**Cross And Crown Christian Outreach**

[www.crossandcrownchristianministry.org](http://www.crossandcrownchristianministry.org)

8th April 2021

**Do You Believe Him?**

**While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”** - Lk. 24:36 NIV

Jesus Christ had just revealed himself to Cleopas and his friend, both of whom had invited him into their home for a meal and overnight rest, but after his disappearance from their midst (Lk. 24:13-35), he showed up in the midst of the Disciples who, according to the foundation scripture for today’s devotional, were gathered still discussing the mystery behind his death and his resurrection, probably wondering how much of truth lies in the whole story, but definitely disturbed and worried about the whole scenario. On appearing, he wished peace upon them but rather than have peace, they became startled and frightened believing they had seen a ghost – Lk. 24:36-37. In his attempt to convince them that he was not a ghost, he asked them to feel him reminding them that a ghost does not have flesh or bones. To further convince them that he was real, he asked that he be served a meal which he ate in their presence. He went further reminding them of all he had told them before his trials and opened their minds to what was written in the scriptures about him, all in a bid to let them believe that it was his real self – Lk. 24:38-49. Although there was no clear report as to whether they eventually believed or not, there was certainly still some elements of doubts amongst them. Some of them could not just bring themselves to believing the fact that anyone could be confirmed dead and buried only for such to come alive again.

If those whom he related with very closely for three and half years, explaining to them things that were happening and exposing them into the knowledge of things to come, who physically visited the tomb and met it empty, who had the opportunity of touching him after his resurrection and saw him eat could still be unbelieving, then one can understand the level of unbelief amongst other people at that time and even the people today with Christians inclusive.

Yes! Christians are included because indeed, like the disciples who never stopped following Jesus Christ yet did not really believe the story of his resurrection, there are many Christians who still entertain doubts about the veracity of that part of the Christian story. Unfortunately, that is the only foundation of the Christian faith – 1Thess. 4:14. There is no Christianity if Jesus did not rise and this remains the final battle that the devil is waging against the kingdom of God. The simple fact remains that whoever does not believe that he died and rose can never benefit from the sacrifice that he made on the cross at Calvary – 1Cor. 15:2-8. The devil did try to stop the resurrection but failed and is now waging a mind war on the average Christian so that such an individual would not be raptured on the last day – Jn. 3:16.

The disciple John who definitely was one those who believed, in his letter to all Christians made it clear that they were not heralding a story that they merely heard, but a story that they were live witnesses of (Jn. 3:11) just as Jesus Christ said that blessed are those who did not see but believed – Jn. 20:29.

The Christian today will be quick to defend him/her self with claims that he/she believes but belief is not in words but in action. Beyond the basic act of baptism and salvation that follows the act of believing, Jesus Christ himself as recorded by Evangelist Mark (Mk. 16:17-18) listed the signs that will associated with those who believe as follows;

1. They will drive out demons in the name of Jesus Christ – Acts 3:6. This is an indication that the one who believes will not be a victim of evil but a victor over evil. So the believing Christian should not be heard confessing how an evil spirit successfully caused a problem in his/her life as it should be clear to such that the real cause is a loss of position as a believer. No real believer can be a victim of the acts of the devil and its agents. If the action of devil seems to have manifested in the life of a true believer, then it would be the Almighty God permitting such to happen for a reason that will eventually glorify His name. The focus in such a situation should still be the Almighty God and never those over-rated agents of the devil. Their actions simply do not have any effect on the true believer. That remains an undisputable fact.
2. They will speak in new tongues. To speak in new tongues in this case is not to babble words that have no clear meaning to those who are listening, after all, the Apostle Paul makes it clear that speaking in tongues will be important when communication is with the spiritual and not with fellow Christians – 1Cor. 14:1-25. Speaking in new tongues here means a complete change in the manner and content of the communication of the believer. Such for example will stop seeing sin as a barrier for success as all sins committed are already nailed to the cross just as the feeling of self condemnation will be absent as such will know that he/she has conferred righteousness – 2Cor. 5:17; Col. 2:13-15. A righteousness that comes from believing and accepting the one that made the sacrifice as Lord and Savior – Rom. 1:17. The walk and talk of the believer is with confidence, not in self, but in the one that provided the Grace, that is the Almighty God and His messiah for man, that is Jesus Christ.
3. They will pick up snakes in their hands and it will not hurt them. The believer cannot be hurt by people with snake-like character. Adam and Eve were successfully deceived by the devil using the snake whom the Bible described as the being more crafty than any of the wild animals but the believer cannot be a victim of such deceitful people, no matter how close they may be – Gen. 3:1. There is an acquired wisdom that elevates the believer above such craftiness and makes it possible for the believer not to be a victim of hypocrisy and deception.
4. They will not be hurt when they drink deadly poison. Even where the believer is deceived into ingesting all those toxic doctrines that are sufficient to destroy a soul, there is an acquired immunity that detoxifies such toxic doctrines as grace is made available, such that the believer is not judged for such negative acts. The acts just gets covered and such is deemed to be sinless like he/she never put up the act in the first place – Psa. 32:1-2.
5. They will place hands on sick people and heal them. This seems very clear and direct except to add that the boundary of the healing stretches from the physical and more into the spiritual. Just as the Israelites wrongly thought that the kingdom of Jesus Christ was earthly, likewise the Christian today seems to have limited the healing in reference here to healing of human medical conditions. As true as this may be, the Christian should expect more of spiritual healing than the physical. Physical healing is more about the body which will return to dust anyway (Gen. 3:19) but the spiritual healing is about the soul which remains the central interests of the Almighty God and Jesus Christ. The believing Christian should carry sufficient healing words to spiritually comfort all those who are spiritually sick. That is what will indicate that he/she is a believer. The Bible says that all those that came to him in the evening came with different ailment but they all went home happy (Matt. 4:24; 40), not necessarily because the physical ailment was removed but possibly because they were made to see a life better than the one that they are struggling to hold on to. That is what should happen to all that meet the believer. They should leave the presence of the believer happy.

There is a huge responsibility on the Christian today to not only by words, confess their belief in the work that was done on the cross, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ but to confirm same also by their actions, as that is what will indicate that such actually believes in the resurrection of the dead. There will indeed be a resurrection of the dead, some into eternal peace and some to eternal damnation – Dan. 12:2. That is what the whole work of salvation is all about and that is what the Christian should represent. Awareness of this and the need to avoid eternal damnation is the key message of God and his Christ to the world – Matt. 3:7-9. Position yourself as an efficient herald and representative of this message just as John the Baptist was. May God use us to take back to himself, a world that He created for His glory but which the devil is battling to retain for himself in Jesus name. Amen.