that he did know.

On the contrary, he confesses his ignorance: wherefore also he learns. He shows his hurt to the physician: sees at a glance, that he both knows the matter, and is willing to teach. Look "Knowest thou," and came up to him in mean attire (μετ' ετελοσχηματος), the eunuch did not take it amiss, was not indignant, did not think himself insulted....but he, the man in great authority, the barbarian, the man riding in a chariot, besought him, the person of mean appearance, who might for his dress have easily been despised, to come up and sit with him," etc.--> how free he is from haughtiness; the outward appearance announced nothing splendid.

So desirous was he of learning, and gave heed to his words; and that saying, He that seeks, finds, Matthew 7:8 was fulfilled in him. And, it says, he besought Philip, that he would come up and sit with him. Acts 8:31 Do you mark the eagerness, the longing desire? But should any say he ought to have waited for Philip (to speak), (the answer is), he does not know what is the matter: he could not in the least tell what the other was going to say to him, but supposed merely that he was about to receive some (lesson of) prophecy.

And moreover, this was more respectful, that he did not draw him into his chariot, but besought him. And Philip, we have read, ran to him, and heard him reading; even the fact of his running, showed that he wished to say (something). And the place, it says, of the Scripture which he read was this: As a sheep He was led to the slaughter. Acts 8:32 And this circumstance, also, is a token of his elevated mind, (φιλοσοφιας) that he had in hand this prophet, who is more sublime than all others.

Philip does not relate matters to him just as it might happen, but quietly: nay, does not say anything until he is questioned. Both in the former instance he prayed him, and so he does now, saying, I pray you of whom speaks the prophet this? That he should at all know either that the Prophets speak in different ways about different persons, or that they speak of themselves in another person -- the question betokens a very thoughtful mind. Let us be put to shame, both poor and rich, by this eunuch.

Then, it says, they came to a certain water, and he said, Lo, here is water. Acts 8:36 Again, of his own accord he requests, saying, What does hinder me to be baptized? And see again his modesty: he does not say, Baptize me, neither does he hold his peace; but he utters somewhat midway between strong desire and reverent fear, saying, What does hinder me? Do you observe that he has the doctrines (of faith) perfect? For indeed the Prophet had the whole, Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Judgment to come.

And if he shows exceeding earnestness of desire, do not marvel. Be ashamed, all you as many as are unbaptized. And, it says, he commanded the chariot to stand still. Acts 8:38 He spoke, and gave the order at the same moment, before hearing (Philip's answer). And when they had come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; Acts 8:39 in order that the occurrence might be shown to be of God; that he might not consider it to be merely man. And he went, it says, on his way rejoicing. (P. 121, note 2.)

This hints, that he would have been grieved had he known: for the greatness of his joy, having had the Spirit also vouchsafed to him, he did not even see things present -- But Philip was found at Azotus. Acts 8:40 Great was the gain to Philip also:-- that which he heard concerning the Prophets, concerning Habakkuk, concerning Ezekiel, and the rest, he saw done in his own person. Daniel 14:36; Ezekiel 3:12 Thence it appears that he went a long distance, seeing he was found at Azotus. (The Spirit) set him there, where he was thenceforth to preach: And passing through, he preached in all the cities, until he came to Cæsarea.

And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. ch. 9:1-2 He fitly mentions Paul's zeal, and shows that in the very midst of his zeal he is drawn. Yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter, and not yet sated with the murder of Stephen, he was not yet glutted with the persecution of the Church, and the dispersion.

Lo, this was fulfilled which was spoken by Christ, that they which kill you shall think they offer worship to God. John 16:2 He then in this wise did it, not as the Jews: God forbid! For that he did it through zeal, is manifest from his going abroad even to strange cities: whereas they would not have cared even for those in Jerusalem; they were for one thing only, to enjoy honor. But why went he to Damascus? It was a great city, a royal city: he was afraid lest that should be preoccupied.

And observe his strong desire and ardor (and), how strictly according to the Law he went to work: he goes not to the governor, but to the priest. That if he found any of this way: for so the believers were called, probably because of their taking the direct way that leads to heaven. And why did he not receive authority to have them punished there, but brings them to Jerusalem! He did these things here with more authority. And mark on what a peril he casts himself. He was not afraid lest he should take any harm, but (yet) he took others also with him, that if, it says, he found any of this way, whether they were men or women-- Oh, the ruthlessness!-- he might bring them bound.

By this journey of his, he wished to show them all (how he would act): so far were they from being earnest in this matter. Observe him also casting (people) into prison before this. The others therefore did not prevail: but this man did prevail, by reason of his ardent mind. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? (v. 3, 4.)

Why not in Jerusalem? Why not in Damascus? That there might be no opening for different persons to relate the occurrence in different ways, but that he alone should be the authentic narrator (■ ξι■πιστος), he that went for this purpose. In fact, he says this [both in his oration on the stairs], and when pleading before Agrippa. Fell to the earth: ch. 22:6: 26:12 for excess of light is wont to shock, because the eyes have their measure: it is said also that excess of sound makes people deaf and stunned (as in a fit) (■ ποπλ■γας).

But him it only blinded, and extinguished his passion by fear, so that he should hear what was spoken. Saul, Saul, says He, why do you persecute me? And He tells him nothing: does not say, Believe, nor anything whatever of the kind: but expostulates with him, all but saying, What wrong, great or small, have you suffered from Me, that you do these things? And he said, Who are You Lord? Acts 9:5 thus in the first place confessing himself His servant. And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute. think not your

warring is with men.

And they which were with him heard the voice of Paul, but saw no person to whom he answered -- for (the Lord) suffered them to be hearers of what was less important. Had they heard the other Voice, they would not have believed; but perceiving Paul answering (some person), they marvelled. But arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told you what you must do. Acts 9:6 Observe, how He does not immediately add all, but first softens his mind. In the same way He called the disciples also a second time.

It shall be told you, etc.: He gives him good hopes, and (intimates) that he shall recover his sight also. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus (v. 7, 8):-- the spoils of the devil (τὸ σκεῆμα αὐτοῦ), his goods Matthew 13:29, as from some city, yea, some metropolis which has been taken. And the wonder of it is, the enemies and foes themselves brought him in, in the sight of all!

And for three days he neither did eat nor drink, being blinded. Acts 9:9 What could equal this? To compensate the discouragement in the matter of Stephen, here is encouragement, in the bringing in of Paul: though that sadness had its consolation in the fact of Stephen's making such an end, yet it also received this further consolation: moreover, the bringing in of the villages of the Samaritans afforded very great comfort.-- But why did this take place not at the very first, but after these things?

That it might be shown that Christ was indeed risen. This furious assailant of Christ, the man who would not believe in His death and resurrection, the persecutor of His disciples, how should this man have become a believer, had not the power of His resurrection been great indeed? Be it so, that the other Apostles favored (His pretensions seest Paul, a man who knew Him not, had never heard Him, had never been under His teaching: a man, who even after His crucifixion makes war upon Him, puts to death them that believe in Him, throws all into confusion and disorder, when thou seest him suddenly converted, and in his toils for the Gospel outstripping the friends of Christ: what plea canst thou then have for thine effrontery, in disbelieving the word of the Resurrection?"-->): what say you to this man?

Why then not immediately after His resurrection? That his hostility might be more clearly shown as open war. The man who is so frantic as even to shed blood and cast men into prisons, all at once believes! It was not enough that he had never been in Christ's company: the believers must be warred upon by him with vehement hostility: he left to none the possibility of going beyond him in fury: none of them all could be so violent. But when he was blinded, then he saw the proofs of His sovereignty and loving kindness: then he answers, Lord, what will You have me to do? that none may say that he played the hypocrite, he that was even eager for blood, and went to the priests, and flung himself upon such dangers, in persecuting and bringing to punishment even them that were in foreign parts -- under these circumstances he now acknowledges His sovereignty.

And why was he shone upon by that light not within the city, but before it? The many would not have believed, since even there (at Jerusalem when the people heard the voice which came from above, they said that it thundered John 12:29, supra, note 2, p. 123; but this man was authority enough in reporting what was his own affair. And bound he was brought in, though not with bonds upon him: and they drew him, who had expected to draw the others. And he eat not, neither drank: he condemned himself for the past, he confessed, prayed, besought God.

But should any say, This was the effect of compulsion: (we answer) The same thing happened to Elymas: then how came it that he was not changed? (ch. xiii. de Laud. Pauli Hom. iv. §1, t. ii. p. 491.) What (evidence) could be more compulsory than the earthquake at the Resurrection, the report of the soldiers, the other miracles, the seeing Himself risen? But these things do not compel (belief) they are calculated to teach (it) (ο■κ ■ναγκαστικ■ ■λλ■ διδακτικ■). Why did not the Jews believe when they were told of these things?

That he spoke truth was manifest: for he would not have been changed, had this not happened; so that all were bound to believe. He was not inferior to them that preached the Resurrection, and was more credible, by being all at once converted. He had no intercourse with any of the believers; it was at Damascus that he was converted, or rather before he came to Damascus that this happened to him. I ask the Jew: Say, by what was Paul converted? He saw so many signs, and was not converted: his teacher (Gamaliel, supra, p. 87, note 1) was converted, and he remained unconverted.

Who convinced him -- and not only convinced, but all at once inspired him with such ardent zeal? Wherefore was it, that he wished even to go into hell itself for Christ's sake? The truth of the facts is manifest.

But, as I said, for the present let us take shame to ourselves (when we think of) the eunuch, both in his baptism and his reading. Do ye mark how he was in a station of great authority, how he was in possession of wealth, and even on his journey allowed himself no rest? What must he have been at home, in his leisure hours, this man who rested not even on his travels? What must he have been at night? You that are in stations of dignity, hear: imitate his freedom from pride, (de Lazaro, Conc. iii. §3, t. i. p. 748. c) his piety.

Though about to return home, he did not say to himself: I am going back to my country, there let me receive baptism; those cold words which most men use! No need had he of signs, no need of miracles: from the Prophet merely, he believed. (b) But why is it (so ordered) that he sees (Philip) not before he goes to Jerusalem, but after he has been there? It was not meet that he should see the Apostles under persecution. Because he was yet weak, the Prophet was not easy; (but yet the Prophet) catechized him.

For even now, if any of you would apply himself to the study of the Prophets, he would need no miracles. And, if you please, let us take in hand the prophecy itself. He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth: in His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth. (v. 22, 23.) It is likely he had heard that He was crucified, [and now he learns], that His life is taken away from the earth, and the rest that He did no sin, nor deceit in His mouth: that He prevailed to save others also: [and] who He is, Whose generation is unutterable.

It is likely he had seen the riven rocks there (on the spot), and (had heard) how the veil was rent, and how there was darkness, and so forth: and all these things Philip mentioned, merely taking his text from the Prophet. It is a great thing, this reading of the Scriptures! That was fulfilled which was spoken by Moses, Sitting, lying down, rising up, and walking, remember the Lord your God. Deuteronomy 6:7 For the roads, especially when they are lonely, give us opportunity for reflection, there being none to disturb us.

Both this man is on the road and Paul on the road: howbeit the latter no man draws, but Christ alone. This was too great a work for the Apostles: and, greater still, in that, the Apostles being at Jerusalem, and no person of authority at Damascus, he nevertheless returned thence converted: yet those at Damascus

knew that he did not come from Jerusalem converted, for he brought letters, that he might put the believers in bonds. Like a consummate Physician, when the fever was at its height, Christ brought help to him: for it was needful that he should be quelled in the midst of his frenzy.

For then most of all would he be brought down, and condemn himself as one guilty of dreadful audacity. (a) For these things Paul deploras himself, saying, Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all His long suffering. 1 Timothy 1:13-16 Verily one has reason to admire this eunuch. He did not see Christ, he saw no miracle: he beheld Jerusalem standing yet entire (συνεστ[α]): he believed Philip. How came he to behave thus? His soul was earnest (μεμεριμνη[ν]).

Yet the thief (on the cross) had seen miracles: the wise men had seen a star; but this man, nothing of the kind. So great a thing is the careful reading of the Scriptures! What of Paul then! Did he not study the law? But he, it seems to me, was specially reserved, for the purpose which I have already mentioned by anticipation, because Christ would fain draw to Himself the Jews by inducements from every quarter. For had they been in their right mind, nothing was so likely to do them good as this; for this, more than miracles and all else, was calculated to attract them: as, on the other hand, nothing is so apt to prove a stumbling block to men of duller minds.

See then how, after the Apostle, we have God also doing miracles. They accused the Apostles after these [miracles of theirs]; they cast them into prison: see thereupon God doing the miracles. For instance, the bringing them out of prison, was His miracle: the bringing Philip, His miracle: the bringing Paul over, was His.-- Observe in what way Paul is honored, in what way the eunuch. There, Christ appears, probably because of his hardness, and because Ananias would not (else) have been persuaded.

Conversant with these wonders, let us show ourselves worthy. But many in these times, even when they come to church, do not know what is read; whereas the eunuch, even in public (π[α]γορ[ε]) and riding in his chariot, applied himself to the reading of the Scriptures. Not so you: none takes the Bible in hand: nay, everything rather than the Bible.

Say, what are the Scriptures for? For as much as in you lies, it is all undone. What is the Church for? Tie up the Bibles: perhaps the judgment would not be such, not such the punishment: if one were to bury them in dung, that he might not hear them, he would not so insult them as you do now. For say, what is the insult there? That the man has buried them. And what here? That we do not hear them. Say, when is a person most insulted -- when he is silent, and one makes no answer, or, when he does speak (and is unheeded)?

So that the insult is greater in the present case, when He does speak and you will not hear: greater the contempt. Speak not to us Isaiah 30:10, we read, they said of old to the Prophets: but you do worse, saying, Speak: we will not do. For there they turned them away that they should not even speak, as feeling that from the voice itself they got some sort of awe and obligation; whereas you, in the excess of your contempt, do not even this. Believe me, if you stopped our mouths by putting your hands over them, the insult would not be so great as it is now.

For say, whether shows greater contempt, he that hears, even when hindering by this action, or, he that will not even hear? Say -- if we shall look at it as a case of an insult offered -- suppose one person to check the party insulting him, and to stop his mouth, as being hurt by the insults, and another person to show no concern, but pretend not even to hear them: whether will show most contempt? Would you not say the latter? For the former shows that he feels himself hit: the latter all but stops the mouth of God.

Did ye shudder at what was said? Why, the mouth by which God speaks, is the mouth of God. Just as our mouth is the mouth of our soul, though the soul has no mouth, so the mouth of the Prophets is the mouth of God. Hear, and shudder. There, common (to the whole congregation) stands the deacon crying aloud, and saying, Let us attend to the reading. It is the common voice of the whole Church, the voice which he utters, and yet none does attend. After him begins the Reader, The Prophecy of Esaias, and still none attends, although Prophecy has nothing of man in it.

Then after this, he says, Thus says the Lord, and still none attends. Then after this punishments and vengeance, and still even then none attends. But what is the common excuse? It is always the same things over again. This it is most of all, that ruins you. Suppose you knew the things, even so you certainly ought not to turn away: since in the theatres also, is it not always the same things acted over again, and still you take no disgust? How dare you talk about the same things, you who know not so much as the names of the Prophets?

Are you not ashamed to say, that this is why you do not listen, because it is the same things over again, while you do not know the names of those who are read, and this, though always hearing the same things? You have yourself confessed that the same things are said. Were I to say this as a reason for finding fault with you, you would need to have recourse to quite a different excuse, instead of this which is the very thing you find fault with.-- Do not you exhort your son?

Now if he should say, Always the same things! would not you count it an insult? It would be time enough to talk of the same things, when we both knew the things, and exhibited them in our practice. Or rather, even then, the reading of them would not be superfluous. What equal to Timothy? Tell me that: and yet to him says Paul, Give attention to reading, to exhortation. 1 Timothy 4:13 For it is not possible, I say not possible, ever to exhaust the mind of the Scriptures. It is a well which has no bottom.

I said, says the Preacher, I have become wise: and then it departed from me.-- Ecclesiastes 7:24 Shall I show you that the things are not the same? How many persons, do you suppose, have spoken upon the Gospels? And yet all have spoken in a way which was new and fresh. For the more one dwells on them, the more insight does he get, the more does he behold the pure light. Look, what a number of things I am going to speak of:-- say, what is narrative? What is prophecy? What is parable?

What is type? What is allegory? What is symbol? What are Gospels? Answer me only to this one point, which is plain: why are they called Gospels, good tidings? And yet you have often heard that good news ought to have nothing sad in it: yet this good news has abundance of sadness in it. Their fire, it says, shall never be quenched: their worm shall not die: Mark 9:44 Shall appoint his portion, it says, with the hypocrites, with them that are cut asunder: then shall He say, I know you not: Depart from Me, you that work iniquity.

Matthew 24:51; 7:23 Surely, we do not deceive ourselves, when we imagine that we tell you in your own mother-tongue (■ Ελληνιστ■) these good tidings? You look downcast; you are stunned; you are struck all of a heap, unable to hold up your heads. Good news should have nothing in it of a duty to be done, but rather should counsel what is good: whereas these Gospels have endless duties to be done. And again, to mention other things, as for instance, Except a man hate father and mother, he is not worthy of Me Luke 14:26: and I am not come to bring peace upon earth, but a sword Matthew 10:34; Luke 12:51: and In the world you shall have tribulation -- John 16:33 excellent good tidings these, are they not!

For good news is such as this -- You shall have this and that good thing: as in common life men say one to another, What shall I have for my good news? Your father is coming, or, your mother: he does not say, You must do this or that.-- Again, tell me, how do the Gospels differ from the Prophets? Why are not the Prophecies also called Gospels, good tidings? For they tell the same things: for instance, The lame shall leap as an hart. Isaiah 35:6 The Lord shall give the word to them that preach the Gospel Psalm 68:11: and, A new heaven and a new earth.

Isaiah 65:17 Why are not those also called Gospels? But if, while you do not so much as know what Gospels mean, you so despise the reading of the Scriptures, what shall I say to you?-- Let me speak of something else. Why four Gospels? Why not, ten? Why not twenty? If many have taken in hand to set forth a narrative Luke 1:1, why not one person? Why they that were disciples (i.e. Apostles)? Why they that were not disciples? But why any Scriptures at all? And yet, on the contrary, the Old Testament says, I will give you a New Testament.

Jeremiah 31:31 Where are they that say, Always the same things? If you knew these, that, though a man should live thousands of years, they are not the same things, ye would not say this. Believe me, I will not tell you the answers to any of these questions; not in private, not in public: only, if any find them out, I will not assent. For this is the way we have made you good-for-nothing, by always telling you the things ready to your hands, and not refusing when we ought. Look, you have questions enough: consider them, tell me the reasons.

Why Gospels? Why not Prophecies? Why duties, to be done, in the Gospels? If one is at a loss, let another seek the answer, and contribute each to the others from what he has: but now we will hold our peace. For if what has been spoken has done you no good, much less would it, should we add more. We only pour water into a vessel full of holes. And the punishment too is all the greater for you. Therefore, we will hold our peace. Which that we may not have to do, it rests with yourselves.

For if we shall see your diligence, perhaps we will again speak, that both ye may be more approved, and we may rejoice over you, in all things giving glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: to Him be glory and dominion now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

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