

~A Bible Study~

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS FOR US TODAY

Jesus said, *"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples"*. (John 8:31)

Jesus is still calling people to follow Him today!

What does it mean to follow Jesus?

After dying on the cross to pay for our sins and then rising again, and before ascending to heaven where He now awaits for His second coming, Jesus instructed the Apostles to go and make disciples by *"baptizing them ... and teaching them to observe all I have taught you ..."* (Matthew 28:19,20)

Do you realize that you and I have access to the very words of Jesus in our day?! I'm not just talking about the *words in red* in your *"red letter edition"* of the New Testament.

Jesus said of His own words, *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."* (Matthew 24:35).

Some people overlook the fact that the Apostles were promised by Christ that the Holy Spirit would give them a special ability to remember what He had said and done, that He would lead them into all truth, even giving them the ability to foresee the future (John 14:25,26; 16:12-15).

These special abilities would enable them to do what they were commissioned to do, to be the official witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 24:44-48; Acts 1:1-11,21,22; 13:30,31). Which would also entail teaching people all that Christ had taught them (Matthew 28:20; Acts 2:40-42). Not only did they understand their role, but they excelled in it (Acts 2:32; 10:39-43; 26:16; 1 Peter 5:1; 2 Peter 1:16-18)

God also authenticated these Apostles with special signs and wonders just as He had authenticated the Prophets who brought us the Old Testament. (Luke 16:19-31 esp. 27-31; Acts 3:1 - 4:31; 5:12-16; Ephesians 2:20; Hebrews 2:1-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12).

It should be noted that these faithful witnesses went to their deaths early for refusing to recant their testimonies and were relentless in their commitment to Jesus Christ as the risen Savior of the world. Their testimony in this regard was simple, *"We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."* (Acts 4:20).

Christ prayed for those who would believe the gospel based on the testimony of His chosen Apostles (John 17:20) and this is exactly what we see happening in the history of the early church (Acts 2:40-42).

Today, Christ is ascended and the Apostles are gone, but we have their inspired testimony in the form of the New Testament (Luke 1:1-4).

Each of the books of the New Testament were written, either by an Apostle, or someone closely identified with an Apostle and subject to their supervision.

It is very important that you and I develop an appreciation for just what **the New Testament is. According to the promise of Christ, it is the authorized (by Christ) and inspired (by the Holy Spirit) revelation of Christ and His Word and His Works. As such, it is the accurate and essential record of the very teachings of Jesus for us today.**

And to think that **you and I can hold it in our hands** and are blessed to be able to read and respond!

Jesus pronounced a special blessing upon us who would believe without the opportunity of seeing for ourselves (John 20:29). This is accomplished through the inspired testimony of the chosen Apostles - the 27 books of the New Testament.

The Apostle John has written, "*Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.*" (John 20:30,31).

Even though, Jesus has ascended to heaven, we can still follow Him. We can still follow His teachings and His example. We can still submit to His authority over our lives.

And so, as you pick up the Bible, don't just look for the words in red. It is all His Word.

God has put His Truth in our hands! May we allow Him now to put it **in our hearts.**

Steve Adams, Pastor