
WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST

and what are you doing
because of it?

SEE MATTHEW 22:42

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

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Being raised in Roman Catholicism has made me very gunshy of all “isms.” And there are several of them around today. Over the last thirty years I’ve watched the Preterist, end-time teaching slowly evolve into something called, “Preterism” and I am very reluctant to call myself one. I learned back in 1982 after finding out there were four main end-time teachings, including the popular dispensationalism, pre-trib rapture and Preterist. I got stopped dead in my tracks and wanted to make sure whatever happened to me since becoming a Christian, had to line up with the word of God, when it came to what I was being taught out of textbooks regarding the end-times.

God showed me while sitting in a prison cell, that He came and not only proclaimed the Kingdom of God, but also taught it. I realized very early in my walk with Jesus, that it wasn’t about His second coming that I needed to concern myself with, but His first. I later accepted His words as being true about Him returning within the, His “this generation” in judgment upon Israel to destroy its’ religion and Old Jerusalem temple and law. I learned and believed Jesus came to fulfill the law and He did so, perfectly in AD 70, right on the money; at the exact moment it was supposed to happen.

At first it took a bit of convincing on God’s part, but after that wrestling match, I learned not to mess with His word. I

was to let it change me and not make the slightest attempt to change it, to fit whatever I wanted it to say. “If He said, it... He meant it.” If Jesus said in (Matthew 24:34) “Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled”... then He meant just that. No “ifs, ands, or buts!” It wasn’t very hard for me to believe Jesus’ words.

Being raised as a Roman Catholic, back when the Bible was a forbidden book, my life was in real turmoil and it took an electrifying miracle to be drawn out of all those dogmas, doctrines and creeds. I had to stand spiritually naked in front of the Word of God to believe what happened to me upon becoming a real biblical Christian, and to understand that Jesus Christ actually came inside of me. I had to drop all Roman Catholic teachings. And I did willingly, especially after being exposed to the Bible. I had enough half-truths that only led me straight into brick walls for most of my life. I was in trouble every time I turned around.

I always believed as a Roman Catholic that the God of the New Testament was broken down into three actual people; The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. However, after reading the scriptures, I came to an understanding, that those were only three of God’s names or titles in the New Testament and He actually had approximately 170 other names* throughout the entire Bible. – Spirit of God ... Spirit of Jesus Christ ... Holy Ghost... Holy Spirit ... Wonderful... Counsellor...The Mighty God ... The Everlasting Father... The Prince of Peace – (Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”)

My first exposure to this confusing concept was in Jesus’ words when he commanded His disciples to

baptize new believers in the name of the father, and of the son and of the, Holy Ghost. (Matthew 28:19 – “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”)

They didn’t officially do that until after the Day of Pentecost. That’s when they received the promised and prophesied power, in order to proclaim the Kingdom of God and understand the NAME ... of Jesus.

I first noticed the difference beginning in (Acts 2:38) when all the Apostles did, was baptize in the name of Jesus, which is really the New Testament title for God. Therefore I figured, they experienced something on THAT day of Pentecost that turned what Jesus said into a reality. They were using the name of the Father, Jesus; the name of the Son, Jesus and the name of the Holy Ghost, Jesus. There is only one name that man can be saved, and it’s, JESUS. (Acts 4:12 – “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”)

I am not here to teach or debate “Oneness vs Trinitarian.” There are thousands of people coming into the fulfilled movement from all walks of life, and from many different denominations. I really believe that we all have to leave our pre-conceived doctrines at the door of AD 70, and should really question most of the other doctrines and creeds we bring along with us into this movement, not just our end-times beliefs. If our denominations got that wrong, I wonder what else needs to be reexamined and studied. Half-truths and outright lies got the church where it is today—very dysfunctional. No one really knows what to believe anymore.

This is where I feel a lot of confusion comes in, not only

into futurism but also with the fulfilled movement. Futurism is waiting for a physical Jesus to come back. Fulfilled believers teach that Jesus already came back in AD 70. However, I honestly feel a further study of the scriptures is needed by both sides.

We can debate until we are blue in the face and still be back to square one, if we don't come to a proper understanding of the Kingdom of God that Jesus and His apostles proclaimed and taught. We shouldn't try to prove anyone one of us is right or wrong. We need to allow God to be God and He will prove Himself to be right, all of the time. He really doesn't need us to mess with His word.

While both Jerusalem's were fighting it out within Jesus' "this generation" He was already there, living within the 1st Century believers. He came to the Jew first and moved right into His Jewish followers on the Day of Pentecost, and continued throughout to the Samaritans and finally to the Gentiles, just as He commanded and prophesized would happen.

Where many are missing the mark, is trying to understand the 2nd Coming for more than what it really was. What was expected to happen, did happen within the forty-year generation of Christ; be it judgment, resurrection, rapture, physical return, etc. What truly happened was that He did return and fulfilled Daniel's 70 Weeks prophecy, and His own, as clearly stated in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Whatever happened; happened and it won't happen again—it is finished! Man can be forgiven of his sins, and finally live right.

I feel the most important issue here, is to understand, exactly who Jesus is, where He is today and what His plan and purpose is for each of our lives, instead of dwelling on the

second-coming and putting so much time and energy in debating who is right and who is wrong on the subject of AD 70. Today's fulfilled scholars have that pretty well understood.

The question here is “What Think Ye of Christ?”

Read in its entirety: Matthew 22:41-46 – “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 called him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”

Our concentration gets misplaced, when we refuse to apply God's spiritual kingdom principles to our lives today. We have to live in the present and fulfilled believers should know this better than anyone else, Futurists have an excuse, we don't; the buck stops here.

Jesus commanded us to love God first and our neighbors as ourselves. Read Matthew 22:36-40 “Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and 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 neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

This hasn't changed over the years. But, believing He isn't with us and in us makes it very difficult to listen to His still soft voice and follow His commands. He wants to guide us into all truth. Read Matthew 25:35 – “feed the hungry, give

drink to the thirsty, take in strangers, clothe the naked, visit the sick, go into the prisons, care for the widows, orphans.”

I think a few good questions to ask and study are; If there was only one other coming in the New Testament, which was in AD 70: Where was Jesus within 1st Century Christianity? Where did Jesus go after AD 70? Where is He now? These should be the all-important critical issues for fulfilled believers.

We know He came spiritually and/or physically in AD70, to end religious Judaism, etc. But who changed non-believers into believers throughout that 1st century generation? Who was living inside of, not only the apostles, but everyone else who believed in Jesus through their doctrine of proclaiming and teaching the Kingdom of God?

That was the Apostles’ message/doctrine. Jesus is our solid rock, chief cornerstone in our New Jerusalem (church, bride, kingdom) inside of us, and the Apostles doctrine being our wall’s foundation. The Apostles knew something was going to happen within their generation, they knew Jesus was returning according to His words. However, according to the Apostles’ doctrine Jesus was really already in them. That is what Paul stressed to the Colossians, “Christ in you the hope of glory” - Read Colossians 1:27 “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Wait—what was that again? “Christ in you?” Then to make matters even more thrilling to learn, Paul went so far as to teach the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 13:5 – “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”

Was he really commanding the Corinthians to examine themselves that they were not their own selves and JESUS CHRIST was in them?

A huge red flag and question mark should pop-up on that scripture along!

How can Jesus Christ be in them/us when He is supposed to be in heaven to return someday, whether it was in AD 70 or on May 21, 2011 ala Harold Camping or sometime in the future according to Hal Lindsey, Thomas Ice, John Hagee, Tim Lahaye, etc.? We have a major dilemma here!

This has to take us back to the question Jesus asked “What think ye of Christ?” in Matthew 22:42.

If Jesus Christ was living in His followers then; that should get us back to studying our bibles, to double check on just what the “coming” of Christ really means.

We really do have the AD 70 truth, pretty much beaten to death. I wonder how many more books need to be written to get to the bottom of that issue. How many more debates? How many more conferences do we need to attend?

What’s next? A fulfilled/Preterist denomination? Is that what we need—another church building? Will it be like all of the others—us four, Lord and no more? Will it turn out to be just another, us against them?

During today’s major paradigm shift within Christianity, I think we all need to take one step back and reexamine exactly what we really believe in. It’s one thing to debate AD 70, but another to debate, “What think ye of Christ?” Just where is Christ right now and where exactly was He

during the 1st generation? Have we allowed Him to be everywhere at the same time? Didn't He ask Job; "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding?" (Job 38:4)

Here's Jesus! No—there He is! Was He in my jail cell in Lexington Kentucky, a foxhole or a dying person's hospital bed? Is He sitting in one of the many "ism boxes" that we've built for Him, or is He really living inside each one of us, changing our hearts and our lives, just like He did the 1st Century Christians?

Is Christ living inside of us? What is the Kingdom of God, the New Jerusalem, the Bride, and the Church really all about?

None of us would be here right now, if it wasn't for the fact that Jesus Christ changed us and continues to change each and everyone one of us and does so, all at the same time.

Some grow faster than others (for those who are forgiven much, love much); some get it faster than others who want to dilly-dally around with their faith, maybe even live in willful sin. But change does continually happen, and in a very personal manner, which eventually forms us all, into His image corporately. Paul taught this principle to the Galatians. Christ will be formed in them and us if we want to let it happen. Read:

Galatians 4:19 – "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

Paul clearly taught the Romans in 14:7 "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

I honestly feel that the world doesn't really care very much about what happened in AD 70 or any other so-called future coming of Christ. Many carry around a false futurist hope, or as fulfilled believers we say, "It is done." But the bottom line to anyone's faith and what continues to draw people to Christ, is His everyday coming; His bringing of peace, joy and righteousness to anyone who will call upon His name.

Paul also taught the Romans, that if any man doesn't have the Spirit of God, while also calling the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ dwelling within them, he is none of his. (Romans 8:9 "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.")

When I teach in the prisons, I refuse to dwell on the future or past 2nd coming of Christ. I believe there is more to Jesus than just that. I teach that Christ can give inmates peace right now, real peace; peace that surpasses all understanding. That only comes through Jesus Christ, the real, "Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6) His peace is the only peace we should be concentrating on. Read Philippians 4:7 – "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." It has nothing to do with; who is right or wrong concerning their eschatology.

That's what confuses so many people today. We debate, argue, point fingers, and call each other heretics while kicking-the-can-down-the-road and we don't stop long enough to fully understand for ourselves, "What We Think of Christ."

Here's more proof that Christ was living within 1st Century

Christianity. The Apostle Paul taught the Galatians in Gal. 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

He also taught Colossians in Col. 3:11 “Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.”

Paul taught the Corinthians that they were the temple of God in 1 Cor 3:16 “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

Listen to what Paul taught the Ephesians in Ephesians 3:16-17 “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,”

Now listen to what Jesus says in the book of Revelation 3:20 “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

Did all of that happen in AD 70? That’s when Jesus came into people? What day did He command His disciples to wait for all of this to happen?

Listen to what He said to them after the resurrection and prior to His departing in John 14:16-20 “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will

come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”

We can spend the rest of our lives trying to figure out on charts, graphs, slide rules, church pews, John Hagee telecasts, Hal Lindsey books or Preterist conferences; just when did, or will Jesus come back, but the real truth is that; Jesus Christ taught the Kingdom of God is within us. I am sure He knew people would be debating this issue for generations to come, but His simple instruction is in Luke 17:21 “Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”

What happened on the Day of Pentecost should not be lightly brushed over. Sometimes we look at it, as a non-important event, but it was the day, Christ spiritually came into His believers. Read:

Acts 2:16-17 “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” This is the Jesus people are looking for, searching for, debating about and fighting about.

The simple message of the Gospel that Jesus taught, and all of the apostles taught, was the big mystery, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Read:

Colossians 1:27 “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

He broke down the wall of perdition between Jew and Gentile and made us both one spiritually. Read Ephesians 2:14 – “or he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall.” Now the only door left into the Kingdom of God is JESUS. Read:

John 10:9 – “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”

There is no need to look here or there, for Jesus. AD 70 was a very important date, to say the least. It was the end of the Jewish world, or age as they knew it, and a very significant moment in time when Jesus fulfilled all prophecy. However, Jesus Christ was living within 1st Century believers as He lives in us now, and that’s the issue we should be discussing and concentrating on. That’s what needs be debated, studied and understood.

God was always King. All we have to do is study the Old Testament and ask Egypt’s Pharaoh or Babylon’s Nebuchadnezzar, if God wasn’t always King. The

Jews weren’t happy with God being their spiritual king. They wanted to be like the Gentiles and have a physical king. Just like what is being taught over the generations up to and including today.

We have the honor today, to have the King living inside of us. The King of Kings --- The Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ taught in John 4:24 “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

Paul clearly taught in Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is

no law.”

Isn't this what we're all really searching for? I know when I was a substance abuser I tried to get all of that fruit from all of the wrong people, places and things. The world only offers counterfeit fruits; that only last for a split moment in time. However, once Jesus Christ comes into us we bear the fruit, that only He can freely give us. That's how we know that He's alive, living in and changing us from the inside. You can snort all the cocaine the world has to offer but it will never satisfy you. Just one sip of Jesus' water ... and look out! We go from being filled to overflowing with the ability to not only overcome our own troubles, but also being able to help others. That's the Kingdom of God in action. It isn't hidden somewhere in the unknown. It's right here living inside of us, just like it was living inside of 1st Century believers. There really isn't much difference.

Does this have anything to do with AD 70, or off into some future moment in time?

Like the old hymn, “I Serve a Risen Savior” clearly reminds us that; “He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today! He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. He lives, He lives, salvation to impart! You ask me how I know He lives. He lives within my heart.”

The Kingdom of God is already set up, within us, because Jesus Christ is sitting as King on the thrones of our hearts, right here... right now.

AMEN!!

