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"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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HOW WOULD YOU SPEND YOUR LAST SUNDAY ON EARTH?

By Truman Spring

I am a member of the Church, having been baptized into Christ long ago. Since that time I've lost zeal for Him and have been busy about everything on earth, but the work of the Church. Oh, I go enough to keep my name on the church roll, and I help a little with the finances, But, I've just had word that NEXT SUNDAY WILL BE MY LAST ON EARTH.

I have but one more Sunday left. Somehow, now, the only thing that seems real important is the Church. It'll be my last chance to hear a sermon and to see my brothers and sisters in Christ. My last chance to worship God in spirit and in truth on this earth and to partake of the Lord's Supper. And last but not least, my last chance to make it right with God and let the world know the Kingdom of God should be first in a persons life.

"Who Is This Jesus?"

By Mike Pace

If someone were to ask you this question, "Who is Jesus?", how would you answer? What would you say in response to such a question? Many people in our world, even this day, do not truly know much about Jesus. I have had the privilege of traveling to the country of India on two different occasions. My first trip to help with the Lord's work there was in 1979. There were an abundance of things that surprised me, that shocked me, and many things that alarmed me. Allow me to share just one such incident. Part of our work was being conducted in a city in Andhra Pradesh (a state) called Vijayawada. Vijayawada is a city of approximately three million people. One after-

noon we were going to a small village just outside of Vijayawada to preach to a group of people who were expecting us. The railroad is one means of transportation for people, as well as goods in India. When traveling by land in India, you frequently are crossing railroad tracks and at each of these crossings on the road, are the large road guards which come down across the road when a train is approaching. In the U.S., our road guards come down just shortly before the train passes, but in India, they come down sometimes an hour or more before the train passes. The afternoon of which I speak was one such incident. We had been waiting patiently for the train to pass, the road guards to lift, and the road to be opened so we could continue on to our destination. Several minutes had passed and a large crowd of people were gathering. We decided to take advantage of the crowd of people present, and the time while we were waiting, and share the gospel with the Indian people. One young lady we talked with seemed to show an interest, perhaps only because we were white and Americans. We asked her if she knew about Jesus Christ. Her reply was in the form of a question? "Who is Jesus? Where does he live? Is he an Indian?", she asked. I was appalled. I had heard that there were people living on this planet who had not heard the message of the gospel, but I didn't realize that there were people who didn't know who Jesus is, and had never heard of our Lord. Even if they didn't believe in Him, I thought surely that everyone had at least heard His name, but this young Indian lady was evidence that my assumption was incorrect. Of course, we did our very best to plant the seed of the gospel in her heart, and to let her know that Jesus, the Son of God, died for her, too!

Jesus Christ stands forth in the world as an historical character. Not even secular scholars can deny His historical life upon this earth, nor discount His effect upon mankind. So all admit His birth, His life, His death, and His humanity. Jesus lived approximately one-third of a century, was born of a peasant family, received

not formal education, lived in a small country, wrote only one time (where it was soon erased in the sand), had as His helpers a group of fishermen, a tax collector, and others of low estate - but left an influence upon the world that is ever so prominent even to this day!

Not only did Jesus' influence leave such a great impression on mankind, but He also made certain bold claims for Himself. Jesus had certain things to say on His own behalf. Consider the following claims Jesus made and see for yourself the Son of God.

Jesus Claimed To Be From God. No other man has claimed the same origin with as much authority as did Jesus. Jesus once said, "*All things are delivered unto me of my Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and He to whosoever the Father will reveal Him*", (Matthew 11:27). On yet another occasion Jesus said of God, "*But I know Him; for I am from Him, and He hath sent me.*" (John 7:29). Concerning His purpose/ reason for coming down to earth, Jesus said, "*For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him who sent me.*" (John 6:38). And again He said, "*My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me.*" (John 4:34). No man could logically, reasonably assert that Jesus was only a good man, but not the Son of God. Jesus claimed equality with God when He said "*I and my Father are one.*" (John 10:30).

Jesus Claimed to Have Authority Over Man. What if any preacher today would openly, blatantly demand obedience from all men. People would surely rebel, "No man has the right to make such a demand!" And how true that would be - no man has that right! But Jesus does have that right, for He was both man and God. Jesus authority was not only in heaven, but also upon the earth. Remember Jesus' statement, "*All authority is given me, both in heaven and on earth.*" (Matthew 28:18). Jesus made the claim to have authority over man, and He had the right to do so!!

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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Jesus Claimed to Have The Power To Forgive Sins.

We live in a day and time when our religious world is pervaded with those so-called priests and confession-takers who claim to have the authority to forgive men's sins. Some accept money or other tokens in exchange for the forgiveness of sins. Such is preposterous as God, and God alone has that right or power to forgive man's sins, and then it is conditional upon man's submission and obedience to God's will. Jesus made the claim, being the Son of God, to forgive man's sins. Recall if you will Jesus healing the man afflicted with palsy and then Jesus saying, "*Man thy sins be forgiven thee.*" Immediately the scribes and the Pharisees began to object to Jesus' claim to forgive a man's sins, to which Jesus replied, "*But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon the earth to forgive sins, he said unto the sick of the palsy, arise and take up thy couch, and go into thine own house.*" (Luke 5:18-26).

Jesus did not give up His right to Sonship nor to His deity when He came to this earth. He claimed to have the power to forgive sins, and He had the authority to do so!

Jesus Claimed To Be The Truth. In John 14:6, Jesus stated, "*I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life. No man cometh to the Father except by me.*" Throughout His ministry upon this earth, Jesus laid claim to the truth that would stand for an eternity. Jesus proclaimed, "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*" (Matthew 24:35). And yet another claim to the truth of his words is recorded in John 12:48, 49, "*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the*

same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." What other man would dare to make such a claim unless He be the Son of God!

Jesus' claims were made for our spiritual well-being, that we might know of Him and properly appreciate what has been done for all of us. "*In that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us . . .*" (Romans 5:8). Do you believe in Jesus? Have you laid hold to the claims that Jesus has made? "Who is this Jesus?" He is God's Son who, "*Came to seek and to save that which is lost.*" (Luke 19:10). Jesus is the "*Alpha and the Omega*" (Rev. 21:6); our Advocate, (I John 2:1); the author of our salvation, (Hebrews 5:8, 9); our bread of life, (John 6:35); the door, (John 10:9); the Holy One, (I John 2:20); our King, (John 12:13); our Lord, (Rom. 14:9); the Messiah, (John 4:25, 26); the propitiation for our sins, (Romans 3:25); our Savior, (I Timothy 4:10); and so much more!

Have you accepted Jesus and His claims upon your obedience to His will? You should, you ought to accept Him, and you need to accept Him!

Thinking Out Loud

By Dalton Key

The church, for the present, must live "in this present world." (Titus 2:12). Because we live within the world, we are both able and obligated to "*go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.*" (Mark 16:15.) Problems arise when we begin not only to live IN the world, but to live LIKE the world as well. God intended we live in the world; He never intended the world to live within us! Inspiration warns, "*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*" (I John 2:15). Again, "*Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*" (James 4:4). And again, "*Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.*" (Romans 12:2.)

The church in the world is much like a ship in the midst of the sea. There is no problem so long as the sea stays outside of the ship. But let the water begin seep-

ing into the boat, and you've got trouble. John made note of this distinction when he writes, "*And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*" (I John 5:19.) The sins catalogued in I Corinthians 6: 9, 10 and Galatians 5: 19-21 characterize life OUTSIDE the kingdom - not WITHIN the kingdom. The church must remain "*a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*" (Ephesians 5:27.) May there ever be a clear, crisp distinction between the church and the world.

We expect to find the sin of immodesty in the world, outside the body of Christ. But we are surprised and alarmed to see this pernicious problem creeping into the Lord's church. The world cries, "Take it off!" And many unconverted church members do just that.

The only thing separating many Christians from the self-proclaimed nudists is a few strips of mesh-like fabric. If we think on the basis of percentage of the body covered, many of our members are more naked than clothed much of the time. Plunging necklines, short shorts, halter tops, skirts slit up to the thigh and beyond - where will it all end? How much more will we have to take off before we become candidates for the nudist farm?

"Oh, don't be so square, preacher! You don't want me to be a prude, do you?" Yes, indeed I do! Actually, the term "prude" is derived from the French word "purdefemme", and is used to denote "a lady of modesty and taste." This sounds a lot like the language of I Timothy 2:9 doesn't it? "*In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*" The church needs more prudes, more men and women of modesty and good taste. By all means, be a prude! You don't find prudes on skid-row. You don't find prudes in the penitentiary. You don't find prudes being assaulted because of their scanty attire. Yes, be a prude!

"But the body is beautiful and we should not be ashamed of it." We cannot deny the body's beauty, as the majestic handywork of God. (Psalms 139:14.) Yet the same God who made man, clothed

him in "coats of skin", and has always opposed public nudity. (Genesis 3:21; Exodus 32:25; Leviticus 18).

The world cries, "Take it off!" Inspiration exhorts, "Leave it on!" To which will you listen?

Is One As Good As Another?

By Wendell Winkler

If you are calling a doctor, is one as good as the other? If you are seeking a wife, is one as good as the other? If you are buying a prescription, is one as good as the other? If you are catching a bus, is one as good as the other? If you are buying a house, is one as good as the other? If you are needing a mechanic, is one as good as the other? Then, kind reader, why be so particular in material things and so careless and "broadminded" in matters pertaining to your eternal destiny? How often do we hear, "One faith, way, worship, religion, baptism, church, name or doctrine is as good as another."

FAITH. Is one faith as good as another faith? If so, then why did the apostle teach, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Eph. 4:5). Also, a dead faith would be as good as an active one. The Bible speaks of both kinds. (James 2:26).

WAY. Is one way as good as another way? If so, why did Jesus say, "I am the way . . ." (John 14:6). Furthermore, Proverbs 14:12 says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Is this way as good as the straight and narrow way that leadeth to life everlasting? (Matt. 7:13, 14).

WORSHIP. Is one worship as good as another worship? If so, then why did God reject Cain's worship and accept Abel's (Genesis 4). Again, why did he kill Nadab and Abihu in the act of worshipping, if one worship is as good as another? (Lev. 10). And, if one worship is as good as another one, then an ignorant worship (Acts 17:23), a vain worship (Matt. 15:9), and a will worship (Col. 2:23) would be as good as true worship (John 4:24).

RELIGION. Is one religion as good as another? If so, why does the book of Acts record thousands of cases of conver-

sions from one religion to another? In fact almost every conversion in the book is a conversion of a religious individual! Why make the change if one religion is as good as another? The Bible discusses pure religion, the only kind to have (James 1:27).

BAPTISM. If one baptism is as good as another, then why were those who had been baptized with John's baptism rebaptized in Acts 19? For our baptism to be valid it must be based on a genuine faith. (Mark 16:16), preceded by a repentance from sin (Acts 2:38), and administered upon a proper confession. (Acts 8:36-38).

CHURCH. Is one church as good as another? If so, then those built and established by man (Matt. 15:13; Psalms 127:1) would be as good as the one established by the Lord. (Matt. 16:18). Yet, Matt. 15:13 tells us that every plant the Father hath not planted shall be rooted up!

NAME. Is one name as good as another? If so, why did the Lord change some names, as in the cases of Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel, etc.? Also, why did the Lord teach in Acts 4:12 that there was salvation in no other name than in Jesus' name?

DOCTRINE. If one doctrine is as good as another, why would John have written, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." (II John 9).

Surely we can clearly see that one is not as good as another.

CONTRIBUTIONS

INDIVIDUALS

Clyde and Delphia Smith	\$32.00
Leo and Ruby Rickman	10.00
Eleanor Davis	5.00
A. H. Sanders	5.00
R. E. and Gracie Stephens	5.00

CONGREGATIONS

Church of Christ, Marionville, Missouri	\$10.00
Big Pond Church of Christ	12.00
Agnos Church of Christ	5.00
Viola Church of Christ	5.00
Garfield Church of Christ	15.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ	10.00
Jeff Church of Christ	10.00
Gamaliel Church of Christ	10.00

Missouri-Kansas Lectures

The second Annual Missouri-Kansas Lectures "Issues Facing the Church" Part 2 will be presented September 23-27 at the 39th Street Church of Christ, 15331 East 39th Street, Independence, Missouri. This year's lecture will include sixteen speakers from six states addressing issues of brotherhood interest. Speaking will be Andrew Connally, Roy Deaver, Don Deffenbaugh, Garland Elkins, Jim O'Connor, Walter Pigg, Ray Pippin, Oran Rhodes, Ira Rice, Vada Rice, Marvin Rickett, George Salyer, Toney Smith, Pat Surles, Jack Williams and Wendell Winkler. The lectures will be a source of strength and edification to all who attend.

Free housing will be provided in the homes of area Christians on a first come, first serve basis. Monday through Thursday the sponsoring congregations will provide noon meals free of charge at the building.

For more information, write -
Jack Williams
15331 E. 39th Street
Independence, Missouri 64055
or call 816 - 373-4946 or 478-0266

Third Annual Denton Lectures

Plans have now been completed for the Third Annual Denton Lectures, to be hosted by the Pearl Street Church in Denton, Texas on November 11 - 15. The assigned theme of the lectures and the title of the book which will contain the lectures is *Studies in the Revelation*. There will be four types of material presented in this major series of lectures: expository sermons on many passages in the Revelation, lectures

dealing with false doctrines relating to the Revelation, lectures on some of the difficult passages in the Revelation and a daily Discussion Forum on controversial subjects. The Discussion Forum, lasting two hours each day (Monday-Thursday) will deal with the four following topics, respectively: "Eternal Punishment - Extinction or Conscious Torment?"; "The Great Judgment - Did Christ Come and the Judgment Occur in 70 A.D.?"; "Scriptural Baptism - Must One Understand That Baptism is for Remission of Sins for it to be Valid"; and "Who Are 'In the Lord'-Are there Sincere Knowledgeable, Devout Christians in the Denominations?" Besides a formal prepared discussion of each of these subjects, there will be questions allowed from the audience.

The potential impact of this lectureship may be seen not only in the subject matter, but in the people who will be preparing and delivering the material. In alphabetical order the speakers are: Maxie Boren, Tom Bright, Byron Denman, Ollie Duffield, Frank Dunn, Garland Elkins, Edward Fudge, Tom Gaumer, Alan Highers, Ken Hope, Bill Jackson, Wayne Jackson, Roy H. Lanier, Jr., Mark Lewis, Dub McClish, Hugh McCord, James Meadows, J. Noel Merideth, Jerry Moffitt, Jack Orbison, Johnny Ramsey, Robert Taylor, Jr., Bert Thompson, W. Terry Varner, John Waddey, Thomas B. Warren, Marvin Weir, W. B. West, Jr., Wendell Winkler and Gary Workman.

Housing in the homes of area Christians will be made available on a "first come - first served" basis. Water and electrical hook-ups will be furnished for travel trailers and motor homes. A staffed nursery will be provided for all sessions. Exhibit space will be available subject to invitation and/or approval of the Pearl Street elders. The Pearl Street Church aims for this lecture series to provide sound, solid and practical Biblical teaching. Much of the material presented will also be planned to combat false teachings, both within and without the church. A book (500+ pages) and audio and video cassettes of these lectures will be available. Inquiries may be addressed to Dub McClish, Director, Third Annual Denton Lectures, 312 Pearl Street, Denton, TX 76201 or phoned to 817 - 387-3531.

How To Become A Christian

The most important question ever asked is: "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). Then, the **HOW** becomes equally as important. Notice the step by step process. First, we must have faith in the Author and Finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ. (Heb. 12:2). This faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God. (Rom. 10:17). "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6). With the belief and trust that Jesus is the Redeemer, we must repent of sins. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30). In repentance, we turn from sin, **STOP** serving Satan and **START** serving the Lord. (Matt. 3:8,

Luke 13:3). With this new attitude we are ready to confess our faith, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:9-10). Read Matthew 10:32-33. Acknowledging our faith, repentance and confession, the last step into Christ is baptism. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27). Read Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38. Now that our past sins have been forgiven, the Lord has added us to His church and we are Christians. (Acts 2:47; Acts 11:26).

BECOME A CHRISTIAN

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