

WHAT THE APOSTLES SAID ABOUT JESUS

Jesus told His disciples that they would be His witnesses world-wide. Through extensive preaching in their day, and the legacy of Scripture that has been preserved to our day, they have left their unique testimony for all. Wherever they went they preached Jesus as Lord and themselves as servants of the church for Christ's sake.

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." II Corinthians 4:5

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." Acts 5:42

Apostle Paul's first message after his conversion was the person of Jesus. When he went to Corinth he determined to preach nothing but the crucified Jesus.

"Immediately he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." Acts 9:20

"For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." I Corinthians 2:2

This Christ-oriented apostolic message was the center piece of the early church.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts. 2:42

The very essence of the Gospel is the story and the unfolding of the person of Jesus. That is where it begins and that is where it ends, in Him.

"Moreover brethren I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures." I Corinthians 15:1-4

Notice some of the comments the apostles made concerning Jesus:

PETER'S TESTIMONY:

"..He is both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36

"He is the Prince of Life." Acts 3:15

"He is the chief cornerstone." Acts 4:11

"Only through His name can salvation be found." Acts 4:12

"He is the judge of the living and the dead." Acts 10:42

"He is the theme of the Old Testament prophets." Acts 10:43

PAUL'S TESTIMONY

"God was in Christ." II Corinthians 5:19

"He is the Head of everything." Ephesians 1:22

"He is the image of the invisible God." Colossians 1:15

"The fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him." Colossians 2:9

"He is the only mediator between God and man." I Timothy 2:5

"He is God manifest in the flesh." I Timothy 3:16

"He is glory and expressed image of God's person." Hebrews 1:3

JOHN'S TESTIMONY:

"He was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." John 1:1

The message of Jesus through the apostles was the sure foundation of the church. Jesus gave a wavering man named Simon a surname, Peter or Petros, which means a piece of a larger stone. Jesus referred to this new name after Peter had made a good confession concerning who Jesus was. The church would be built upon the large stone, Petra, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Peter, Petros, represented the confessors of this truth. They would be come living stones upon which the kingdom of God would be built.

"Simon Peter answered and said, ' You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

Matthew 16:16-18

"Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." I Peter 2:4,5

THE APOSTLES' SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Little did the uneducated men Jesus chose know just how far reaching their lives would be. Peter, after having confessed that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God, must have been surprised that he would be given the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What a responsibility!

"And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:19

As individuals and together the apostles made up a spiritual foundation upon which the church was to be built.

"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." Ephesians 2:20

Late in his life John had a vision of God's church, the mystical New Jerusalem. There he beheld the names of the twelve apostles as foundation stones of the glorious city. Now that is significance!

"Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Revelation 21:14

The apostles were not being egotistical when they made exclusive claims for the Gospel they proclaimed. They knew there was no other message equal to theirs. They had been with the Master and were witnesses of His resurrection. No other gospel was to be preached.

"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:8

John was very clear about their position. True believers would hear the testimony of the apostles. This would mark the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. The spirit of error would attempt to circumvent the authority of the apostles' doctrine.

"We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." I John 4:6

One of the criterion of the New Testament Canon (the compiling of authentic books) included this test:

Was it written by an apostle or one closely related to an apostle? If this could not be answered in the affirmative then it was rejected. The New Testament is the preservation of the legacy of Jesus and His apostles. It is significant that Paul, who was not an original apostle but authored much of the New Testament, received endorsement from the apostles. Galatians 2:9 Peter recognized Paul's writings as being scripture.

"as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures." II Peter 3:16

APPLICATION

It is vital that our faith be established on the foundation appointed for us by Jesus through His apostles. If we haven't anchored to that time tested rock then we are being deluded. Sincerity will not make up for obedience. Jesus said there would be those who called Him, "Lord" but followed their own way. They were convinced that they were doing right because of all the miraculous signs that they were able to accomplish. Beware when results are your only test of truth. The real test is: Are we in obedience to the Word? If the Jesus and the apostles didn't teach it, I have no business believing it. These simple tests will keep us from being deceived.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom or heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonder in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart form Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" Matthew 7:21-23

THE APOSTLES MIRACLES, SIGNS, AND WONDERS

The Christian faith from the beginning has been accompanied with the demonstration of the power of God. Jesus introduced and trained His disciples in the area of signs, wonders, and miracles. They saw the dead raised, the lepers cleansed, a small food supply multiplied to feed a multitude and many other phenomenal sights. They were commissioned to go out under Jesus' authority and name and announce the kingdom of God to the Jewish people by a demonstration of His power.

"These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them saying,; Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But to rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give."
Matthew 10:5-8

The working of miracles made the Jewish people ever more accountable for their outright rejection of Jesus.

"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me: but if I do though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." Therefore they sought again to seize Him but He escaped out of their hand." John 10:37-39

Jesus told His disciples that they and all true believers would do even greater things as they bore witness of his soon to be resurrection and ascension into heaven.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also, and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." John 14:12

The baptism of the Holy Spirit would be the means whereby the disciples would receive the faith and power to access this miraculous dimension.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
Acts 1:8

The Book of Acts is a record of the actions of the Apostles. It is replete with miraculous signs and wonders. Consider this sketchy summary of extra ordinary events.

Speaking in Tongues 2:6-8 Miracles by the Apostles 2:43 Lame man healed 3:6,7

Shaking of the Place of Prayer 4:31 Death of Ananias and Sapphira 5:5,10

Mass Healing's 5:15,16 The Apostles Released From Prison By An Angel 5:17-20

Stephen's Ministry 6:8 Philip at Samaria 8:5-8 Philip's Translation 8:39

Aeneas Healed 9:34 Dorcus Raised from the Dead 9:40,41,

Peter Released from Prison by an Angel 12:6-10 Elymas Smitten with Blindness 13:9-11

At Iconium 14:3 Crippled Healed 14:8-10, Sorceress Delivered 16:16-18

Prison Opened Again 16:25,26 Unusual Miracles 19:11,12 No Harm Snake Bite 28:5,6

Publius' Father is Healed 28:8.

Miracles were used to first of all to signify the Lordship of Jesus, that He is the Son of God. They were also used to show the authority he vested in the Apostles.

"Men of Israel, hear these word: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know.."
Acts 2:22

"Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." II Corinthian 12:12

Signs and wonders are not used to satisfied the curious or to promote a persons wealth. Misused they can lead people to believe a lie.

"The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved." II Thessalonians 2:9,10

The Gospel (the message of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus) is certified as truth by the signs that follow it.

"And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen." Mark 16:20

"how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" Hebrews 2:3,4

We can have the utmost confidence in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For it is the power of God unto salvation. As long as the Gospel is preached with power, miracles in some measure will happen. Let us join the New Testament Church in their prayer:

"Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." Acts 4:29,30

THE APOSTLES AND THE HARVEST

The ministry of Jesus forever changed the world. He brought the kingdom of heaven to earth. In a few short years he scattered the seeds of the imperishable Gospel throughout the Middle East. His teaching had impregnated the minds of multitudes with eternal truth never heard before. That Word would produce an eventual effect somewhere sometime. The book of Acts is simply a sequel to the work begun by Jesus. Please notice the introduction to the book.

"The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach."
Acts 1:1

Jesus had informed his disciples/apostles that there was a harvest that was due to the efforts of others of which they, the apostles, would be the reapers.

"For in this the saying is true; 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."
John 4:37,38

God uses the human instrument to sow the Word of God and to nurture its growth in the hearts of people, but only He can give the abundant increase. Paul was well aware of this.

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase." I Corinthians 3:6,7

The writer of the Book of Acts attributed the growth of the church to the Lord himself.

"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:47

Notice the phenomenal ingathering's recorded in the Book of Act as Jesus worked through His apostles.

Acts 2:41 3,000 were added to the church on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:47 There was a daily addition of converts to the church.

Acts 4:4 A census of 5,000 male believers.

Acts 5:14 Multitudes of both men and women believed.
Acts 6:1 The number of the disciples was multiplying.
Acts 6:7 The number of disciples multiplied greatly with many priests who became obedient to the faith.
Acts 8:6 Multitudes in Samaria believed with one accord.
Acts 11:24 A great many people were added to the Lord at Antioch.
Acts 13:43-45 Many the whole city..the multitude.
Acts 14:1 Great multitude both of Jews and Greeks.
Acts 17:4 Great multitude of devout Greeks, and not a few leading women of Thessalonica.
Acts 17:12 Many Jews not a few Greeks. . . prominent women and men of Berea.
Acts 18:9,10 many people in the city of Corinth.
Acts 19:18,19 many at Ephesus.
Acts 21:20 Myriads (thousands) of believers in the city of Jerusalem.

This same Gospel has been preached for centuries around the earth by faithful servants of our Lord. Because of this obedience to the Great Commission, there is bound to be a great harvest. A great ingathering is taking place in various parts of the world today. There is a great need for those who will harvest.

"Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'"
Matthew 9:37,38

It is our privilege as it was the Apostles to, at various times and places, both sow and to reap. Let us not grow weary in our labors. Our work is not in vain. The Word of God will accomplish its designated purpose. Someday there will be a final gathering of all the saints of all the ages and from every race of people. What a gathering that is going to be! We will want to be there, and to have been instrumental in others being there also.

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" Revelation 7:9,10

[CHRIST CHURCH, POCATELLO](#) – BIBLE STUDIES

Pocatello, Idaho

1245 N Arthur - 83202

PASTOR, STEPHEN R. YADON