

## The Inconvenient Jesus

- I. It is a universal observation that if something requires little or no effort to produce or obtain, it cannot justify a high price of purchase.
  - A. By contrast, if one values something very highly, he will spend time, effort and/or money to produce or obtain it.
  - B. If one loves something or someone superficially, the value of that thing or person will be reflected in his attitudes and actions.
    1. Contrarily, what one loves greatly will generate willing effort and sacrifice to obtain or preserve. **GEN 29:20; SON 8:6-7.**
    2. Love makes long and arduous services short and easy. Thus, we read of the *labour of love*. **HEB 6:10.**
- II. The way of Christ is a way unto life that was never meant to be a cakewalk. **MAT 7:13-14.**
  - A. strait: Of a way, passage, or channel: So narrow as to make transit difficult... a conventional, limited procedure or way of life.
  - B. Tribulation attends all who identify with Him and it increases according to one's dedication to Him and to society's ignorance or rejection of Him. **JOH 15:18-20; 16:33; ACT 14:22.**
  - C. Christ Himself requires disciples to forsake precious things for His sake. **LUK 14:26-27.**
- III. Jesus Christ represented salvation and healing in His earthly ministry as He "...went about doing good..." (**ACT 10:38**).
  - A. But His doing good was often not in conformity to what men thought was right and proper. **MAT 9:10-15.**
  - B. There were times when His merciful acts of healing enraged men who would themselves show mercy to beasts under similar circumstances. **JOH 5:15-16; LUK 14:3-6.**
  - C. Jesus simply didn't fit the mold that ignorant sinners assumed to be that of a good man.
    1. He remains to this day a controversial figure to both an unbelieving world and to professed believers who are ignorant of His true nature as revealed in Scripture.
    2. Jesus would be universally popular if He made life easy for all men without demanding any change in them. But He does demand change. **ACT 17:30-31.**
    3. Jesus Christ was/is God manifest in flesh and God's ways and thoughts are not as man's. **PSA 50:21; ISA 55:8.**
    4. His gospel is not designed to coddle men's imaginations but to cast them down by His truth. **2CO 10:4-5.**
    5. Will you have Jesus Christ on His terms or yours?
- IV. Christ frequently tested men to see how much effort they would put in to receive His benefits.
  - A. He once healed a man who was blind from his birth. **JOH 9:1, 32.**
    1. This was an exceptional healing above *recovery* of sight. **LUK 4:18.**
    2. Christ could have healed him by His mere touch or word. **MAT 9:27-30; 8:8.**
    3. But here he smeared mud on the man's eyes and sent him on a mission. **JOH 9:6-7.**
    4. The man complied rather than complain and it may be observed that God does not favor complainers. **JUDE 1:16.**
  - B. Christ similarly commanded blind Bartimaeus to come to Him. **MAR 10:46-52.**
  - C. When a woman with a debilitating eighteen-year infirmity needed healing, Christ "...called her to him..." (**LUK 13:11-12**).
  - D. Instead of predicting the faith of the friends of the paralytic man and dropping everything

- to rush to that man's aid, Christ let them show Him their faith by overcoming considerable obstacles to get their friend to Him. **MAR 2:1-5.**
- E. This pattern is seen throughout Scripture in God's dealings with men and all benefits that may be sought of Him are to be qualified by His honor and will being preeminent. **MAT 6:9-10; 26:39-42.**
- F. Do you think God owes you anything? Think rather as Jacob did. **GEN 32:10.**
- V. Jesus used a great Syrian as a reproof to His generation. **LUK 4:27.**
- A. Naaman initially chafed at the way Elisha handled his case. **2KI 5:9-12.**
- B. But upon due consideration he humbled himself and submitted himself to Elisha's order. **2KI 5:13-14.**
- C. By the time his heart was submitted to obedience, he never even complained, "Why seven times?"
- D. Here was an uncircumcised Gentile who submitted to a commanded baptism and his leprosy transferred to a greedy Israelite. **2KI 5:27 c/w ACT 18:6.**
- VI. Carnal minds are likely to reject a Christ Who heals, saves and blesses on His own terms.
- A. Some hold that unless Christ fills the belly or heals the body, He is unacceptable and His gospel hindered accordingly.
1. They basically affirm a *humanitarian Christ* is the only good one.
  2. humanitarian: One who affirms the humanity (but denies the divinity) of Christ.
  3. For such, the second great commandment is more important than the first. ct/w **MAT 22:36-39.**
- B. Some only have time or interest in Christ when it is convenient for themselves. **ACT 24:25.**
1. They desire a convenient Christ, not an inconvenient One.
  2. Ironically, God can and does accommodate them but then judges them for it. **1KI 12:25-30 c/w AMO 4:4; 2TH 2:10-12.**
- C. Spiritual minds desire spiritual things; carnal minds desire carnal things. **ROM 8:5.**
- VII. Those who perceive Christ for Whom He truly is and what He genuinely represents and does will count any cost acceptable to identify with Him. **JOH 6:61-69.**
- A. Those who would have Christ and His benefits must be prepared to jump hurdles, bear burdens, forsake all.
- B. God is to believers "...a rewarder of them that DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM" (**HEB 11:6**).
- C. Wouldn't it be nice of Jesus if He just ran to relieve us of our every burden and that He was beholden to us rather than us to His mercy?
- D. But instead Christ calls burdened believers unto Himself, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (**MAT 11:28**).
- E. True faith feels its blind way to the pool of Siloam without griping about the hassle and, receiving the benefit, worships the One Who gave it. **JOH 9:35-38.**
- F. His high value is worth the effort and wait, and this proves the intensity of our love of Him.