

What have we done? Part Two

By

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When was the last time you heard of anything miraculous happening in our churches? Oh yes we all have heard the missionary stories of dramatic things happening in far off places but my question is when did anything like that happen in your local place of worship? Does the shadow of anyone passing over another cause healing like it did when Peter walked by? Stephen's ministry included signs and wonders. Earthquakes were caused simply to release two believers from jail because of their faith. These early believers walked in the freshness of Jesus's love for all and released life wherever they went. Where did all this go?

No more than a couple centuries following the death and resurrection of our Lord, these same people were being hunted down, crucified, and boiled in oil, beheaded and all sorts of cruelties simply because they worshipped the Messiah. They were going against the norm of their day the religious institution of their day. Where did the thousands that responded to the message of the Apostles go? A group of believers that existed as a living and thriving community were being trodden down by organized religion and the institution.

Abraham Herschel in his book "Man's quest for God" wrote this: "Services are conducted with dignity and precision. The rendition of the liturgy is smooth. Everything is present: decorum, voice, ceremony. But one thing is missing: *Life*. One knows in advance what will ensue. There will be no surprises, no adventure of the soul; there will be no sudden outburst of devotion. Nothing is going to happen to the soul. Nothing unpredictable must happen to the person who prays. He will attain no insight into the words he reads, he will attain no new perspective for the life he lives. Our motto is monotony."

Sound like your worship service? Yet Herschel was talking about modern day Jewish services. But sadly that is our worship service of today. A community of believers that sacrificed everything for one another even to the point of sacrificing their lives for each other has been turned into an organized institution of religion. Everything in order everything in its place.

I never enjoyed history growing up. I always thought that what mattered was what happened today not what happened hundreds of years ago. Yet as God allows me to think clearer I have to adopt the same thought process as Paul when he wrote: in 1 Corinthians 10:11 that "all these things happened to them as examples, and *they were written for our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."

So history is important and how we got here is all wrapped up in history. We may not like what we see but it is all part of the "What have we done question". The love for one another was demonstrated daily by the early believers, today in our church's we just talk about the importance of love. Do you think the world noticed the difference?

I ended part one of this series with a prayer, my prayer today is that we rekindle and find the love of the first century again.

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