

The Whole Message of This Life, Acts 5:17-32

For generations, people have sought “*the meaning of life.*” The answer has been sought from just about every source imaginable. Most people seem to be able to recognize a higher purpose for our existence than mere survival of the species, but are unable to agree beyond that point. Why then are more not looking to the Creator of man, as well as everything known to him and beyond for the answers to the questions of life? It might be easy to say that this failure is due to disbelief in the existence of God. To be sure, this is true of many. But there are many others who profess belief in God's existence, but still seek answers to life's quandaries from *alternative sources*. Why? Perhaps 1Cor.1:21 is the answer. This lesson deals not with the ignorance of man, but rather his education by the inspired word of God- that is, the Spirit's revelation concerning “*the whole message of this life*” as given in Acts 5:30-32. The “*whole message of this life*” is what the angel of the Lord told the apostles to preach. So, the apostles either obeyed and we ought to be able to read this *whole message* here in this text, or they disobeyed and therefore failed to carry out the angel's directive. Which one do you think happened? Let's look and see together.

I. What is “*The Whole Message of this Life*”? What Did the Apostles Preach?

A. The Crucifixion of Christ- v.30b. This proves His Humanity

1. Phil.2:5-8 Examine the contents of this passage closely: Jesus emptied Himself + took the form of bondservant + was made as a man + humbled Himself + was obedient even unto death.
2. Heb.2:9,14-18 He was made like His brethren in all things to make proper propitiation for them, v.17.
3. Rom.8:3-4 He had to be in the likeness of the sinful flesh to be a "perfect" offering for sin to fulfill the requirements of Law.

B. The Resurrection of Christ- v.30a. This proves His Divinity.

1. Notice the early teaching of the apostles and evangelists: Acts 2:24,32; 3:15,26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30,33,34,37; 17:31. Surely we can see the importance of teaching the resurrection of Jesus as proof of His *divinity* as well as that of the Father, Rom.1:4!
2. Rom.10:8-10 Belief in the heart (intellect) + Confession with mouth (to proclaim openly) = Righteousness (which results in salvation)
3. 1Cor.15:1-8 That which was “*of first importance*” in the gospel is that Jesus Christ died and was *resurrected* (note the proof offered by witnesses). That's how important this is!

C. The Exaltation of Christ- v.31a . This proves His Authority :

1. Matt.28:18 Christ, at that point, declares “all authority.” Why here? Why not after His baptism, or even His transfiguration? Christ had been given all authority *because* of His resurrection and imminent ascension. Note the correlation between Jesus' *glorification* and authority:
 - (a) John 7:39 The giving of the Spirit was tied to this “*glorification.*”
 - (b) John 17:1-5 For what is Jesus asking in v.5? Is not this *glorification* a reference to His resurrection and subsequent ascension? (see also Lk.24:25-26)
 - (c) Acts 2:32-36 Note again the connection between the *resurrection/ascension* with the *reception of the promise of the Spirit*. Now note that Jesus is therefore proclaimed as “both Lord and Christ ” being indicative of His *authoritative power*.

II. What Is the Proper Response to this *Whole Message of Life*? What Does it Require ?

A. Obedience is Required- v.29 We must *obey* God! **Acts 4:19** We can and do *disobey* by:

- (a) refusing to do anything, **John 5:38-40; 12:42**
- (b) adding to the word of God, **Rev.22:18**
- (c) taking from the word of God, **Rev.22:19**
- (d) distorting/perverting the word of God, **Gal.1:6-8**
- (e) substituting our wishes for the word of God, **Lev.10:1-2; Isa.5:20-21; Matt.7:21,24**

So, the only real choice is either to Obey or to Disobey this Message of Life!

III. What Does *The Whole Message of Life* It Provide ?

A. Repentance - v.31. But how is repentance "*granted*" ?

Does this mean that God bestows it direct from heaven as a gift to His elect apart from man's active desire and participation? It cannot mean to endow *without* an exercise of man's will for repentance is also an act which is **required** of him, **Acts 3:19** . How can something which is described as his duty be "*granted*" to him?

1. **2Cor.7:10** "*godly sorrow*" (KJV) produces a repentance which results in salvation. What is the source of this sorrow?
2. God, by His will, makes known to man his sin. This knowledge of sin by God's revealed Word, should produce a *godly* sorrow that would lead man to change his actions into conformity with God's will. Thus repentance is *granted* at least in part, by God, **Rom.3:20; 7:7** .

B. Forgiveness - v.31 How so? Continue with the reasoning above:

When man (because of his knowledge of sin gained from understanding God's word) repents and obeys, he is promised forgiveness, **Acts 2:38; 3:19; 1John 1:7-9**

C. Holy Spirit as Witness - v.32 What? How so?

1. Peter, and the other apostles who were speaking to the council, had just told them of the "whole message of this life" that is, of Jesus' death, resurrection, and exaltation. For proof, they offered their own witness as well as that of the Holy Spirit confirming their words with miracles, **Mark 16:20**.
2. If you and I today, will preach the same thing that they proclaimed, we too will have the testimony of the Spirit as witness through the inspired word of God, **Acts 4:13,20 > 8:4 > 11:19 > 2Tim.2:2 !**

Conclusion: You have heard "*The Whole Message of this Life!*"

You have been told of the *Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Exaltation* of Jesus Christ.

That's what you *have* to know for it tells both *Who* and *What* Jesus was and is.

What will you do with it? Will you believe and obey it? Or disbelieve and reject it?

Make your decision now and act accordingly.