

Levi Pennington

People

1940

What Think Ye of Christ?

Levi T. Pennington
George Fox University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/levi_pennington

Recommended Citation

Pennington, Levi T., "What Think Ye of Christ?" (1940). *Levi Pennington*. 386.
https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/levi_pennington/386

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the People at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Levi Pennington by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolfe@georgefox.edu.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

By Levi T. Pennington

That Jesus Christ has had more influence on the lives of mankind than any other who ever walked the earth is a statement that would probably not be questioned by anyone who reads this article. While he was here on earth he asked that question of some of His fellow Hebrews, "What think ye of Christ?"

And that is a question that should be faced by every thinking man and woman today. What do you think of Christ? It may matter little what you think of Napoleon or Mary Todd Lincoln or Franklin Delano Roosevelt, but what your attitude is toward Christ is of infinite importance.

It is interesting to consider what others have thought of Him. The ancient prophets had better than a dim vision of Him as they looked forward through the centuries. His contemporaries ^{thought of} Him as the Son of God or as one possessed of a devil, depending on the point of view. Artists have sought to picture Him as the perfection of human beauty. Educators have seen Him as the greatest of all teachers. Moralists have found nothing so high in the ethical realm as His teachings and examples. But at the same time, as in His own day on earth, "there is a division among the people because of Him." What do you think of Him?

If we believe, as we do, that He was neither a deceiver nor deceived, we can be surest that our attitude is the right one if it conforms to what He said about Himself. There are many such statements. Let us look at a few of them.

"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" said Jesus, expressing the same idea that appeared in the name that was given Him before He was born, "Thou shalt call

His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." His purpose, the *raison d'être* for His life on earth and His death on Golgotha, was that he might save men from their sins. How many times He emphasized that purpose.

And what other man who ever lived could have made His claims without making himself ridiculous. He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Choose the greatest saint you ever knew or of whom you ever knew. I would select my mother, for if ever there was a saint on earth, I believe she was. But suppose my mother should have said, "I am the way", in any such sense as Jesus used the expression. I should have had to say, "No, Mother, you are not the way. You showed me the way, but you are not yourself the way." If she had said, "I am the truth", I should have had to say, "No, Mother, you are not the truth. You taught me the greatest truths that the human heart can know, but you are not yourself the truth." If she had said, "I am the life", I should have had to say, "No, Mother, you are not the life. You went down into the valley of the shadow of death to bring me into life in the physical world, but you are not yourself the life." And if she had said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me" -- but it is almost sacrilegious even to suggest such a thing of my mother, whose worship of Christ as her Savior and Lord was most sincere.

Another thing that Christ said of Himself, "I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly." The new birth which Jesus said was necessary does not usher the soul into a narrow, restricted, impoverished existence; there is abundance for the soul that receives Him. How we dishonor our Christ if we live, as the poet said, "at this poor dying rate."

And as Jesus approached the end of His work on earth, He

said to His closest followers, "All power is given unto me, in heaven and on earth." What man could say the same without making himself a laughing stock. Not Nebuchadnezzar, not Alexander the Great, not Mussolini, not Hitler -- but Jesus said it of Himself, and from that day till now He has proved it true to all who have tested Him in the great laboratory of human spiritual experience.

And His final word, to those about Him at the time of His ascension and to us today, after assuring them that all power was His, was, "Go --- and I am with you always." Not left desolate (orphans), but with the fulfilled promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, that handful of men and women were to go out into the world and transform it.

The change they wrought in that ancient world during the next two centuries would be hard to believe if we did not have convincing record of it. They traveled on foot -- we can travel by air. They could speak only to those who could hear their voices directly -- we have radio and television. They had no written documents except those that were laboriously copied by hand -- we have dozens of kinds of duplicating machines, linotypes, whirling printing presses. What could not the Christian world do in a generation if fired with the same zeal that sent the early apostles -- yes, and the early Quaker leaders -- out to spread the good news that God is always ready to receive those who seek Him, and to transform them by making them partakers of the divine nature.

Every follower of Christ, and certainly every one who is named a Friend, should heed the words of Jesus Christ, "All power is given unto me -- go -- I am with you always."
