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WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? AN EXCERPT FROM *THE GOSPEL AWAKENING*

DWIGHT L. MOODY (1837 – 1899)

CHRISTIAN EVANGELIST



I want to ask you a question — not what you think of this church or that church; not what you think of this minister or that minister; nor what you think of this creed or that creed; not what you think of this denomination or that denomination. The question is not what do you think of this belief or that belief; but, “What think ye of Christ?” And I think it is a proper question. There isn’t a noted public man in this country but that if I ask what you think of him, you would give your opinion, quite freely. I hear some of you going out of the hall giving your opinion about the sermon, and sometimes it isn’t very complimentary; but that is nothing. The question is not what you think of the preaching, or what you think of the singing; but, “What think ye of Christ?” It is of very little account what you think of the minister, but it is of vast importance what you think of Christ.

I want you just to ask yourselves this question, Do you believe in Christ? Do you believe that he was the Son of God? Do you believe that he was the God-man? Do you believe that he was with God before the morning stars sang together, and voluntarily left heaven and came down into this world? Whose son was he? Was he the son of man and the Son of God? That is the question. Now, if I had come into this city to find out about someone, to find out about his character, who he was, what he was, there would be two classes of people I would go to see. I wouldn’t go to his friends





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only; I would go to his enemies; I would go to both classes. I would go to his friends and go to his enemies, and see what his enemies had to say about him, before I gave judgment about the man.

My witnesses are the men that talked with Christ — the bitterest enemies that he had. The first I would like to summon into this court would be the Sadducees. What was it they had against the Son of God? Why, he proclaimed the resurrection; and they didn't believe in the resurrection. They didn't believe in future punishment. They didn't believe that they were going to rise again. And then the Pharisees went about planning how they might destroy him. "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them"—that was all they could bring against him. That is what we like to glory in.

Let us bring in Caiaphas, the highest ecclesiastical potentate of the earth, president of the Sanhedrim, the chief priest; and let Caiaphas open his lips, and let him tell us why he condemned the Son of God to death. Suppose he stood in my place. Caiaphas, just tell us what was the evidence you found against the Son of God. He said to him, "I adjure thee by the living God, Art thou the Son of God?" And he said, "I am." And Caiaphas says: "When I heard it, I tore my mantle and said he was guilty of blasphemy." That is what we glory in, his being the Son of God. Stephen said, when the heavens were opened, he looked in and saw him standing at the right hand of God. That is why they condemned the Son of God, just because he was the God-man. If he wasn't divine, they did right to put him to death; but he was.

Let Pilate come in; now he is an impartial witness. He has no prejudice against Christ. Pilate, just speak out now and tell us why you condemned him to the scourge, and to be crucified, and why you wrote up there upon the cross: "This is Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Tell us, what did you find in him – what fault? And hear what Pilate says, "I find no fault in him." Now men condemn Pilate, and yet there are a great many men worse than



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Pilate; for they find fault in Jesus Christ. Said he, “I will chastise this man and let him go; for I find no fault in him.”

Yea, my friends, I will bring in Judas, the very prince of traitors. Suppose I should say: “Judas, you sold the Son of God for thirty pieces of silver; you betrayed him; you knew more about him than Caiaphas; you knew more about him than Pilate. Come, now, Judas, tell us why you betrayed Christ? You were with him; you ate with him, and drank with him, and slept with him; tell us what you think of him?” I can imagine him throwing down the thirty pieces of silver, as he cries in agony, “I betrayed innocent blood.” Oh, yes, it is easy to condemn Judas nowadays; but how many men are worse than that!

But here is another witness, and that is the Roman centurion. He occupied the same position as the sheriff does now. This centurion of the Roman band had to go to Calvary and put the Son of God to death. He is a Gentile, and an impartial judge; let him tell us what he thinks of the Son of God. Come, now, centurion, you had charge of the execution of Jesus of Nazareth; you were there when he died. Here is his testimony: “Truly, this was the Son of God.”

I wish I had time to examine his friends. It would take all day and all night, and I think the whole of the week. Suppose I could examine that mighty preacher, the prince of preachers, a man that with his eloquence — and he had the eloquence of heaven — drew all men to hear him. Now, let us call in this wilderness preacher, who looks more like Elijah than any other prophet since Elijah. Ask John the Baptist, What think ye, John, of Christ? Hear his testimony: “I bear record, this is the Son of God.” That is what he thought; he forever settled that question. Another time he says of Christ: “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.”





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I might bring in doubting Thomas; he didn't believe that Christ had risen. But Christ says: "Thomas, did you say that you wouldn't believe unless you saw? Put your fingers in my side and feel the wound there; put your fingers in the palm of my hand and feel the wound there;" and Thomas cried out, "My Lord and my God." Convinced of the divinity of Jesus Christ, his cloud of unbelief was scattered to the four winds of heaven.

Now, before I close, let me ask you one question – take it home with you – and that is this: "Why don't you love him?" Just think now, can you give a reason for not loving him? I knew an infidel who was asked by a little child why he didn't love Jesus, and he finally said to himself, "I will just find out why I don't love Jesus." He took the Bible and opened it to the book of John – if you want to find out why you don't love Jesus, don't you look there. He found that God so loved the world that he gave Christ for it, and the poor infidel's heart was broken. And that night he was on his knees crying for mercy! ■

NOTES

Source: "What Think Ye of Christ?" in *The Gospel Awakening*, (Springfield, MA: Star Publishing Co, 1877), pg.214–219



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Dwight Lyman Moody was born the sixth child of Edwin and Betsy Holton Moody in Northfield, Massachusetts on February 5, 1837. Moody's formal education ended in the fifth grade, and he rapidly tired of life on the farm. He left home at age 17, seeking employment in Boston. It was there that he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ following a visit by his Sunday school teacher Edward Kimball.

He would later be responsible for starting Moody Bible Institute, the Northfield Seminary for Young Women, and the Mt. Hermon School for Boys. He had a major impact on the British Isles through his evangelistic meetings. Moody's love for the common man and message that all of life was to be lived in service to Jesus Christ left a lasting legacy.