

TRUE DISCIPLESHIP MEANS MISSION

A disciple according to the definition of the word is one who is a learner. A disciple never presumes to know it all. He takes a humble position before his teacher. He is in the position of learning. He is always open to further instruction.

This is very interesting, especially when we think of how Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16 that He was going to build His church. After Peter made that supreme confession, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” then Jesus said, “I will build my church.”

Now the question is how will He build His church? We know from the account of creation in the book of Genesis that God spoke things into being, from nothing. He created light out of nothing. He created a world out of nothing. So He could speak the church into existence and behold there it would be.

But God has chosen to build the church through Jesus Christ another way. We may call that way by delegation. Even so He is going to use speech. It is to be by proclamation. God has decreed that believers should be proclaimers. The Gospel message has been brought to the world in exactly that way, from the very beginning. Yes, God has decreed that disciples should be proclaimers. And the message is Good News. The mission is set forth in **Acts 1:1-11**.

- 1. The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,*
- 2. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:*
- 3. To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and*

speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4. And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7. And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

From these verses in Acts, God has laid down those **FUNDAMENTALS** upon which the disciple's mission must rest. By disciple's mission I refer to Christians today. I hope that you are a Christian, a believer, a disciple, a follower of Jesus, a learner. If you are, then I want you with me to get caught up that **TRUE DISCIPLESHIP MEANS MISSION**.

THE PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION define the first fundamental upon which our mission must rest. There can be no question about it, the death of Jesus Christ is absolutely essential. It is referred to in this text as His passion, the suffering He endured. There was

the suffering of the garden. There was the suffering of the trial before the high priest and before Pilate. There was the suffering of the cross.

Probably in our wildest imaginations we can scarcely conceive what the Saviour experienced, whether it be in the garden where He sweat “as it were drops of blood,” or the mockings where the crown of thorns was smashed upon His head and the thongs of the whip lashed upon His back, or the cross where the nails pierced His hands and feet and the spear His side. In our most sanctified imagination we can scarcely conceive of the suffering, the passion of our Lord. But His death was absolutely essential.

The Saviour was born to die, differently than any other man. His resurrection was also a necessity. We are informed in this text that for forty days He showed Himself alive to the disciples by many infallible proofs. The resurrection is supremely necessary, for if He did not rise then our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins.

Salvation rests upon this fact. The Scripture tells us there were forty days of evidence, forty days of teaching. Some scholars debate that He wasn't really dead. Some say He revived in the tomb, therefore it is not a resurrection. Others say that when the disciples and women came to the tomb they mistook the tomb and came to the wrong one.

Here is a fundamental upon which our mission must rest: the infallible proofs of the resurrection. These are historical points that cannot be pushed aside. They are irrefutable evidence. The proofs of the resurrection are one of the fundamentals upon which the disciple rests his mission.

THE POWER OF THE REGIMENT undergirds the disciples commission. I'm using this advisedly because the disciples became that regiment to carry the banner in the march with the orders to take the kingdom. I didn't say to build it; I said to take the kingdom.

Jesus told them order was very important. They must take their orders from the Captain, and He issued them. He said, “Wait for the promise of the Father.” It's important to get the right order of action. So you wait for the promise of the power; “You wait for the promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit,” He told them.

Now it was in their minds that they were not only to take the king-

dom, but they were waiting for the establishment of the kingdom, so they raised the question with Him, “Is this the time when you’re going to restore the kingdom again to Israel? Are we kingdom builders?” And Jesus told them that only the Father knows that for those are matters that the Father has in His authority.

“But what you will receive,” He said, “is the dynamite of the power of the Holy Spirit”. The power of the Holy Spirit will come upon you. You will receive that kind of power once the Holy Spirit has come upon you. “And you shall be witnesses unto me.”

Let me point out to you in that powerful text the fact that here is a point of time: after the Holy Spirit has come upon you, then you will have the dynamite of God’s power. It is God’s timing.

There is also a point in terms. “You shall be witnesses”. Oh, my friend, we don’t have any options. We have no other alternatives. Jesus said, “Once you have received the power you will then be my witnesses, witnesses unto me.”

Yes, some debate the function of this power in various ways. Some insist that the function of the power is simply to be able to speak in ecstatic tongues. Some argue for one aspect or another. Let me urge you to understand that our mission must rest upon this fundamental power of the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is an irresistible power, the dynamite of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses unto Christ.

THE PROMISE OF THE RETURN fills the disciple’s mission with joy. I always rejoice when I come to this part of this text in the Acts of the Apostles. I want you to see how essential, how vital the ascension is. He went back to glory. Without the ascension the resurrection is pointless, because had He stayed here He could not have fulfilled the role of our intercessor at the right hand of God. Without the ascension the second coming is groundless because He would have been here. But He went back to glory.

We speak of the first advent and the second advent. The first advent was when He came from heaven to earth in the form of a baby. The second advent is when He will come as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The ascension is vital to this.

So the return is verified because of His departure. Those two who

stood by the disciples on the Mount of Olives said, “This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.” So it’s His departure, as He went up. He had a delegation there to announce His return, the two men, and their declaration was this same Jesus. So His return is verified.

Now, my friend, our mission must rest upon this fundamental promise, the promise of His return. What an inspiration this is to us. He is coming back!

As disciples we have a glorious mission--to declare the Good News. It is that mission we must solidly base our faith and actions on these fundamentals: the proofs of His resurrection, the power of His regiment, and the promise of His return.

Therefore, friend, it is very important for you and me to give ourselves to Jesus Christ. It is important for us to be like clay in the potter’s hand. We must be able to say, “Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way.”

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