

## Way Maker; Isaiah 43:15-16

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1. No Way Out.
  - a. Often, we find ourselves in situations where we think there is no way out.
    - i. *No Way Out* is a 1987 movie starring Kevin Costner and Gene Hackman.
    - ii. Kevin Costner stars as Naval officer Tom Farrell, who finds himself in a ‘no-way-out’ situation.
    - iii. The Navy is searching for a killer who is also a Russian spy who is also in the US Navy.
    - iv. He has to find the killer before the evidence points to him.
    - v. Throughout the movie, it seems that, at every turn, Tom will be the one accused of the murder and, therefore, the Russian mole.
  - b. We can all empathize with Lt. Commander Farrell.
    - i. We have all stood with a barrier before us, thinking there is no way over, under, or around it and that there is no way out.
    - ii. Frustration sets in, panic begins, and we enter fight, flight or freeze mode.
    - iii. We stop thinking and start reacting.
  - c. God makes a way for us.
  - d. Isaiah 43:15–16: “I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.” Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,”
  - e. The band Leeland wrote a song titled *Way Maker* that shows us God’s heart for his creation when they find themselves in no-way-out situations.
2. Touching.
  - a. “You are here touching every heart.”
  - b. God is intimately involved in our lives.
    - i. Last week in our Bible class, we discussed God being in the details.
    - ii. The Ethiopian.
      1. I want you to remember a slave who heard great things about the One God and went to Jerusalem to worship Him.
      2. God intervened because this slave could not understand what he was reading.
      3. Acts 8:28–31: “and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.”
      4. The Ethiopian was reading from Isaiah 53 about the suffering servant (Jesus) and did not understand who Isaiah was speaking about.
      5. Acts 8:34–39: “And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.”

6. God was in the minute details of an Ethiopian slave who did not understand the scroll of Isaiah.
- iii. The Centurion.
1. Do you remember a Roman centurion who stopped worshipping Caesar and began worshipping God? We must recognize the seriousness of Cornelius' decision to worship God.
  2. Centurions were usually wise, well-disciplined leaders who could control their soldiers.<sup>1</sup>
    - a. In Matthew 8 and 9, a centurion assumes that Jesus can heal from a distance.
    - b. In Matthew 27, a centurion admitted Jesus was the Son of God.
    - c. In Acts 22, a centurion stops soldiers from beating Paul.
    - d. In Acts 23, a centurion foils an assassination attempt against Paul.
    - e. In Acts 27, a centurion listens to Paul and saves the doomed ship's crew, passengers, and prisoners.
  3. Acts 10:2: "a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God."
  4. God sent him a vision and an angel to tell him to send for Peter, who was in Joppa.
  5. Acts 10:44–48: "While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days."
  6. God was in the minute details of a Roman centurion.
- c. We can be assured God is in the details of our lives, touching every heart.
3. Healing.
- a. "You are here healing every heart."
  - b. We often refer to Jesus as the Great Physician because of His words in Luke.
    - i. Luke 5:31: "And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."
    - ii. This idea of healing means a cleansing of the heart.
    - iii. To purify through ritual cleansing, make clean, declare clean.<sup>2</sup>
    - iv. 1 John 1:7–9: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
  - c. The LORD commissioned Isaiah to speak to Israel.
    - i. Isaiah 6:8–10: "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." And he said, "Go, and say to this people: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bibleref.com/Acts/10/Acts-10-1.html>

<sup>2</sup> William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 488.

- perceive.’ Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”
- ii. Matthew, John, and Luke repeat Isaiah’s words.
    - 1. Matthew 13:15: “For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.”
    - 2. John 12:40: “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”
    - 3. Acts 28:27: “For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.”
  - d. God is in the details of our lives, healing the hearts of those who have turned to Him.
4. Turning.
- a. “You are here turning lives around.”
  - b. Hate is a strong emotion.
    - i. Jesus admonishes us not to let our anger burn against anyone in Matthew 5.
    - ii. Matthew 5:22: “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.”
    - iii. Matthew 5:43–45: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”
  - c. Saul of Tarsus.
    - i. Remember a man who hated Christians.
    - ii. He was so angry, even furious, that he was in charge of Steven’s death.
      - 1. Acts 7:54: “Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him.”
      - 2. Acts 8:3: “But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.”
    - iii. Ravaging means to lay waste, to ruin, or to destroy.<sup>3</sup>
    - iv. Saul was so angry and enraged with Christians that he was arresting them and throwing them in prison.
      - 1. The prisoner often died of malnutrition or disease.
      - 2. Jeremiah 38:7–9: “When Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch who was in the king’s house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern—the king was sitting in the Benjamin Gate— Ebed-melech went from the king’s house and said to the king, “My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they did to Jeremiah the prophet by casting him into the cistern, and he will die there of hunger, for there is no bread left in the city.”

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 604

3. “Prisoners were often fed very little and treated harshly. Old Testament poetic and Wisdom literature contains many outcries about the suffering of the imprisoned.”<sup>4</sup>
  4. Psalm 79:11: “Let the groans of the prisoners come before you; according to your great power, preserve those doomed to die!”
  - v. No one could reason with Saul, but God turned his life around.
    1. God met Saul on his trip to Damascus.
    2. God changed his mind and his life.
    3. Acts 9:20–22: “And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” And all who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?” But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.”
  - d. God was in the details of Saul’s life, turning his life around.
5. Way Maker.
- a. God is a Way Maker, Miracle Worker, Promise Keeper, and Light in the Darkness.
  - b. God is touching our hearts.
  - c. God is healing our hearts.
  - d. God is turning our lives around.

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<sup>4</sup> [Dan Nässelqvist, “Imprisonment,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).]