

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We trust the reality that God is love (1 John 4:8). Love is other-centered, not self-seeking. The full representation of the love of God came in human flesh through the person of Jesus Christ, who created all things in the universe by the word of His mouth, lived a life of service to humanity and saved us from our sins, our rebellion, our own desire to live without Him. By His death and resurrection we have assurance of a future without pain, hurt and selfishness.

We also trust the ancient scriptures hold the evidence for the story of this passionate God, how He intended the world to be, what happened to get the world in the mess that it is in and if this mess is ever going to end.

Throughout these studies from the books of the bible we will see enough evidence that can give us assurance God loves us deeply, has won the hearts of most of the universe, except for this little planet, but His light is shining on the heart of humanity brighter and brighter each day. As restored followers of Christ, we will also show outwardly how to live a life of other-centered love, helping others in physical, material, emotional and spiritual need.

JOHN 6-8

Chapters 6-8 of John show a battle beginning to emerge between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. Not a literal battle, but a spiritual one. What Jesus said to them was highly contested to the point of them declaring that God in the flesh had a demon.

1) FEEDING THE 5,000 *

John 6:1-15

Christ asked the question to Philip, "Where shall we buy food for all these people?" To test Philip. He responded by saying that not even 200 silver coins * would buy food for so many people.

When the disciples notice that there is no way to move on without God, He brings the miracle. Unfortunately the success was so huge on the material side that people wanted to declare Jesus as King. However, this was not His intention, mainly because a King, to the Jews, meant to fight against Roman oppression, something that was far from Christ's goal.

2) THE BREAD OF LIFE

John 6:25-71

Jesus spiritually linked bread with Himself. Saying in verse 40, "For my Father's will is that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life."

After that, on verses 47 and 50, he associated eternal life with eating the bread of life, and those that would eat it, would never die.

The idea therefore that Christ was speaking literally about eating his flesh and drinking his blood is misleading, since in verse 63 He says, "The words that I told you are spirit and life."

3) THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE WITH THE PHARISEES

John 7:32-52

In these verses we see the climbing hatred against Christ's teachings. The Jewish leaders send guards to arrest Jesus in verse 32. Except that after their encounter with Jesus and hearing the teachings of Christ, the guards returned without Jesus to the Pharisees. They say, in verse 45, "Why did not you bring that man?" 46 They replied, "No one ever spoke like this man!" Even the guards were touched by the words of Jesus. The only ones who didn't were those who had all the scriptures, those leaders

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* 5000 only counting men, as they did back then. If we add also the women and children is quite possible that there would be over 15,000 people.

** 200 silver coins were equivalent to 8 months of work.

who boasted to having been chosen by God to teach the people how to follow His laws. Those who should be the first to accept the teachings of Jesus are those who feel more anger toward Him.

5) THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY

John 8:1-11

While this story is disputed as a story that was not written by John and perhaps did not belong in the Apostle's gospel, there are many interesting factors that make us at least believe that it is true. The fact that the story is about a woman who was forgiven (women were not well seen at the time), that Christ confronted the Pharisees as usual, and the fact that it shows the Pharisees wanted to trap him again, are factors that help us to believe in the veracity of history. Bringing only the woman, the Pharisees were breaking the Law of Moses, which said the man also had to die (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22), but where was the man, as she was caught in the act? Christ consciousness attacked these accusers, and He says in verse 7, "if any of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." And the most beautiful part of the story lies in Jesus' words to the woman, v. 11 "Neither do I condemn you: Go and sin no more."

5) THE INDIGNATION OF THE PEOPLE WITH THE WORDS OF CHRIST

John 8:12-59

Many things were discussed by Jesus, by the Jewish leaders and by the people at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles. His mention that true freedom comes from Him - v. 31, 36, and stating that they were slaves of sin - v. 34, caused people to really offend the Son of God by saying he was a bastard, illegitimate child - v. 41. Jesus, outraged by the lack of faith even said that they were children of the Devil - v. 44. Jesus was even more offended - v.48, and they cried even that he had a demon. And then one of the most striking phrases of Jesus culminated in people's desire to pick up stones to kill him. In verse 58 he says, "- I tell you the truth: before Abraham was born, I Am." Jesus equaled himself to the God of the burning bush. For the Jew, if someone mentions the words "I Am" as God Himself said to Moses, it was a very great blasphemy, so great that they decide to kill him. Unfortunately, they were declaring that God Almighty could not under any circumstances be this man Jesus.

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