

## CHRIST - The MESSAGE

### **SPECIALIZATION ..... A FOCUS ON A SPECIFIC PART**

We live in the days of specialization. We consult one doctor for our eye issues, a different one for our cancer, another for skin disorders, another for surgery, another for pregnancy, and so on. You get the picture. Each treats, diagnoses, and pre-scribes for their area of expertise.

The whole human body has been broken down into areas of specialization to facilitate man's need for better health. Each medical professional has studied extensively a part of the body. If all the parts of the human anatomy and physiology were totaled together, the sum would be a human. Although the sum would be a human form, ... yet that form would be less than a person.

The human may be separated into parts, yet we are more than the sum of our parts. Studying the parts of a thing helps us to humanly gain valuable information to understanding it. But, focusing on the parts, even all of the parts; ...is still less than the whole. The whole is more than the sum of its parts.

When you hear the phrase, "I love you" , to which part of that person was this addressed? The last time you told someone ... "I love you" , which part of that person were you speaking to? You probably were not even thinking about it on that level. You rarely ever hear someone say, I love your right eyeball or I love your left nostril.

***Preaching in Christianity may have deteriorated into the Preaching of Specialization.*** Today, sermons often target parts of Christ, rather than Christ himself. Sermons target the beatitudes, parables, miracles, healings, prophecy, blessings, faith, blood, power, anointing, second coming, endtime, sanctification, justification, victory, forgiveness, repentance, holiness, baptisms, overcoming, gifts, baptism of the Holy Ghost, Pentecost, Passover, etc ..... Each of these, no doubt does a valuable service for the listeners in targeting their specialized spiritual needs. But, it somehow misses Christ Jesus.

Could it be that much preaching and teaching today focuses on the parts of Christ, rather than on Christ?

Could disciples be coming to church gatherings for a special part of Christ they need, ...rather than Christ himself?

Could it be that we love His Power, more than we love him?

Could believers be like a child who climbs upon their parent's lap with hugs and kisses, while the parent knows all the time they are there for something other than just being with the mom or dad?

Could it be that people have been un-knowingly enticed to follow Christ for the loaves & fishes?

Could it be that much of our efforts are about getting in touch with Christ's Stuff, ....rather than in touch with Christ Jesus himself?

### **RESULTS OF MINISTRY ....or.... THE MINISTRY**

Am I making the main thing the main thing? It could be possible that we are preaching the ***Results of the Ministry of Christ Jesus*** rather than the ***Ministry of Jesus Christ***.

The 1<sup>st</sup> sermon recorded after Jesus ascended on high, focused on ***preaching Jesus Christ***, not the stuff of Christ or what Christ brings to the table, so to speak. Acts 2 speaks of unity, wind, fire, tongues, and spiritual utterance of the wonderful works of God. As Peter began to preach that day, he did not speak of unity, nor of tongues, nor fire, or wind. He preached Jesus of Nazareth crucified and resurrected. The sermon included scriptural support in “***This is That***” which Joel spoke and witnessed by David; ...that Christ Jesus was baptizing with the Holy Ghost; ...that this same Jesus had been crucified, but was now risen and exalted as both Lord & Christ.

The ***results of the preaching of Jesus Christ*** came about when the listeners asked ... “*What shall we do?*” The sermon focus was on Christ Jesus. The response and result of the sermon was what they should do now that they believed the sermon. Repentance, water baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and abiding in the apostles doctrine was their response and results to the preaching of Jesus Christ. The message was Christ. The results of the message were miracles of salvation, deliverance, and healing.

### **CHRIST WAS ALWAYS ....THE MESSAGE**

When Phillip entered into Samaria in Acts 8, *he preached Christ*, the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ. The results of Phillip’s preaching of Christ was miracles, healings, water baptisms, and later after Peter & John came, ... the results were receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost. But, The message was Christ.

After Phillip had spent a little time in the Ethiopian Eunuch’s chariot *preaching Jesus to him*, which began in Isaiah; ....the Eunuch’s faith response was ... “here is some water is there anything to hinder baptism for me”. Phillip said not if you believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God. Again, ...The message was Christ Jesus.

As Peter stood in the house of Cornelius that day in Antioch; *Peter preached Jesus Christ* to the hearers. He preached.... How God was with Christ, ....how God anointed Jesus Christ, who the Jews crucified but he resurrected the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. He preached that faith in Christ’s name would remitt sins.

That day their believing response to Peter’s message brought the almost immediate result of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave utterance...; just as it had on the day of Pentecost previously in Jerusalem. Christ was the message.

*Paul’s message was the Lord Jesus Christ* to the Jailer of Phillipi in Acts 16. Their faith response to the message was baptism even though it was past mid-night. Christ was the message.

Later, when Paul’s evangelistic party came upon believers in Ephesus, he realized he needed to ask them a question. He asked if they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed? Their response to his question was; ...we don’t know anything about it. Paul inquired about their baptism into this way. When the Ephesus believers responded that they came in under John the Baptist’s baptism; *Paul immediately began to tell them about Jesus Christ*. Their response was water baptism in Christ’s name and prayerful laying on of hands brought the gift of the Holy Ghost to these believers, just as it earlier came to other believers. Christ Jesus was the message.

Dear Lord Jesus help us to preach the fullness of you.

In Psalms we hear the prophet say, If *the foundations be destroyed what will the righteous do..?* CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION! Christ’s stuff is not the foundation! I am not being dis-respectful. But there is ....No other foundation can be laid. The foundation of the good news gospel is not

Christ's parables, or faith for miracles, or Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> second coming, or endtime prophecy ..... the list could go on.... *The foundation of the good news is Christ Jesus! It is Him!*

IT IS ALL ABOUT HIM. I don't know if I comprehend it. But I want to do a better job glorifying Jesus.

The ministry of Jesus Christ was spoken to the prophet Isaiah, and hundreds of years later, one day in Nazareth, Jesus made it obvious that Isaiah 61 applied to him and to his ministry ....

*Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;*

*Isa 61:2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;*

*Isa 61:3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*

Where ever Jesus is preached there will always be a preaching of the good news to the poor, a healing of the brokenhearted, a preaching of deliverance to those held captive by the rulers of darkness, the giving of sight to the blind, and setting at liberty those who have been bruised. It is the acceptable year of the Lord. The ministry of Jesus Christ.

This ministry of Christ is Defined in Acts over 25 times in the expression as....*speaking or preaaching .... the Word, ..the Word of God, ..the Word of the Lord, ..the Word of the Lord Jesus, ..the Word of the Gospel, ..the Word of His Grace.*

The focus was God's Grace, Salvation, Christ's Coming, Suffering, Dying, Resurrection, Christ's Kingdom, *the words of this life ...Acts 5:20..., a preaching of Jesus Christ.*

### **TAKE NOTE OF THE PREACHING IN ACTS :**

#### **ACTS 2:14-40 Pentecost : The Coming of the Kingdom**

Preached Joel's Prophecy, (14-21) David's Prophecy (25-31)

V22. Jesus of Nazareth, man, slain, raised, resurrection, v32-36)

Jesus Exalted, given a Holy Ghost Kingdom, made Lord & Christ

#### **ACTS 3:12-26 Lame Man's Miracle at the Temple**

Not us, God's Son Jesus healed him, Christ should suffer,Repent....

#### **ACTS 4:8-12, 19-20, Disciples Before the High Priest**

By the Name of Jesus Christ, head of the corner, no other name, boldness,...

#### **DISCIPLES PRAYER IN FACE OF OPPOSITION 4:29-31**

Grant to us boldness to speak your word, stretch forth hand to heal, Do signs and wonders in the name of thy Holy Child Jesus, Place shaken, filled with Holy Ghost, spoke Word of God Boldly.

#### **Acts 5:29-32 Disciples Before the High Priest & Council**

Obey God, God Raised Jesus who you killed, Jesus exalted as Prince, Savior, unto Repentance, We & Holy Ghost witnesses

#### **Acts 5:42 Daily in the Temple & Every House.....Cease not to Teach & Preach Jesus Christ**

**Acts 7:2- 56 Stephen's Message Before the Council & Elders**

Israel's History, A Prophet Like Unto Moses.v37, Just like your Fathers, Resist Holy Ghost, Coming of the Just One who you betrayed & murdered, I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God

**Acts 8:5,12 Phillip's Preaching in Samaria**

Preached Christ, the name of Jesus Christ, the things of the Kingdom of God,

**Acts 8:35 Phillip & the Ethiopian Eunuch.....Preached Jesus****Acts 9:20,22,27 Paul's Preaching in Damascus**

Preached Christ is the Son of God, proving He is Christ, boldly the Name of Jesus

**Acts 10:6,34-43 Peter's Preaching to House of Cornelius (As I began to Speak ...11:15)**

Told them what to do, God No Respecter, God Anointed Jesus with Holy Ghost, Doing Good, Healing those oppressed of the Devil, Crucified, & Raised the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, We are witnesses ate & drank with him, All prophets give witness to him, whosoever believes receives remission of sins.

**Acts 13:16-49 Paul's Preaching in Antioch**

Of David's Seed God has raised a Savior to Israel, Savior Jesus, who John preached would come, crucified him, in a tomb, raised the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, promise made to our fathers fulfilled in raising Jesus, this day have I begotten thee, Holy one did not see corruption, thru this man is preached forgiveness of sins, Beware .... (Jews rejected him, Gentiles believed & received him)

**Acts 14:7-10,21-22 Preaching in Lystra, Iconium, Antioch**

Preached the gospel, (lame man healed) exhorting them to continue in the faith, thru much tribulation(pressure) we enter the Kingdom of God.

**Acts 16:31-32 Paul & Silas to the Phillipian Jailer .....Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ****Acts 17:2-3 Preaching & Reasoning the Scriptures in Thessalonica**

Alleging Christ must suffer & die, be raised from the dead, this Jesus is Christ

**Acts 17:22 Paul's Preaching at Mars Hill, Athens**

Preached the unknown God who made the world, Lord of Heaven & Earth, not worshipped with Men's hands, all men everywhere should seek Lord, commanded all to repent, judge world by an ordained man who was raised from the dead

**Acts 19:2,4,8 Paul's Preaching at Ephesus**

?? Asked a question ... Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed??

John said they should believe on him that would come after him .... Christ Jesus.

3 months Persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God

Acts 20:20,21 Taught you publicly, house to house, to Jews & Greeks, Repentance toward God, Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ

Acts 20:25 Gone Preaching the Kingdom of God

Acts 20:35 That laboring you ought to support the weak, Jesus said It is more blessed to give than to receive.

**Acts 26:23 ... Before Governor Festus (you're mad) & King Agrippa (almost persuade me)**

Christ (Jesus) should suffer & rise from the dead, show light to the people & the gentiles

**Acts 28:23 Paul in Rome under House Arrest**

He expounded & testified the Kingdom of God, persuading about Jesus

**Acts 28:31 Preaching the Kingdom of God & the Lord Jesus Christ.**