
Miracles have always been God's means proving his divine messengers. Nicodemus was not the only Jew who understood Jesus had come from God, "for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him" (Jn. 3:2; Acts 10:38). When the Jews confronted Jesus saying, "'Tell us plainly if you are the Christ,' Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me'" (Jn. 10:25; See also, Jn. 10:37-38; 15:24).

When the apostles preached Jesus as the Son of God, they reminded their audiences that they had seen the miracles Jesus performed and that this proved Jesus' identity. Peter reminded the Jews on Pentecost, "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know" (Acts 2:22; See also Acts 10:38).

Jesus' miracles were not "done in a corner" (Acts 26:26), but done openly and publicly, often before thousands. Even Jesus' enemies could not deny the miracles he performed. Jesus' miracles were God's divine testimony of Jesus' identity.

If Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch, he must have told him of his miracles. When John the baptist sent his disciples to Jesus to ask if he was "He that should come?" Jesus' answer was to show them many miracles. Then he told them, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached" (Lk. 7:20-22). The Ethiopian believed Jesus was the Son of God because of the evidence of Jesus' miracles.

The Witness of the Resurrection

The greatest witness of Jesus is his resurrection from the dead. When the Jews demanded a divine sign of Jesus' authority, Jesus pointed to his resurrection, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up ... he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said" (Jn. 2:19-22).

The resurrection was not a conspiratorial afterthought of a failed revolt. Jesus' first public promise of his resurrection came at the beginning of his public ministry. He spoke often of this "sign" throughout the three years he publicly taught (Mt. 16:21; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; Mk. 9:10; Lk. 9:22-23).

Jesus' resurrection from the dead was the premier evidence used by the apostles and the focal point of their sermons. Peter preached, "This Jesus

hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32; See also, 2:23-31; 3:15, 26; 10:40-41). Paul preached, "But God raised him from the dead" (Acts 13:30; See also, 13:34-37; 17:31). Paul explained Jesus was "...declared to be the Son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4).

Philip could not have preached Jesus and failed to tell of the greatest proof that Jesus was truly the Son of God. The very passage the eunuch was reading foretold of the Christ's death (Acts 8:32-33). Philip told of Jesus' cruel tortuous public death on the cross. He spoke of Jesus' burial in a sealed and guarded tomb. Philip described how on the third day the tomb was emptied and a glorious resurrected Jesus appeared alive to many witnesses.

Philip also told the eunuch of Jesus' command, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15-16). This is evident from the eunuch's express desire to be baptized, "See, here is water, what hinders me from being baptized" (Acts 8:36).

Conclusion

The Ethiopian eunuch had heard the "witnesses." He saw the evidence was clear and convincing. He confessed, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37) and he was "...buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father...(he was raised) also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:4-5).

No other life in ancient history has more historical documentation and evidence, than the life of Jesus of Nazareth. There are over 24,000 ancient manuscripts of the New Testament. The earliest manuscript was written only 25 years after the first century. The testimony within these manuscripts is powerful. Those witnesses who heard, saw and touched the resurrected Jesus (1 Jn. 1:1-3) declared him to be "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2:13).

Believe with your heart and confess with your mouth, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" and obey Him in baptism. Then you too can go on your way rejoicing.

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"And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God'"

Acts 8:37

I Believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God



Wayne Greeson

I Believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God

It was down a dusty road the horse drawn vehicle lurched. One of the riders grabbed for a handhold to brace himself, but he continued speaking intently to the other rider as they both pored over the scroll between them. The afternoon sun blazed down fiercely as the chariot rolled on past barren vistas.

The speaker was a young Jewish man of Jerusalem who had been traveling on foot down to Gaza on the Mediterranean coast. His audience of one was a dark skinned Ethiopian, a royal minister of the queen of Ethiopia, who was returning the long miles home after worshipping at the temple in Jerusalem. The Ethiopian was riding and reading the ancient words of the Jewish prophet, Isaiah, when the young Jewish man ran up and agreed to explain the perplexing text.

A turn in the road revealed a small spring. The Ethiopian had listened carefully to the young man named Philip explain that Isaiah's prophecy and the rest of the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets had been fulfilled. Philip pointed out how one called Jesus of Nazareth had accomplished in his life, death and miraculous resurrection all the Jewish prophecies of old. The young preacher taught one could receive all of God's promised blessings through this Jesus by believing in his name, repenting of one's sins and being baptized for the remission of sins.

As the Ethiopian eyed the glinting reflection of the sun in the water, he turned to Philip and asked, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" The candor of the dark man brought a quick answer from Philip, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The reply came back, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The chariot was halted beside the road and together the two very different men walked down into the cool water. Philip immersed the royal minister in the water and raised him up again. Together they walked out of the water but, as the Ethiopian looked around, Philip was gone. With great joy the eunuch continued his journey home.

Confessing Jesus' Identity

Anyone who desires to be a partaker of the same joy and blessings that the Ethiopian eunuch enjoyed must confess as he did Jesus' identity as the Messiah, the promised Son of God. Jesus proclaimed, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.

10:32). Paul explained this confession is essential to salvation, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

When one confesses Jesus, what is he saying he believes? To confess Jesus is to confess he is the Christ, the Messiah promised by God's prophets (Jn. 9:22). Confessing Jesus means one believes God raised Jesus from the dead to be Lord (Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:9-11). When one confesses Jesus he is confessing Jesus is the Son of God, that he is God (1 Jn. 4:15). One must not only confess Jesus' deity, he must also confess Jesus' humanity that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" (1 Jn. 4:2-3; 2 Jn. 7).

Proving Jesus' Identity

Christians are not only to confess but also prove Jesus' identity to others. Jesus claimed he was the Messiah, the Lord, the Son of God and the Son of Man. But Jesus said that his claim, by itself, was not established. Jesus said, "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true" (Jn. 5:31). One proves the truth of his claims by producing evidence to support his claims. One type of evidence to establish a claim are witnesses who verify the truth of the claim. Under the Law of Moses two or three witnesses established the truth of a matter (See, Deut. 19:15; Jn. 8:17; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19). Jesus established his claims by the proper evidence and he pointed to the many witnesses which proved his identity (Jn. 5:32-47).

Those who proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God did not make unsupported assertions. They preached Jesus to engender faith in those who heard them. This faith was not a leap in the dark, but a faith based upon clear evidence. Believers were urged to "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21) and to "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). What is the evidence? Who are the witnesses?

The Witness of the Scriptures

The Scriptures testify Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus pointed to them as a witness of His identity, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me" (Jn. 5:39). How?

Over 1,000 years the Old Testament Scriptures were written. God's Word foretold of the coming Messiah

through prophecy and type. There are over four hundred direct prophecies of the promised Messiah in the Old Testament. There are also many prophetic "types," persons and things that foreshadowed the life, death and resurrection of the Messiah.

Jesus proved he was the Son of God by fulfilling all the prophecies of the Scriptures concerning the Messiah. Jesus told his disciples, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written *about me* in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms" (Lk. 24:44; See also, Mt. 5:17-18; 26:56; Lk. 4:20-21; 24:27; Jn. 5:39-40, 46-47).

Jesus' apostles also pointed to this evidence (Acts 3:18, 24; 7:52; 10:43; 13:29; 26:22; 28:23; 1 Pet. 1:10). "As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. 'This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,' he said" (Acts 17:2-3).

Some argue Jesus either deliberately or coincidentally fulfilled the prophecies. First, many prophecies Jesus fulfilled were outside any human control such as the manner of his conception (Isa. 7:14), the time of his birth (Gen. 49:10), the place of his birth (Micah 5:2), the manner of his death (Psa. 22:16), etc. Second, one person might fulfill one or maybe two of the prophecies, but the probability of one person fulfilling over 400 prophecies is very nearly impossible.

One writer estimated the probability of one man fulfilling only eight of the prophecies of the Messiah at 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. Let's illustrate this probability. If one had 10¹⁷ silver dollars, they would cover the state of Texas two feet deep. Mark only one of the silver dollars and mix it with all the rest, blindfold a man and give him one opportunity to pick up the right marked silver dollar. Yet Jesus fulfilled all of the prophecies. The Scriptures specify so many details of the person, words and work of Jesus that the only way to reject Jesus as the Son of God is to reject the very Word of God.

The Ethiopian eunuch was reading one of the prophecies of the Christ from Isaiah and Philip "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). He believed and confessed Jesus as the Son of God, because of the witness of the Scriptures.

The Witness of Miracles

Jesus proved he was the Son of God by the miracles he performed. "But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish — the very works that I do — bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me" (Jn. 5:36). Jesus' miracles were the Father's "works" which testified of Jesus.

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