

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## More About Jesus

By Mike Davis

Number 43 in *Sacred Selections for the Church* [Editor's note: Number 678 in *Songs of Faith and Praise*, tgmcc] is entitled “*More About Jesus.*” Its words are powerful, and I urge you to read them verse by verse and gain their understanding! The list of items desired from the author is righteous: more of His grace, more of His saving fullness, more of His love, more of His holy will, more about Jesus in His word, more about Jesus on His throne, more of His kingdom's sure increase, more of His coming, more of His peace! Dear reader, you just can't get too much of Jesus!

The church is the body of Jesus! (Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 1: 22-23; 5:30). It is comprised of people who have obeyed the gospel (1 Pet. 2:4-10). As the late Dee Bowman was renowned for saying when asked about the work of the church, he would answer, “It's about the people!” It isn't about their wealth, their ethnicity, or their position in society, but it's about their souls! Everyone has one, and every soul needs the gospel of Christ! To realize this unique concept, you need to realize how Jesus dealt with people.

Jesus was unique. He chose twelve of the most diverse men you could find to be His apostles. Fishermen weren't considered the wisest of men, especially if they came from Galilee (cf. Acts 2:7). Publicans (i.e., tax collectors) were considered thieves. And when you consider men like Andrew, Bartholomew, Philip, Thomas, James the Less, and Simon Zelotes, we know very little about them: but they weren't the same as the rest except in one area – being apostles of Christ Jesus! James and John tried once to gain dominance in this group via their mother asking on their behalf (Matt. 10:20-21). Jesus dealt with that problem without casting them from Himself. They often had little faith (Matt. 8:26; 16:8) and Jesus dealt with that without castigation of these men. If we would carefully examine Jesus and how He dealt with those closest to Him, we'd find it wasn't always without difficulty, but it was always with love and understanding! Indeed, more about Jesus we need to know!

I say this because as Christians, we are still “people.” Immersion into Christ (Acts 2:38) didn't change us physically, ethnically, economically, or any other temporal entity. What changed is whom we SERVE, and why we serve HIM! Yes, our lives must change to agree with His because we now have Christ living in us (Gal. 2:20). We no longer serve sin (Rom. 6:16-17) and therefore, many will need to work diligently in changing past habits, and at times even friends. But when we each accomplish this in our individual lives, we are still PEOPLE – but we're people with Christ!

Peter tells us Christ set an example that we must follow (1 Pet. 2:21-24). But it seems many think of Christ as such an esteemed Being that there is no possible way we can be like Him. That isn't true (Gal. 2:20)! If it were not possible to follow His steps, why would Peter tell us these things? But to follow His steps, we need to know more about Jesus! We need to learn how He managed Himself when challenged by opposing forces. We need to learn how He taught those who believed they knew everything. We need to learn how He worked with the poor and the rich and did so without respect of persons. We need to learn more about Jesus!

Jesus devoted three years to “training” His apostles to preach the gospel. Judas didn't learn well; he was selfish. But the others, we find them preaching on that first Pentecost that followed the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:14). They were ready to share what Jesus taught them, and for the next several years, they trained others to engage in the work of spreading the gospel (Acts 8:4; Matt. 28:19-20; et al). He trained them in two ways: viz. word and deed. And once trained, He sent them to do the work! Are we training men to preach/teach, lead singing, pray, etc.? If not, why not? Are we training women to know their place and their work in the Lord's cause? If not, why not? Jesus did, and we need to learn how He did it!

The church belongs to Christ (Acts 20:28), and we are blessed to be a part of it. But what are we doing to increase

its strength, its influence on other souls, its proof of love and care for everyone? What will become of this local work in just the remaining seven months of 2023? There's no need to think about years ahead if we aren't willing to face the here and now! It isn't about what WE want, it's about JESUS. And when it comes to spreading His truth, we need to remember it's about the people – ALL people! Indeed, dear reader, more about Jesus would I know! And more about Jesus would I live to please Him! ■



***“Born Again”***  
By Greg Gwin

Have you wondered about the phrase which describes certain individuals as “born again Christians”? What does that mean anyway? Is a “born again Christian” in some way different than other Christians? And how exactly does a person get that way?

While the words ***“born again”*** and ***“Christian”*** are certainly found in the Bible, it is of note that they are never found together as the popular usage has it today. In fact, the phrase “born again Christian” is obviously redundant. Every person who is a Christian has, of necessity, been born again. This becomes apparent as we examine the re-birth that is described in the Scriptures.

Jesus first introduced the idea of being born again in John 3:3-5. He said, ***“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*** When asked for an explanation, He added, ***“except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”*** Many have wondered as to what exactly Jesus meant when He spoke of the role of water and the Spirit in the new birth. Other passages shed valuable light on this matter.

In 1 Peter 1:23, we read once more of being ***“born again.”*** Here Peter says we are, ***“born again...by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”*** Knowing that the Holy Spirit caused the inspired word to be written, we have thus discovered the work of the Spirit in this rebirth. His work is found in the instructions of the Scriptures which lead us to obey the Lord. But what about the water? Look to Romans 6:4 – ***“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*** There is the water; it is the water of baptism, from which we rise to ***“walk in newness of life.”*** Now, think for a moment: ***“newness of life”*** – that phrase speaks to us of a new birth, of being ***“born again.”***

And so we have it, what it takes to be ***“born again,”*** ***“born of water and the Spirit”*** – it is to be instructed by God's holy word, and to be obedient to its commands, including baptism in water.

Have you been ***“born again?”*** Or, perhaps even more simply, are you really a Christian? There is nothing mysterious about the process, as some would have you to believe. Instead, you can be born again just as every other true Christian has ever been, by learning God's law, and obeying His commands. ■



***“Limping Between the Two”***  
By James Hahn

When Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal at mount Carmel he also presented a challenge to the children of Israel. He said, ***“How long go ye limping between the two sides? if Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him”*** (1 Kgs. 18:21). God has always expected His people to declare themselves. This same challenge needs to be presented to those who would identify themselves as the people of God today. If we are going to serve Jehovah then let's do so. There is no room in the kingdom of God for half-hearted, lukewarm service (See Rev. 3:14-19). To those members of the body of Christ who are not faithful in their service to the Lord, we ask, ***“How long go ye limping between the two sides?”*** ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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