

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

MATTHEW 22:41-42 • TV123A

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Matthew 22:41-42

“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, what think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?”

I’m asking you to turn in your Bible today to the **Book of Matthew**. We are going to look at **Matthew 22:41 and 42**.

The title of this message is a question: **“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”**

Now, look at verse 41: *“While the Pharisees were gathered together Jesus asked them saying: what think ye of Christ; whose son is he?”*

Now, the purpose of this gathering was this; the Pharisees and the Sadducees and some of the religious leaders had plotted and planned to attack the Master with difficult and perplexing questions.

What they were trying to do was *“entangle him,”* the Scripture says, in His talk and discredit Him before the people. This was their purpose. They got off to the side and they plotted and planned a way that they could entangle him in His talk and discredit him with the multitude.

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So, one of the Pharisees asked him this question, he said: *“Master; is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar, is it lawful for an Israelite to pay tribute or taxes to a Roman governor?”*

The Lord Jesus Christ knew their wickedness; He knew their thoughts and He replied: *“Show me your tribute money.”* And so, a man took out a coin and handed it to him and when He looked at the coin the Master said: *“whose image is on this coin, whose inscription is on this coin?”*

The man replied: *“Well, Caesar’s image is on that coin.”* Christ said: *“You render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God, the things that are God’s.”*

Well, He put them to silence and when the Sadducees heard that He had put the Pharisees to silence then they had a question for Him. Now, the Sadducees did not believe in a resurrection; they did not believe that there would be a resurrection of the dead. So, one of them came to the Lord Jesus Christ and this was his question; he said:

“Master; suppose that a woman is married and her husband dies and she marries another man and he dies and in turn she marries seven men and all of them die, now in the resurrection, who’s going to be her husband?”

The Lord Jesus Christ looked at him and he said: *“you err not knowing the scriptures or the power of God. In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven.”*

Then, there was another Pharisee that came; this man was a lawyer. He came to the Master and he asked this question; he said: *“Master; which is the greatest commandment in the law?”* He was referring to the whole law.

Now, there were the Ten Commandments, and someone said these old Pharisees had 365 commandments. They had one for every day of the year. This man is asking this question; he is saying: *“Of all the laws and commandments, which is the greatest?”*

The Lord Jesus Christ replied: *“Thy shall love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”*

So, he put to silence the Scribes and Pharisees and the lawyers. There’s nothing wrong with discussing and studying questions of this nature. I’m not discouraging the asking of questions about: what shall be in the resurrection, or should we pay tribute or taxes, or which is the greatest law, not at all.

There’s generally nothing wrong with examining and discussing and studying questions of this nature. But it is wrong if these issues and these questions become of greater importance to us than the supreme question.

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Now, if we can study these things in a humble fashion and in an earnest way, find and seek the answer to them and even believe God when we do not find the answer. But, many times these questions, foolish questions, can be the tools of Satan to sidetrack us from the vital and important issues of our relationship with God.

For example: The Lord knew their wickedness. He knew their thoughts. He knew these men were sidetracked with their traditions and religions and debates and arguments and customs and all of these things.

So, when they had finished asking all of these questions and He knew they were not asking for information; He knew they were asking to entangle Him and to discredit Him and to argue.

So, the Master, before they left; He said after all this debate and argument and discussion was finished, our Lord said: "I have a question for you." Now, this is the important question, He asked them this question, He said: "*what think ye of Christ; whose son is he?*"

Now, my friend; this is the important question, this is the vital question; this is the foundation, this is the heart of faith and the heart of our relationship with God, what's going to happen in the future, the coming of Christ, the millennium, the tribulation and all of these things are not vital to your well-being.

They are not really important to your well-being. But, "*what you think of Christ?*" Now, that's the important question, and this is what our Lord is saying to them. After He had asked all these questions, the most important question of all is this; "*what think ye of Christ?*" This is the issue, this is the question, this is the foundation of true religion; what do you think of the Lord Jesus Christ and that's my question to you today.

While I was in a Bible Conference recently a friend of mine, a man a little older than I am asked me if I remembered reading about Kiser Bill, who was the Kiser of Germany back in World War I. I told him: "Yes; I had read about him."

He said: "You know; several years ago I met the man who was his private secretary. His name was Auto or something like that. He was a private secretary to Kiser Bill of Germany during WWI."

Kiser Bill was a man who read the Scriptures quite a bit. And the man who was his private secretary said that Kiser Bill was reading the Bible one day, sitting in his library at his desk, and he said that he raised his head up from the Bible and he said; "Auto; Jesus Christ said: '*If you believe not that I am he ye shall die in your sins and if you die in your sins you cannot come where I am.*' Auto, that's the most terrifying and disturbing and frightening statement I've ever read."

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“If you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” That’s a frightening and disturbing statement. The importance of that question is staggering isn’t it? Who then is Jesus Christ and *“what think ye of Jesus Christ”* and who is Jesus Christ to you?

Paul gives the answer. He gives us two answers that I want us to look at today. The first one is found in **Colossians 3:11**. In **Colossians 3:11** the apostle Paul says this: *“Christ, Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, is all and in all. What think ye of Christ? He is all and in all.”*

There was a time, my friend, when the world did not exist. There was no world here, there was no earth here. There were no people on this earth. There were no trees and mountains and deserts and valleys, streams, and rivers and oceans, stars, the sun and moon. These planets were not here. There was a time when these things were not here.

If Jesus Christ is all; where was He then? Well, the Scripture tells us in **John 17:5**, the Master Himself, in His prayer to the Father said: *“Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”* Where was Christ? *“He was with the Father before the world was.”*

Then, there was a time when this world was created, when the dry land appeared and the dry land was separated from the water. The trees appeared and the mountains and all of these things as we now know them appeared, *“yet without sin.”*

There was a time when the world was made, when the world was created, when everything came into being, when man was created in the likeness and image of God. If Jesus Christ is all, where was He then?

Well, the Bible tells us: *“In the beginning was the Word, (the Word is Jesus Christ); the Word was made flesh. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made.”* All things were made for Him, by Him, and for His glory.

There was a time when sin came into this world. When God’s world was invaded by sin, by rebellion, when darkness and death and disease came upon this earth, when man, God’s great creation fell in rebellion against the Holy God.

When he came to know shame and fear and hate and all of these marks of sin and it was a terrible time of darkness and death upon this earth, when the whole creation was plunged into sin and *“became subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope,”* even the animals suffered because of Adam’s sin.

Even the creation has suffered because of Adam’s fall, the blight, the plague, the pestilence, death; everything dies now because Adam fell. If Christ is all; where was He then?

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The Scripture tells us that in that moment of darkness God almighty came and announced; the light of the world, Christ, the woman's seed, **Genesis 3:15**. In that day of death God almighty came and announced the life, Jesus Christ: "I am the life, the woman's seed."

In that day of sin God almighty announced the Saviour from sin and that is the Lord Jesus Christ; "*No man cometh to the Father but by me.*"

In that day of the devil's lies, when they took over the earth, God announced the truth: "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head.*" That was the good news in that hour of darkness. That was the good news in that time of death and disease in the fall.

Christ, the announcement of His coming, the prophecy and promise of His coming, was the only bright spot in that day of wrath and in that day of sin. If Christ is all, where was He then? He was the announcement of God: a Messiah, a Saviour shall come.

Then, the earth went on for 4,000 years and we come to a time when darkness and error in religion and superstition reigned. There was a church, but it was a "*den of thieves.*"

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "*My house shall be called a house of prayer but you have made it a den of thieves.*" Even the table of the Lord would become a snare and the ceremonies a stumbling block.

Here and there, there was one looking for the consolation of Israel. Here and there, there was one that was looking for the promise of the Messiah. Here and there was one who knew that God would send a Redeemer.

Well, if Jesus Christ is all; where was he then, where was Christ? Well, "*in the fullness of the time,*" when those years had gone by, and when we come to the place where religion is as corrupt as it's ever been and superstition reigned as never before and the temple and synagogue were nothing in the world but dens of thieves and robbers and traitors.

God almighty, "*in the fullness of the time sent his Son into this world, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were born under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*"

Christ came and He was "*tested and tried in all points as we are, yet without sin.*" Then He went to that cross of Calvary and died for our sins and redeemed us. He was buried and rose again and ascended back to the heavenly Father. Christ is all in redemption.

Then, there will come a day when this world shall be no more. The almighty God said that He would never destroy this world again by flood. He put a bow in the sky and said to Noah: "That's my covenant I never will destroy the world by flood again but I will destroy the world; I will destroy it by fire." "*There's coming a time when the heavens and the earth shall melt with the fervent heat and shall pass away.*"

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There's a day coming when men shall rise from the tomb and they shall stand before God and the Books will be opened."

There's coming a time when hell shall give up the dead which are in it and death and the grave shall give up the dead which are in them. "*The sea shall give up the dead which are in them and they will all stand before God at that great Judgment, (the Great White Throne Judgment).*"

And I know Satan, just like those questions a while ago; Satan is a master at turning our attention away from the issue at hand, from that important thing. And here we've got the Judgment divided into half a dozen different judgments.

They've got "the general-judgment" and "the judgment for believers" and "the judgment for sinners" and "the judgment for the nations" and "a judgment for somebody else." If you are not careful you will get all bawled up in studying these different judgments and forget that we all must stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

It doesn't matter who you are or where you are or what color you are or what race you are or what denomination; you are going to come to the Judgment.

Now, if Jesus Christ is all, where will He be then? Where will Christ be? He's all: "*What think ye of Christ?*" He's all. Where will He be then?

Listen to John 5:22: "*The Father judgeth no man but he hath committed all judgment to the Son.*" The Lamb is the Lion; the Lamb is the Judge. We shall all stand before Christ!

Well, one day there is going to be a new heaven and a new earth. Sin shall be done away with and "*death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.*" That is what the Scripture says.

Satan shall be no more, no more trial, temptation, testing, no more sin, sorrow, no more death, and no more judgment. "*There will be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, (the righteousness and holiness of God).*" Nothing shall enter in that "*worketh or maketh a lie.*"

If Christ is all, where will He be then? Well, **Philippians Chapter 2: 9 and 10**, tells us: "*Wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow in heaven, in earth, and under the earth and every tongue shall confess (declare) that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.*"

Christ is all. "*What think ye of Christ?*" This is the question, this is the issue; this is the heart of religion. This is the foundation of redemption: "*what think ye of Christ?*" It's not what did your daddy think of Christ or what does your mother think of Christ, it's what do you think of Christ?

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It's not what your denominational leaders think of Christ or what does your representative think of Christ, it's what do you think of Christ? Paul answered for himself and he's the only one that can answer for himself and you are the only one that can answer for yourself: "*what think ye of Christ, whose Son is he?*"

What is Christ to you? "Preacher; He's all and in all from eternity past to eternity future; He's "*alpha and omega.*" He's "*the beginning and the end.*"

All right; here's the second answer that Paul gives us found in **Colossians Chapter 3, verse 4**, if you care to turn; he said: "*Christ is our life.*" He does not merely say Christ is a way of life. And I'm not splitting hairs here. I'm not entering into controversy here; I'm bringing something, I'm bringing a point that is very, important.

It does not say that Christ is a way of life, it says: "*Christ is our life.*" Christ is not a way of life, He is our life. What think ye of Christ? He is our life. "*When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory;*" He is our life!

Now, what do I mean by that? There are four things:

First of all: He is the life of our spiritual existence!

Christ is the life of our spiritual existence. He said to Mary and Martha: "*I am the resurrection and the life.*" Martha said: "*I know our brother will rise again.*" Mary said, "*I know our brother will rise again in the resurrection:*"

Christ said: "*I am the resurrection. I am the life. He that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live. I am life.*"

In **1 John 5: 11 and 12**; listen to this: "*This is the record; God hath given us eternal life and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son of God hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*" Christ is the life of our spiritual existence. By nature "*we are dead in sins.*" By nature we have no spiritual life. By nature we have no spiritual life at all but in Christ we are made spiritually alive, "*You who were dead hath he quickened.*" We are crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, and risen with Christ and seated with Christ who is our life.

Listen to this: by nature, "*we are without God.*" In Christ we know God and are united with God. The Lord Jesus Christ said: "*This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*" Eternal life is to be one with God!

Adam knew his wife. Isaac knew Rebecca. Christ said: "*I know you.*" There's an intimate, personal, vital, living union. The two become one. In Christ we know God; we are one with God.

Then, "*by nature we are children of wrath.*" In Christ we are children of God. By nature "*we are under the curse of the law.*" In Christ we "*are accepted in the beloved.*"

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Listen to these illustrations He uses. Christ said, *“I am the head and you are the body.”* That’s one person. Without the head there’s no life. You can sever an arm, you can sever a leg, and you can sever a different part, but you can’t sever the head and the body and live.

Christ is the head. He is the life. *“He is the true vine and we are the branches.”* The branch cannot survive alone. The vine can survive without the branch but the branch can’t survive without the vine because that’s where the life is.

He says: *“I’m the bridegroom and you are the bride.”* Listen to this verse in **Ephesians 1:10**: *“In the fullness of time God will gather together in one all things in Christ.”* So, He is the life of our spiritual existence. Christ is the life.

“What think ye of Christ?” He’s my spiritual life; without Him I am dead. Without Him I am like a branch severed from a vine, withered and dying and fit for the burning.

Without Christ I am like a bride without a bridegroom. I have no husband and I have no name. Without Christ I’m like a body without a head, I have no existence, no life. Christ is my life.

Oh, I hope you get that. This is not just an issue to be argued; this is the very vital part of redemption, Christ is our life.

Second: Christ is the life of our sanctification!

Now, we hear a lot of discussion about sanctification, a lot of preaching and arguing about sanctification and a lot of talk about the baptism of the Holy Ghost and living above sin and the eradication of the old nature and all of these things.

Sanctification, plainly considered, involves two things. Sanctification must be considered in two ways: legally and experientially. That’s the only two ways that you can consider holiness and righteousness, legally before God and experientially before God.

Legally before God, before the law; we are sinners: *“What the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All we like sheep have gone astray. We’ve turned everyone to his own way.”* Legally, and before God’s law, legally, judicially, we are sinners, criminals, worthy of death.

Now, that law, God’s law will not be compromised. I don’t care what or how you try to whittle it down, it remains the same. It will never be compromised. God’s holiness and righteousness will never be compromised.

God requires legal and judicial perfection. Anyone who does not come up to it, who comes short of God’s glory, shall be judged and damned. What we couldn’t do, what the law could not do,

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because of the weakness of the flesh, what we couldn't do, "*God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and condemned sin in the flesh.*"

In other words, Jesus Christ came down here to this earth and worked out for me a perfect righteousness before the law. And, as my representative, as my federal-head; He represented me and He did what I couldn't do.

He honored that law, obeyed that law, kept that law, and imputed to me (charged to my account), and reckoned to me a perfect righteousness, a perfect holiness. So, legally, judicially, before God because of Christ, I'm perfect, perfect.

Holiness and righteousness must be considered experientially. It must be considered in my own nature and person, my conduct before God and my love for God.

Now, listen to me: By nature we love sin. By nature we love darkness. By nature we hate holiness. God says: "*Your thoughts are not my thoughts; your ways are not my ways. You will not come to me that you might have life.*"

Men need a new nature. They need a new heart. They need to be made new creatures in Christ Jesus. That's the reason our Lord said: "*you must be born again.*" We've got to experience the righteousness of God.

Not only must we have legally and judicially before God an imputed righteousness, but if we are born again and redeemed by God and called by His Spirit, experientially; we have imparted to us the nature of Christ!

"The love of Christ is shed abroad in our hearts. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. If any man have not the Spirit of God, he is none of his. He that loveth not knoweth not God. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another."

This is experientially and this fruit of the Spirit grows, it develops. Babes in Christ are not expected to have the fruit of the Spirit to the degree that mature men in Christ have: "*we grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ.*"

But, in the seed, the bud, that fruit is there. They are new creatures in Christ. A man who does not love our Lord Jesus Christ, well, he's not sanctified, he's not holy, he's not made righteous and he's not redeemed. A man who does not love his neighbor; he's not redeemed.

Third; Now watch this: Christ is the life of these Christian graces!

"Without me, you can do nothing," He said. Write that on the walls somewhere and read it every day, "*without me you can do nothing.*"

Suppose a man does have faith, it's a gift of God. That's right; it's a gift of God. "*It's given unto you not only to suffer for Christ but to believe on him.*"

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Hope, our hope is in Christ. Love, *“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.”* A forgiving spirit, *“We forgive as we have been forgiven.”* Humility, *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ.”* Prayer, *“Whatsoever you ask in my name it shall be done.”*

So, these Christian graces which we experience in the new birth and the new nature; Christ is the life of those, Christ is the life of those.

We deserve no credit at all: *“Who maketh thee to differ? What do you have that you did not receive? Now, if you received it, why do you boast as if you didn’t?”* We can take no credit for any gifts, talent, or ability or grace that we have; *“it’s the gift of God, not of works.”*

Last of all: Christ is the life of glory!

He shall raise us from the dead: *“The day cometh when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live.”* His appearance shall be the signal for our glorification. *“We shall see him and be like him.”* We will not be like Him until we see him as He is.

He shall be our eternal glory. To the thief, He said: *“Today, ye shall be with me.”* To the disciples he said: *“I go to prepare a place for you that where I am there you may be also.”* Paul said: *“I have a desire to depart (and be with mother? No sir), to be with Christ: “I have a desire to depart (and get my reward? No sir) to be with Christ, which is far better.”*

Well, I would like to reply to Paul this morning: ***“Christ is all and in all and Christ is my life.”***