

The Unchanging Christ

Introduction. In Mark 4:35-39, Jesus had to still the tempest and demonstrate His incredible ability to control nature. In a spiritual sense, people who identify with Jesus want Him to still the tempests in their lives. But they have to take Jesus as He is. None of us will find the peace and serenity that only Christ offers us if we seek to change Him.

I. Christ Can Change Us, But We Can't Change Him

- A. Jesus is the same and will never change (Hebrews 7:24; 13:8).
- B. There's many who'd accept Jesus if they could just modify Him somehow.
 - 1. Jesus knows us and sees all things (John 2:25; Revelation 2:18-19). He knows when His creation is dissatisfied with Him.
 - 2. Sadly, there's a lot who want Christ to fit their mold, but not to fit His. We can't change, modify, streamline, altar, or dictate Him.
 - 3. Many have and continue to try to change what God's done. When we truly love God, we'll love and respect God's plan (John 14:15; 15:10; 1 John 5:3; 2 John 6).
- C. Let's take a look at several ways that people have tried to change Jesus.

II. Changes Some Would Like to Make

- A. Christ and the Godhead.
 - 1. Too many want to believe in God, but they want to degrade Christ to just a prophet. This is a prominent tenant in Islam.
 - 2. However, Jesus existed from eternity (John 1:1-3). When He came to Earth, He was "God with us" (Matthew 1:23; cp. Hebrews 1:8;).
- B. Christ and His authority.
 - 1. Some had rather go by their feelings, creeds, or what the preacher says.
 - 2. While Jesus is "gentle and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:28), He has to be respected (Matthew 28:18; Luke 6:46; John 12:48).
- C. Christ and His salvation.
 - 1. Many people have their own personal feelings about salvation and being in heaven.
 - 2. Several Bible passages teach what you have to do in order to be saved (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33; Mark 16:16).
 - 3. We've got no other choice but to listen to and abide in the teaching of Christ (Matthew 17:5).
- D. Christ and His church.
 - 1. The church belongs to Jesus (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:23).
 - 2. Many want Jesus, but not His church. And it does raise reasonable questions as to whether church membership is biblical.
 - a) People have told me that they "feel" God in nature or at home.
 - b) The evidence in the New Testament makes the case that church membership is indeed biblical.

- (1) The New Testament letters were written to organized churches (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1).
- (2) There are reports in the New Testament of people being counted and added (Acts 2:41; 16:5; 1 Timothy 5:9).
- (3) Elders are called to oversee a particular flock (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2).
- (4) Taking matters of discipline to the church assumes an identifiable church body (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:4).
- (5) The practice of withdrawal involves removal from something you belong to (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:2, 13).
- (6) Obedience involves actions toward one another (1 Corinthians 12:25; Ephesians 4:2; 5:19; Colossians 3:13, 16).
- (7) Maturity involves accountability (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).
- (8) Discipleship involves submission to teaching and authority (1 Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:18).
- (9) Decisions are made by a recognized congregation (Acts 6:1-3; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

Conclusion. You can't change Jesus. You have to be willing to take Him as He is. Therefore, you're left with changing yourself to be in alignment with the Savior.

Does the Christ of the Bible appeal to you? If not, then Jesus isn't going to change to appeal to you. When many of His very own disciples turned to walk with Him no more (John 6:66), He didn't change to please them.

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