

This Is What I Believe

August 8, 2010

People don't believe much today, but it's important what your pastor believes. He is either feeding your soul with truth or feeding your soul with lies and philosophies. I want to feed your soul with truth.

In **John 11**, Jesus gets word that Lazarus, his friend, has died. He delays, and delay is not denial. Delay does not mean God will not answer your prayer, but God also says no. No is an answer. So Jesus received word that his friend had died, and He delayed going to him.

In **John 11:27**, Martha and Jesus are talking. Her brother is in the tomb, and in **Verse 27** Martha says to Jesus, "Yes, Lord." Those two words are easy to say when everything is going good; but when you're in a battle, "Yes, Lord," is hard to say. When we say yes, we are saying yes to His will, yes to His way. We may not understand it, but we're saying yes.

There are others who won't say yes to the Lord. They will argue. They will get mad, but Martha said, "Yes, Lord." Then she says, "I believe." It is crucial what you believe, and what you believe has nothing to do with your denomination. What is your belief based on? **My belief is based on the Word of God!** I want my faith to be founded on God's Word.

"Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ." The word "Christ" is who the prophets of old had predicted and prophesied would come. The Old Testament is full of prophesies by the men of God that were moved by the Holy Spirit, talking about the Christ. Christ means "the Anointed One." Not just any anointed one. THE Anointed One, the Messiah.

Many Jews today are looking for the Messiah. They are praying for the Messiah to come, but Martha said, "I believe that You are the Christ." She believed that the Messiah had come, and He was standing before her. "I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

In **Acts 8:26-40**, an Ethiopian eunuch was coming back from a trip to Jerusalem, and an angel leads Philip out in the desert. He comes upon this man sitting in a chariot, and he is reading Isaiah. Philip asks the man, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The eunuch says, "How can I unless someone guides me?"

So, he asks Philip to come up and sit with him; and through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, Philip begins to explain the Scriptures. He tells this man about Jesus' birth and His death, and he asks Philip what he must do to be baptized. In **Verse 37**, Philip says, "If you believe with all your heart (trust in, put your faith in what Christ did on the cross), you may (be baptized)."

Then the Ethiopian eunuch says, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." I can't say it enough. It is important what you believe. It is important in Whom you believe. People yawn at that, because we have a lot of head knowledge but not much heart knowledge.

There are a lot of groups out in the world that say they believe in Jesus, and if you're not careful you will get swept up in one of these groups. The Jehovah Witnesses have their belief about Jesus. The Mormons have their belief about whom God is. Muslims believe Jesus was no more than a mortal human being, a prophet and teacher. The Hindus believe that Jesus is one of millions of gods, and the Orthodox Jews have their belief about Jesus. God loves all of these people, but it is crucial what you believe about Jesus.

(1) I Believe in Jesus' Virgin Birth. I believe He was born of a virgin. You can yawn if you want to, but **I believe His birth was a supernatural birth.** In **Isaiah 7:14**, Isaiah predicted, hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, "Behold, the virgin (that was Mary) shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Immanuel means "God with us."

John 1:14 says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

I believe in Jesus' supernatural, virgin birth; because, without a virgin birth, you do not have a sinless, spotless sacrifice. **I believe He had a supernatural conception.** I believe life begins at conception. Can I get a witness?

Joseph knew he had not been with Mary, and he could have had her stoned according to Jewish law, but God sent an angel to Joseph in **Matthew 1:20**. The angel said, "Do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." Jesus was born human but was full of all of the power of the Godhead. That is what I believe.

I believe Jesus' virgin birth is one of the pillars of the church. The virgin birth identifies Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God. If you do not believe in the virgin birth, some would say that is ok, but let's read what it says in **1 John 4:2-3**.

"By this you know the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God; and this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world."

If you do not believe in the virgin birth, that Christ came in the flesh, you have the spirit of the Antichrist. The spirit of the Antichrist is that spirit in our world today that is fighting Jesus. The issue isn't religion. The issue is Jesus. People say they believe in God, but the devil hates Jesus. The battle line has been drawn, and it's all about Jesus. What you believe about Jesus is essential, and there are men in pulpits today that are not saying anything about Jesus.

(2) I Believe in Jesus' Virtuous Life. The word "virtuous" means "pure." I believe Jesus lived a **morally perfect life**, and I don't believe there is anybody in this house who is perfect morally.

Look at what it says in **Luke 1:35** from the Amplified Bible. "Then the angel said to Mary, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you (like a shining cloud), and so the holy (pure, sinless) thing (offspring) which shall be born of you will be called the Son of God.'" **Jesus lived a pure, holy life.**

I believe Jesus lived a life without sin. A report was written in Time Magazine. A group of liberal theologians came together and all came to the conclusion that Jesus sinned somewhere in His life, but I say nay, nay. It is important what you believe. I believe He lived a **sinless life**.

The Bible says that we have all sinned, so none of us have lived a sinless life, but Jesus lived a sinless life. How could that be? He is God! This is truth in a world that is shaking. The Bible says that God is going to shake everything that can be shaken, so that which cannot be shaken will stand, and the only thing that cannot be shaken is the Kingdom of our God!

Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus was tempted in all points as we are. That means He was tempted in every way that we have been tempted. "He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." That means He was tempted to commit adultery. He was tempted to steal. He was tempted to lie. He was tempted in all points, yet He did not sin! I serve a **risen Savior**, and I serve a **sinless Savior**. He is the **sinless, spotless Lamb of God**. That is who He is!

Let me give you two quick scriptures. **1 Peter 2:22** says, "He committed no sin." **1 John 3:5** says, "and in Him there is no sin." I believe Jesus was **sinless**.

(3) I Believe in Jesus' Valid Promises. The word "valid" means "trustworthy, authentic." I believe He keeps His promises. I believe we can trust in His promises. When He says, "If you will confess your sins," He says He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins. **I believe He will do what He promised.** If He says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you," you can hang onto that promise.

A lot of people live by their emotions, by how they feel at the moment. Let me tell you something. There are times in your walk with Christ that you will feel nothing. Some of you have to have this Holy Ghost high, and you go from place to place looking for an emotion; but there will come a time when you won't feel anything, and it is then that you will have to go by what the Word of God says.

The Word of God is what I can lean on and look to in times of trouble, but I believe He said He would never leave me nor forsake me. There are times I have to tell the devil he is a liar. That my God has never left me. If you haven't been there,

you will one day. You cannot trust feelings, because feelings come and feelings go. Feelings are deceiving, but you have to hold onto what you believe.

Some of you abandon Jesus when things don't go your way, but we have brothers and sisters in Christ who are in prison in countries where they are not allowed to preach Jesus. We are blessed in this country, but when the blessing goes away people want to throw in the towel.

Joshua 23:14 (NIV) says, "You know with all your heart and soul that not one of the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled, not one has failed." **Psalm 145:13** (NLT) says, "The Lord always keeps His promises."

Jesus promised, "I came to give you life and that more abundantly." That means He came to give us life to the fullest. I believe that every promise He promised, He has the power and the authority to complete.

(4) I Believe in Jesus' Vast Miracles. I believe His life and everyday ministry was full of miracles. Everywhere He went, something happened. He was around human beings with real needs and problems, and He touched them, healed them, and helped them. Jesus loves people! Even in **John 11:47**, His enemies declared, "This Man certainly performs many miraculous signs."

In **John 20:30**, John says, "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book." So, we are just getting a small glimpse of the vast miracles Jesus performed; but I believe He is just the same today! Anything He did back then, He can do today; because **Hebrews 13:8** says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." It is crucial what you believe.

(5) I Believe in Jesus' Vicarious Atoning Death on the Cross of Calvary. The word "vicarious" means "substitute." I believe He is the sinner's substitute. He paid the price for our sins. We are saved because of His marvelous grace.

Ephesians 2:8 says we have been saved because of God's grace, and we connect to God through faith. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." The only way we could be forgiven was for there to have been a sacrifice, a substitute for our sins. **That substitute was Jesus!**

The animal sacrifices on the altars in the Old Testament were substitutes for peoples' sins, and they had to keep offering those sacrifices year after year; but when Jesus died on the cross, He shouted out something. "It is finished!" That meant there would no longer be any substitutes for sin. He was the **ultimate, final sacrifice**. He paid for my sins and your sins.

You can yawn if you want to, but I believe there was **ONE sacrifice**, and that sacrifice was **Jesus Christ!** I believe the church has lost her appreciation for what Jesus did on the cross, but you are in a church today that believes that He bore our sins and paid the price.

Isaiah 53:4-5 says, "Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; but He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement (the punishment) for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." The only way we could have peace was for God the Father to punish Jesus.

1 Peter 2:21 says, "Christ also suffered for us." **1 Peter 2:24** says, "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree." When He was dying on the cross, He was carrying the sins of the world. The sins of the world were literally upon Him, and when sin was upon Him, the eternal fellowship He had with His Father was separated. We cannot explain or comprehend what that was like; but, for the first time, He had no fellowship with the Father.

(6) I Believe in Jesus' Victorious Resurrection. I believe He was buried when He died. Mary came to the tomb to anoint His body, and the angel said, "Behold, He is not here; He is risen."

I don't know about you, but I believe we have a **risen Savior**. This church has a **living Lord**. Our God is not dead. Our God is alive! He arose with healing in His wings. He said, "I have all power in Heaven and on earth." His name is Jesus! He is a

living Savior!

Death couldn't hold Him, and because death couldn't hold Him, death will not hold you or me! Death is the final enemy, and Jesus defeated the final enemy. He said, "Because I live, you shall live also."

(7) I Believe Jesus is Physically and Visibly Coming Again. No one knows the day nor the hour. Don't believe these date-setters. No one knows when He is coming, but I believe He is on the way. He is coming soon. This earth is beginning to groan for the Second Coming of our Lord.

Philippians 4:5 says, "The Lord is near." He is coming soon. **1 Thessalonians 4:16** says, "For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." The dead in Christ are those who died in the faith, and their newly resurrected bodies will meet their spirits.

Verse 17: "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds." That means your mortal body will be changed into a resurrected body. "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord." What is YOUR ultimate goal in life? I hope it is to be with Jesus.

I've got one last thing to tell you. Look at **Matthew 24:40**. "Two men will be in the field, one will be taken and the other left." **Verse 41:** "Two women will be grinding at the mill, one will be taken and the other left."

Now look at **Luke 17:34**. Jesus says, "There will be two men in one bed, the one will be taken and the other will be left." It's called the Rapture. The ones that are taken are the ones ready to go. Are you ready to go? Jesus is visibly and physically coming back.

Are you ready to go? Don't delay. Don't be left behind. You will be on an earth without a church. You don't want to be here when that happens. Are you ready to go?