

THE REALLY GOOD LIFE

Life of Christ Series

Luke's Gospel

'Teach the Truth in Love'

After a baby is born the main thing he or she needs is 'milk'. Survival, health and growth can only happen if the natural craving for nourishing milk is satisfied immediately. Other things will also be important to human development later on – home, loving parents, pediatric care, etc. – but from the beginning 'milk' is essential for the new life from God. The Holy Spirit through Peter says that the same is true of a spiritual new-born Christian: "*as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious*" (1 Peter 2:2-3). Real thirst to learn and apply God's Word is a spiritual 'vital sign' that salvation has truly been imparted to someone. If there is no natural craving to be *nursed* by the Holy Spirit with divine nourishment, it must be said that a religious miscarriage has happened, not a 'born-again' Christian. The newly imparted life from God within the believer must have a steady diet of verse-by-verse Bible teaching to grow, strengthen and mature in grace. The Holy Spirit *nurses* young believers through those He has enabled with the spiritual gift of teaching until they learn to feed themselves with daily times of prayer, study and meditation (devotions). Teaching is the God-given ability to study, understand and practically apply God's Word to one's life, ministry, vocation and relationships. Although teaching is a unique spiritual gift from God for those He calls to serve in ministry, every believer is obliged to be a teacher in some respect (family devotions, church ministries, sharing the gospel, etc.). Creative, accurate, practical application of the Bible to life is the main purpose of a church (Ephesians 4:11-16). A biblical New Testament church from God primarily exists to be a truth supplier to the church family meeting together for spiritual nourishment.

Christ's concept of the church was never to be religious museum of antiquated traditions and rituals, or a secret spiritual club with cryptic religious language not found in scripture. It is to be the place where believers can be assured of finding teachers who teach the truth in love so they, their families and their friends can grow in grace. When Jesus chose 'the 12' He called them to: **1) be with Him, 2) to teach for Him and 3) to heal broken lives through His power** (Mark 3:13-15). Note that **teaching** was and still is imperative to each purpose of Jesus – teaching of the Bible is the only way to know and be 'with Him' – teaching is the only way we help others see how awesome He is – and teaching is our power source to being used by Him to fix the masses of broken people in this world. Without really good Bible teaching, a church becomes just a religious social club without point or purpose in the sight of God or man. In these 'last days' before the Lord Jesus returns 'teaching the truth in love' is getting very hard to find in churches today (2 Timothy 4:1-4). Thank God for the many excellent teachers at CBF and pray for Him to bless us with more who can *teach the truth in love* to those who come to learn the truth in love, so we can all grow in grace 'til He comes (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

"... Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I've commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen."

Matthew 28:18-20

THE MAKER'S DOZEN

('Apostolic Selection' – Appointing 'the 12')

Luke 6:12-19

Jesus / The Great High Priest

"Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day He called His disciples to Himself, and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles..." 6:12-13

Strict definition of 'apostle' = Acts 1:21-22 (only 'the 12' / later to include Paul)

'Loose' definition of 'apostles of the churches' (2 Corinthians 8:23) = Acts 14:4, Romans 16:7, 1 Thessalonians 2:6

‘Apostolic Succession’

The false teaching that there is an ‘uninterrupted transmission of spiritual authority from the Apostles through successive popes and bishops’ has no biblical reference. This is not only unsubstantiated in the Bible, it is an unnecessary concept since the ‘apostolic age’ ended with the death of the last apostle John around the end of the first century. Even during the first century, ‘apostolic age’ new leaders were being appointed according to scriptural qualifications (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1 & 1 Peter 5) not by personal affiliation with previous church leaders. The new titles were ‘elder’ and ‘deacon, not ‘pope’, ‘archbishops’, ‘cardinals’, etc. The Roman Catholic Church has completely fabricated a list of names between Peter and the first popes in the 7th Century AD to perpetuate this religious hierarchy system to control its members. Scripture calls this system ‘Nicolaitinism’ (niko / power; laos / people = power over the people) and says that the Lord hates it (Revelation 2:6, 15). (Scriptures proving the apostolic era was only for the establishment era of Christianity in the 1st Century – Ephesians 2:20, Revelation 2:2, etc.).

‘The 12’ / Believer-Priests

(Matthew 10:1-4, Mark 3:13-15, Acts 1:12-13)

“...He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: Simon, whom He also named Peter and Andrew his brother, James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.” **6:14-16**

Simon (Peter)	fisherman; most prominent of the apostles (key apostle to Jews / Galatians 2:7-9)
Andrew	fisherman; Simon Peter’s brother (known as one who brought others to Jesus / John 6:8)
James	fisherman; joined Peter and John on Mt. of Transfiguration; first apostle martyred
John	fisherman; James’ brother (called ‘sons of thunder’ by Jesus); NT author; last apostle
Philip	brought Nathaniel to meet Jesus (not the evangelist of Acts)
Bartholomew	(also called Nathanael)
Matthew	(formerly called Levi); tax collector; writer of the first gospel of the NT.
Thomas	(called ‘the twin’ / had a twin brother(?); skeptic who was last to believe Jesus arose
James	(son of Alphaeus) distinguished from son of Zebedee (above) (also ‘the less’ (Mark 15:40)
Simon	(the Zealot) distinguished from Simon Peter (also ‘the Cananite’ (Matthew 10:4, Mark 3:18)
Judas	(son of James) distinguished from Judas Iscariot (also Lebbaeus / Thaddaeus (Matthew 10:3)
Judas Iscariot	(‘man of Kerioth’) the only disciple not from Galilee; betrayer; ‘son of perdition’

Note: The disciples chosen to be apostles were of varying age, background, personality and intellect. The common denominator was that they were committed to the Lord Jesus. They were faithful, available and teachable. None of them was a trained religious leader or clergyman. They were all men, some married and some single. With the exception of Judas Iscariot, they had the call of God upon them to change the world of their day with the gospel message of salvation in Christ. With the exception of the first four on the list the pairings of the disciples seems to change until a final arrangement in Acts 1:12-14. This may have been the Lord’s way of teaching them to learn to work cooperatively with different followers with different personalities and spiritual gifts.

The Crowds / Savior-Seekers

(Matthew 9:35-38, Mark 6:7-12)

“And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples and said...” **6:17-20**

‘came down with them & stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples’

This is the picture of Jesus’ new way of ministry during the Church Age while He is away in heaven:

1. Christ is high up in the heavenly mountain of God interceding for His people on earth
2. He is calling out of His followers leaders through whom He can minister His grace
3. In the Spirit He is present among those who seek to hear His Word and follow Him
4. One day He will physically return with His apostles & disciples to rule and reign

Note: Successful ministries that bless people, miraculously change lives, and achieve spiritual victory happen through Christian leaders who are like Jesus – fervent in prayer, discipleship, and serving others.