

Series: Questions asked by the Lord
Title: What Think Ye of Christ?
Text: Mt 22: 42
Date: August 14, 2014
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Tonight, instead of beginning with my text, I want to begin with other scripture, then work our way to the text.

In the New Testament, the first sinner we find drawn to the Lord Jesus for mercy is in Matthew 8.

Matthew 8: 2: And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3: And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

This man had a desperate need. So he came bowed down, humbled, broken, contrite. The first word out of his mouth exalted Christ—“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” He did not say “I will” but “if thou wilt thou can.” True faith in Christ is to believe Christ is able.

Then another man came to Christ.

Matthew 8: 5: And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, 6: And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. 7: And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. 8: The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed...10: When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

This man was a Roman soldier, not a Jew. So this man had not the word of God as did the Jews. He was a Gentile. But he had heard of Christ because faith comes by hearing and he came believing Christ. He was in authority over 100 men—a centurion—but he did not come commanding, he came “beseeching.” This man also exalted Christ in his speech, calling him, “Lord.” He confessed his total inability to help his servant. Then he took his place in the dust, saying, “I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof.” He exalted Christ, believing Christ was able to heal by merely speaking the word. Christ said that he had not found so great faith, not even among those who had the word, not even among those who appeared so outwardly moral and godly. Do you see what Christ delighted in? He delighted in simple, child-like faith in Christ.

Then in Matthew 12, religious men came to Christ.

Matthew 12: 1: At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hundred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. 2: But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.

The Pharisees did what Pharisee’s in our day do, they were always watching others, minding other folks business. In Mark’s gospel, Mark put there statement in the form of question, “Why?” These men were not concerned about Christ. They were not coming with a desperate need. These men were concerned about a day of rest rather the very Rest the day typified; concerned about the law, rather than the end of the law for righteousness to the believer; concerned about sacrifice, rather than obeying God and believing on his Son; concerned about a form of religion, rather than heart -worship of the Redeemer.

Then again, religious men ask another question in verse 10.

Matthew 5: 10: And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.

Their question was not about their need of mercy, not about their unworthiness, but to accuse. Work religionists ask questions, attempt to entangle the Lord's preacher and his people, for the same reasons that the Pharisee's tried to entangle Christ in his words. They attempt to justify themselves before men for not worshipping Christ with his people.

Then in Matthew 15 more religious men come to Christ with more questions.

Matthew 15: 2: Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. 3: Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?... 7: Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8: This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9: But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

These men were not interested in Christ. They had their minds set on making sure others conformed to their church traditions, to the commandments of men. When Christ told these men that it is the heart that defiles a man, these fine religious folks became angry and murdered Christ in their heart. But soon as he left there, Christ shows us a great contrast. At that moment, God the Father drew unto him a Gentile woman in need of mercy. Now notice the great contrast between those religious men with no need and this sinner with great need.

Matthew 15: 22: And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil 24: But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25: Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26: But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. 27: And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28: Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

She came confessing her utter helplessness. The Lord's answer seems harsh but he is showing us the difference between a new heart, broken and contrite by Gods' grace and that of the naturally religious heart of flesh in those Pharisees. Spiritually, this woman was a lost sheep of the spiritual house of Israel. What would the Pharisee's have said at the Lord's answer? Yet, she took her place as a dog dependent upon and content for just a crumb for her Master, Christ the Lord. That is the heart gives his child by his grace.

Then in chapter 19 another question was brought by those fine, whitewashed, formalists.

Matthew 19: 3: The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

Do you see the difference? Each time these vainly religious men come to Christ they come with no thought about Christ, no thought about their sinfulness, no thought about mercy and grace. They come only with questions about law, about man's doings, about form, always ready to debate. That is the natural heart dead in trespasses and in sins. You and I are Pharisee's by nature. There is in every believer's flesh a dead, legal Pharisee. The greatest thing believers have to be on guard against is self-righteousness.

Then in Matthew 20 two more needy sinners come to the Lord.

Matthew 20: 30: And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. 31: And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. 32: And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? 33: They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. 34: So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

When a sinner has been shown his spiritual blindness by the Lord's grace, that sinner is like these blind men, nothing and no one can stop him from crying out to the Lord Jesus for mercy. We have to have the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice, the Lord Jesus "stood still" at the cry for mercy!

Then in Matthew 21, here come more of these great pious, righteous, religious folk—the teachers and leaders. The problem starts in the pulpit. In most places in the scriptures, Christ was most harsh with the teachers.

Matthew 21: 23: And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

The best thing these men could have done was to shut up and listen to the Lord as he taught. Instead, they were only concerned with knowing what seminary Christ had been to and where he got his credentials. Their concern was what elder had given Christ authority for casting the thieves out and for teaching in, what they thought, was the house they lorded over.

They came again in Matthew 22, with more questions.

Matthew 22: 17: Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

Always, these questions are earthy. When the apostle Paul speaks in Romans 8 about the carnal mind only minding the things of the flesh, this is exactly what he is speaking of. Those with only a form of religion in Israel minded only the things of the flesh just as men with only a form in our day mind only the things of the flesh. They had been circumcised into the covenant of works at eight days old but had no idea natural circumcision pictured spiritual circumcision of the heart, by God, by which his child is brought under the everlasting covenant of grace. Their confidence was in the fact they were natural sons of Abraham but they had no idea that the majority of the natural sons of Abraham were not the sons of God, but that only the elect who are brought to believe on Christ are the true sons of Abraham. They really thought they were keeping the law but had no idea the law is spiritual, reaching even to the thoughts and intents of the heart and only fulfilled through faith in Christ—the very one they rejected. The only reason they looked for the Messiah was to deliver them from Roman bondage and establish his kingdom on earth. Their minds were on the things of the flesh. In our day, there are multitudes who call themselves Christians who mind the exact same things.

These religious men even came up with absurd scenarios to question the Lord about.

Matthew 22: 23: The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, 24: Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 25: Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: 26:

Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. 27: And last of all the woman died also.28: Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven?

Vain men ask loads of questions that have no relevance and are totally unimportant. Things like “Who was Cain’s wife?” They could have been asking Wisdom questions that mattered. Yet, here they stood asking Christ about some outlandish scenario. Christ put his finger right on the problem when these kinds of questions are asked. He said, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.”

Now we come to our text.

Matthew 22: 41: While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42: Saying, What...think...ye...of...Christ?

Proposition: There is THE question that we need to be asking ourselves. This is THE issue, “What think ye of Christ?”

Matthew 22: 41: What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The Son of David*. 43: He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, 44: The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? 45: If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? 46: And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.

These men answered quickly. You ever notice how religious folks in our day have all the answers? Oh, to find someone that is teachable! Now, notice their answer, “The Son of David.” Their answer was partly true. Usually, false preachers say a lot of truth. It is often what they leave out that makes their gospel false. The only way they could answer truthfully was to confess that Jesus is God in human flesh, David’s God and the God with whom they must do business.

Subject: What Think Ye of Christ?

Divisions: We will divide the question into two parts.

I. FIRST, WHAT THINK YE...WHAT THOUGHTS ARE IN YOUR HEART...OF CHRIST?

What do you think of Christ? This is not merely what you think in your head. Salvation is not intellectualism. This is a heart matter.

Proverbs 23: 7:...as a man thinketh with his heart so he is.

Matthew 6:21: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Matthew 12: 34...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35: A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

Have you ever really, truly asked yourself this question, “In my own heart, what think I of Christ?” The question is not what others think but what do you think of Christ in your heart? It is not a matter of what your spouse thinks or your children or your mother and father. The answer is not what you’ve memorized from a commentary or a confession of faith or a catechism. What do YOU think of Christ in your heart?

Did you notice the religious men, with all their vain questions, all had one thing in common, they had no need of Christ. They had their systems of doctrine, they thought they knew it all, they had their religious deeds and traditions and forms. What need did they have of this Jesus? But everything they loved was a bad copy of a bad copy of a bad copy. It was all the commandments and traditions of men. They were more concerned with man-made doctrines, man-made church traditions, keeping up appearances and being seen of men.

Christ forbids us to forswear ourselves. We have no power to make one hair white or black. Our life is a vapor. What audacity for church leaders to constrain men to fill out a church covenant saying what men will promise to do! That is works, not grace!

Luke 16: 15: And [Christ] said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Men who treat their family like hell at home, put on their Sunday-face, love to spend a few hours each week talking religion, debating religion, and even fighting over religion. But only a very small remnant are brought by God, to be confronted, with that which is vital—THE ISSUE! Christ himself! Most people are too busy with the smoke screen of vain questions, church order, religious history and religious ceremonies. So it was with those religious men that faced Christ. Their questions were not concerning Christ. They were striving about vain, foolish questions. The Holy Spirit warns us through Paul, saying,

1 Timothy 6:4: He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, : Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

Most let their Jesus save them then move on to practical things. Very few in this world really need Christ. Very few! And the gospel is very, very scarce. Yet, it should come as no surprise that men and women think that Christ's gospel is commonly found everywhere because when Christ walked this earth men thought the Head of the church was common.

Oh, but what a contrast! Did you notice in those sinners who came begging mercy, that they all had a desperate need for Christ? They came confessing their leprosy, their total inability, their blindness, taking their place as dogs, believing on Christ, persuaded he alone was able to save!

What think ye of Christ? Do you think that you really, really have a need of Christ? How desperate is that need?

When a man is starving, he will go where food is. When a man is dying of thirst, given water, he will drink. Do you hunger and thirst after Christ our Righteousness?

Job 23: 12:...I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

John 6: 67: Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68: Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69: And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Christ said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (Jn 6: 63) He said, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me!" (Jn 10: 27) When Christ speaks the Spirit and the Word create life within the dead sinner was not there. Then Christ's sheep hear Christ exalted in the gospel and man abased. Where they hear the glory of the

triune God in Christ Jesus—not sometimes, not every half dozen messages—ALL THE TIME—there they camp out at Christ’s feet!

Christ went into Martha’s house.

Luke 10: 39: And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. 40: But Martha was cumbered about much serving,...

There is the problem with 99.99% of religion in our day.

Luke 10: 39:...and [Martha] came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

When a sinner is taught to mind the things of the flesh, when you are cumbered about much serving, everything becomes about “ME!”

Luke 10: 41: And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Christ said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” (Jn 15: 5)

God reveals to his child our desperate situation in sin, then the sinner realizes, “I have to have Christ!—I have to have his words in his gospel—I have to have his presence in my heart!” When you meet Christ, you never grow beyond Christ.

Illustration of Brother Mahan and Brother—“Christ is all.”

What think ye of Christ? Is Christ all to you? Or is there more than Christ?

II. SECONDLY, WHAT THINK YE...OF CHRIST? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF CHRIST HIMSELF?

Not what ye think of the doctrine of total depravity, or election and so on. You could teach a monkey the five points of Calvinism. Have you “learned Christ?”

True doctrine gets all its light from Christ and it all glorifies Christ. If what you are being taught does not declare you to be worthless, helpless, powerless withering grass and Christ All then it is not true!

John 17:3: And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

We are not talking about the Jesus most men are preaching—we are talking about the Jesus Christ whom God has sent! Do you know him!

2 Corinthians 11: 2: For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. 3: But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4: For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye

receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.

There is “another jesus”, “another spirit”, and “another gospel.” God sets the heart of his child on the “simplicity of Christ.” He sets our hearts singularly on Christ alone. Saul of Tarsus was a man cumbered about much serving, troubled by many things. But after Christ saved him, the apostle Paul said, “I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified!” (1 Cor 2: 2)

Who is Jesus Christ? He is God in human flesh! Immanuel, God with us.

Isaiah 7:14: Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel

2 Corinthians 5:19: To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Only God in human flesh could obtain eternal redemption for us. Jesus Christ is the GodMan, absolutely sovereign God who rules all in heaven and earth and absolutely bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

Why did Christ come?

Matthew 1:21: And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Christ came to save his people from our sins. Christ did not lay down his life for everyone. He laid down his life for the sheep.

Christ came to declare God just and the Justifier of all who believe. He came to satisfy justice so that the death sentence has been executed on all of God’s elect in him. So that God is just. No harm is done to his law in saving his people from our sins. And God in Christ is the Justifier.

Romans 3:26: To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

What did Christ accomplish?

Hebrews 10: 12: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13: From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Christ purged our sins by himself. He obtained eternal redemption for us himself. By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified—those elected, redeemed, and regenerated by his grace were all perfected forever, not by anything we have done, but by Christ’s one offering.

Where is Christ now?

Ephesians 1: 20:...he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. 2: 1: And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

That is what Christ he doing now?

Ephesians 4: 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Christ adds to the church daily such as should be saved. Through the Holy Spirit Christ is formed in his child giving us life and faith in him. He is teaching us his gospel. Christ is growing us—it says “from whom the whole body”—“according to the effectual working in the measure of every part”—Christ “maketh increase of the body.” Our Head is in his church in Spirit as real and as powerful as he was when he walked this earth in bodily form. He will continue this work till he brings every last, lost redeemed child to faith in Christ and not one will be lost.

Christ is All! Christ is the whole counsel of God. Christ is the subject of all Scripture. Christ is the Bishop of our souls, the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Bread of life, the Captain of our salvation. Christ is the Foundation, the Corner-stone, the Door, the Mediator, the Prince of life, the Rock, and the Shepherd. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the world, the Light of men, the Way, the Truth, and the Life! Everything thing made was made by him and for him and he is before all things and by him all things consist and all things show his glory him in some way. Christ is Christianity. Christ is Salvation! When we are saved into heaven, Christ will be our exceeding great reward, our heaven! Christ is All!

Every practical exhortation must be taught declaring: we have sinned and come short of the glory of God in it, Christ fulfilled it and is our Righteousness in it, then by his Spirit, he constrains us to obey him in love in the heart he has made new.

Illustration: The light in the dark room—growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

What think ye of Christ! Believers say, I do not think of Christ as I ought. I do not give him the honor as I want to think of Christ. I want to know more of him because the more I see him, the more I see God’s glory, the more I see my sin, the more I see my need of him, and the more I see all my salvation is accomplished in him. That is why when asked, “What think ye of Christ”, true believers will say, “Christ is All!”