

WHAT THINK YE ABOUT CHRIST?

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“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?” (Matthew 22:41-42). Jesus poses the most important of all questions to these Pharisees. **“What think ye of Christ?”** While Christ was specifically talking about his genealogy when he posed this question, the inquiry in general is one that all men need to consider. **What do you think about this man named Jesus Christ?** How you answer that question is going to directly affect how you view life, morality, marriage, religion, philosophy, science and even politics.

THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ made two distinct truth claims upon which everything else he taught rested and relied upon. First of all, Christ claimed to be equal with God. He claimed to be deity. Secondly, Christ claimed to have power over the grave. How a person responds to these claims goes a long way in determining what they think about Christ. Those who believe that Christ was nothing more than a man will follow a completely different life course than will those who believe Christ is deity. Those who deny the truthfulness of the resurrection will take a completely different path in life than those who believe that Christ has power over the grave. Our view of truth, morality and the afterlife is directly related to what we think of Christ. The person you are and the person you will be depends entirely upon how you view Christ and the claims he made about his deity and resurrection. Your “worldview” will be framed by your opinion of Jesus Christ.

CHRIST AND THE TRUTH

In making the claim of deity, Christ implicitly claims to be the embodiment of truth as well. ***“I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.” (John 8:26-28).*** Christ declares that he was sent from the One who is true, God the Father, and he claims to have only spoke those things which he had heard from God. He is claiming that everything he taught and everything he said was true because he was deity. If you accept this claim of Christ, then you have a basis for objective truth. This removes truth from the realm of cultural traditions and popular opinion and it places truth in the realm of absolutes. Think for a moment about the implications of this. A famous Hollywood celebrity once remarked that the more people you can get to know and the more people you talk to and understand, the closer you will get to real truth. Her understanding of truth was that it is to be found in the opinions of the masses. Her statement implies that no one person can have or know the truth. **There could not be a position that is more at odds with what Christ claimed.** He said, ***“I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6).*** Jesus said he was the truth. Everything that came from him was true. Man says that truth lies somewhere within all of us. In that sense, truth is relative to our experiences, prejudices and upbringing. How we view truth directly affects how we view life! The person who does not view Christ as the embodiment of truth runs to a view of truth which is relative where anything and everything goes. That in turn leads to a certain view of morality.

CHRIST AND MORALITY

It seems that many have “lost their way” in the area of morality. When men do not consider Christ to be the objective standard of truth, anarchy reigns in the arena of morality. How you view Christ is directly related to how you view truth and how you view truth is directly related to how you view morality. ***“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;” (Romans 1:21-28).*** Paul makes an indictment against the view point that truth comes from within man. He writes that men who professed themselves to be wise actually became fools. He speaks of men who changed the truth of God into a lie. Truth for these men became irrelevant. No longer was God the standard of truth and moral behavior. The ungodly desires of sinful man became the standard of moral conduct! It was “for this cause” (verse 26) that God gave them over to vile, unnatural, abominable behavior. God counted them worthy of death (verse 32). **These men and women had a twisted, perverse sense of morality because they had a twisted, perverse sense of truth.** They had changed the truth of God into a lie, and when that happened, there was nothing to stand between them and despicable behavior. The unbeliever finds no objective standard for truth except his or her own opinions and circumstances. Because of that, the only basis for morality becomes their own selfish, vile desires. **The quickest path to an immoral life is to deny the deity of Christ because once you do that, you remove the objective standard of truth.**

CHRIST AND THE AFTERLIFE

Another remarkable claim Christ made was that he had power over the grave. How you view Christ and this claim will have a tremendous impact on how you view the afterlife, and how you view the afterlife will impact how you live your life here. ***“And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (1 Corinthians 15:17-19).*** Paul sets forth the truth that if Christ did not exhibit power over the grave like he said he would, then there is absolutely no hope for our being resurrected. If our hope in Christ is limited only to this world, Paul says we are most miserable. If there is no hope of the resurrection, if there is no afterlife, then misery follows all men. Have you ever noticed how miserable atheists are? They seem to be angry, bitter and resentful about everything in life. It only stands to reason that if the unbeliever truly thinks that this life is all there is, they would be unhappy and miserable. They are mad, they are miserable, they are angry, they are malcontented, and they are unhappy - and they know that things will never get any better for them! **Their opinion of Christ and his claim of the afterlife has an impact on their lives now!** On the other hand, the believer has a quiet confidence that something better does await. He has the confidence that the resurrection is real and believes these things because of his opinion of Christ. ***“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16).*** It is this view of Christ as the risen Redeemer which gets the believer through the dark days that are inevitable. It is this opinion of Christ as the grave-beater which causes us to believe that although we may lose everything we have on this earth, all is not lost. **What does the unbeliever have? You live; You suffer; You die; You are forgotten.** What a sad and pathetic existence.

What Think Ye Of Christ?