

# PLAIN SPEECH

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**“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)**

By Scott Parker

## **...AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!**

Let's just admit it: as Christians, we are not immune from unfairly prejudging people. It does happen. Let me illustrate:

- Sometimes we decide ahead of time who is, and who is not, a viable candidate to try and set up a Bible study with. Hey, I have thought, *“I sure would like to talk to that fellow about his soul, but he doesn't seem like the type of person who would be interested.”*
- Sometimes we decide ahead of time who might, and who might not, accept an invitation to an assembly of the saints. Again, I have caught myself thinking: *“She would never be willing to attend.”*
- Sometimes we decide ahead of time who will, and who will not, change when presented with the facts. I have said myself, *“I will share the truth about ‘Issue XYZ’ with that person, but he will never change.”*

Other illustrations could certainly be cited. Now listen, I am in no way suggesting that we should not make righteous judgments about people, for we must (**John 7:24; Matthew 7:16; 1 John 4:1**). What I am saying is this: when we form judgments about people, and decide as judge and jury against their willingness to conform to the truth, before we reach out to them with said truth, we are sinning (**John 7:24**). What's more is that sometimes we would be wrong.

- Consider Abram. He lived in the metropolis of Haran – a city in Mesopotamia (**Genesis 11:31; Acts 7:2**). Had we been there we might have said of Abram: *“He will never be willing to leave all that is convenient and familiar behind him so as to sojourn in a strange land” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**Hebrews 11:8-10**).*
- Consider Moses. He was powerful in Egypt (**Acts 7:22**). Had some of us been there we may have said: *“There is no way this man will ever humble himself; he will never give up his place in Pharaoh's court for a life of service to the Almighty” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**Hebrews 11:24-27**).*
- Consider a water drawer. She was a worldly woman (**John 4:15-18**). A Samaritan, no less (**vs. 7**). Some of us likely would have looked upon her with scorn (**John 4:9**). We might have reasoned, *“This pitiful, poorly cultured woman would never care about spiritual things” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**John 4:19-30; 39-42**).*
- Consider Simon the Zealot. The zealots made up a militant group that was determined to rid Palestine of the Romans by any means necessary. We may have thought: *“Simon will never accept a message of ‘love your enemies’ and ‘submit to the powers that be’” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**Luke 6:13-15**).*
- Consider Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector (**Luke 19:2**). He was rich (**ibid**). Tax collectors were notorious for fleecing folks (**Luke 3:12-13**). We might have deduced: *“There is no way such a man would ever want to learn about Jesus. All he cares about is lining his pockets” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**Luke 19:3-9**).*
- Consider Simon the Sorcerer. He was a charlatan (**Acts 8:9, 11**). He was known for boasting (**Acts 8:9**). Would we have prejudged how Simon would respond to the gospel call? Likely. We might have thought: *“That braggart will never give up his parlor tricks and obey the gospel” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**Acts 8:13**).*
- Consider Simon Peter. He intentionally denied the Lord three times in a row (**Matthew 26:69-75**). Had we been disciples in the first century we might have said: *“That lousy, good for nothing Peter will never be of any use in the kingdom” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**Acts 2:14-41**).*
- Consider Saul of Tarsus. He was a Pharisee (**Philippians 3:5**). He stood happily by as a Christian was murdered (**Acts 7:54-60; 22:20**). He wasted the church (**Galatians 1:13**). He compelled Christians to blaspheme (**Acts 26:11**). He shut up saints in prison (**Acts 26:10**). What if we had been alive in those days? What would we have thought of Saul? I can hear us now: *“This man is a radical sadist; there is absolutely no way he would ever become a Christian” ... **AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG!** (**Acts 9:17-20**).*

How many people are still on the broad way because we have decided that they will never forsake it? Let's stop all the unfair, premature judging.