

# ***Forming Christ's Mind in You: Glimpses Into the Inner Life of Our Lord***

## ***Scriptural Values of Studying Christ***

### **Lesson 1 | Introduction**

We are embarking on a study of the Life of Christ. But it is a very focused, particular study of the Life of Christ.

- Not His “life” in the sense of surveying His public ministry—His sermons and parables and miracles—but particularly what the Bible reveals about His inner life.
- You could almost say we are studying the *personality* of Jesus.
  - to understand what motivated Him
  - what pleased Him and what disturbed Him
  - what His personal praying was like
  - the way He thought, and the way He expressed Himself
  - the way He understood and used the Scriptures
  - where His strength of purpose and character came from

In fact, just so you have a clearer idea of where we are headed, let me give you the coming lesson titles:

- Christ's Mind
- Jesus Walks by the Spirit
- Jesus' Preoccupation with the Father's Affairs
- Jesus Displays the Fear of God
- Jesus' Delight in the Father's Will
- Jesus' Dependence on Prayer
- Jesus' Affections

*What value is there in such a study?*

There are different ways we could approach a lesson and a question like this. We could just list out the reasons and give you the corroborating Scripture passage.

Instead, we would rather lead you on a journey of discovery for yourself, straight through your NT, stopping at passages that seem to contribute one of the answers to this question—because the Bible's answer to that question is multi-faceted. And we're going to ask **you** to look at these passages and infer answers to the question.

Some of these passages will also *have* something to say *about* the very personal, inner life of Christ. But that's what the whole series is about; that's not what we're looking for this morning. What we're looking for this morning in these passages is,

- What this passage suggests about the value of scanning Scripture for glimpses into the inner life of Christ?
- What specific value does this passage imply about why it would be a good thing to study Christ from the angle of His inner life?

There are certainly passages that we will miss. But what we see will be more than enough to justify the kind of study we are embarking on for the next 3 ½ months.

### 1. Isaiah 49:1-3; 50:4-7

These passages also actually provide some glimpses into the inner life and thought of Christ. But what might this passage suggest about the value of closer scrutiny of that dimension of Christ's life?

- *To flesh out what that kind of relationship with the Father looks like*

### 2. Matthew 5-7

We need to set this one up a little, because it may be a little hard to follow where we're going with this; and it's not just a verse or two, but has to do with the tenor of His whole first sermon.

- READ 5:17-20
  - 17—Don't misunderstand my attitude or purpose or motivations with respect to the Scriptures; don't misinterpret what I'm about to say.
- This is followed (ch. 5) by a succession of "*you have heard . . . but I say to you*", where He is exposing errant traditions and interpretations and applications of Scripture, and expounding legitimate & necessary applications instead. The focus is on Public Righteousness.
- This is followed (ch. 6) by exhortations regarding personal religion—good works, prayer, fasting, priorities—all revolving around the reality of God as **Father** (if you've never gone through these chapters and marked all the references to that, you need to).
- This is capped off (ch. 7) with warnings about Personal Response to His words.
- READ 7:21-29
- This sermon is bookended with His focusing attention on Himself and His authority—and the people *definitely* got the point.

So what might this passage suggest about the value of glimpses into the inner life of Christ?

- *It confirms the conviction that He really was what He claimed to be*
- Anyone can claim anything, especially in the spiritual realm.
- The demonstration of authenticity comes not merely from observing public words and actions, but from seeing what a person is like in private
- So when Scripture pulls back the curtain on Jesus' private moments, his personal habits, his prayer life, it is confirmatory that He is genuine.

### 3. Matthew 11:27 → John 1:18

So what might this passage suggest about the value of glimpses into the inner life of Christ?

- *To know God better*
- This is part of His mission, and one for which He is **uniquely** suited

Other passages support this reason for studying the inner life of Christ.

- John 8:29—*I always do the things that are pleasing to Him*
  - *To know what it looks like to please the Father*
  - *To better understand what our relationship to the Father should be by observing Christ's relationship to Him.*
  - Yes, His relationship as the God-Man is unique; but there is a reason God utilizes the Father-Son relationship, and that Jesus is described in Hebrews as our “brother” and habitually refers to Him as “Father”
- John 14:10-11—*Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? . . . Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me . . .*
  - *To know what a life full of and directed by the Father looks like*

### 4. Romans 8:29

*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;*

What truth in this passage suggests the value of glimpses into the inner life of Christ?

- *To examine the model into which God intends to shape us*
- In Romans, Paul also describes Jesus as the “Last Adam”—i.e., He is what we were intended to be and did what we were intended to do, in terms of rendering perfect obedience to our God and Creator. So everything we can observe about Him—including especially His private, inner life, is a model for us.

### 5. Romans 15:2-6

How does this passage imply the value of observing Jesus' private life and personality?

- *To study how I am to relate to others in the body of Christ*

### 6. 2 Corinthians 3:18

*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

What about this passage?

- *It actually facilitates my transformation to Christlikeness*

This actually complements and fills out Romans 8:29 very helpfully. It supplies the How.

What is the word for “changed” or “transformed” here? *Metamorphoo*

- We use that word to describe change, but only certain kinds of change.
- Isaac has changed a great deal from when he was born—but he hasn’t metamorphosed.
- The term denotes inward change that results in outward change
- A frog doesn’t *act* like a tadpole—they move differently, breathe differently, eat differently. Nor does a butterfly act like a caterpillar. That is because they have metamorphosed—they have *changed outwardly* **because** they have *been changed inwardly*.

How does this work?

- Imagine going to the puzzle section in Walmart and seeing a stack of puzzles in blank boxes—no picture on the top, just a note on the side that says “500 Piece Puzzle—Put it together and find out what it is!”
- You need a picture, right? What is this thing supposed to look like?
- And even while you’re putting it together, you are constantly referring to the picture.
- Scrutinizing the most minute details—looking at the shade of green on this side of the field, comparing which direction the tree branches are going in that part of the picture.
- Sanctification is the same way—if you don’t know what the final picture is supposed to look like, you have a terribly frustrating time trying to get there!
  - You’re not just trying to put together a 10-piece child’s puzzle; you’re trying to put together a puzzle of a gray mountain jutting up into a blue sky, skirted by autumn-colored maple and birch trees that surround a meadow of green grass with eight horses grazing in it!
  - You’re not just trying to “be good” or “do better”; your goal is to become LIKE CHRIST. HE is the GOAL of this transformation that we call sanctification.
- And just like you scrutinize every detail of the picture on the cover of the puzzle box to try to get it right, scrutinizing the picture of Christ in your Bible is the means God uses to help you fit together the puzzle of your sanctification.
- 2 Corinthians 3:8—as we thoughtfully, prayerfully, submissively examine Christ in the Scripture, we are changed into the image of the One we see there.
- A puzzle is transformed into the image on the box; the believer is transformed into the image in the Book.

## 7. **Philippians 2:1-5**

How does this passage imply the value of observing Jesus’ private life and personality?  
[HINT: very much a parallel to Romans 15:2-6]

- *To discover how I am to relate to others in the body of Christ*

Again, this is another passage that not only implies why we should examine the personal life of Christ, but goes on in the next several verses to open a window into that personal life of Christ.

## 8. 2 Peter 1:2

*Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

- *It is a means of grace and peace*

## 2 Peter 1:8 → 2:20

- *It is a means of escaping the world's defilements*

## 2 Peter 3:17-18

*You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,<sup>18</sup> but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

- *It is a means of spiritual stability and decreases our susceptibility to false doctrine*

## 9. 1 John 1:1-3

*What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—<sup>2</sup> and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—<sup>3</sup> what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

- *It enables us to validate and echo authentic testimony about Him*
- We can certainly testify to our first-hand experience of Jesus' ministry in our own lives,
- But there is something surer than that.
- We sing "you ask me how I know He lives; He lives within my heart." Someone has remarked that even the liberal theologian Rudolf Bultmann would have no problem with that line. In fact, that's **all** he had, because he dismissed the reliability of Scripture on which everything we know about Christ is based.
- If a personal spiritual experience was all we had, we'd be no better off than Bultmann, or than a Mormon with a 'burning in the bosom.'
- But we have the reliable testimony of Scripture itself that affirms and interprets and explains our personal experience of Christ.
- **That's** our authority and confidence.
- That's why we can validate and echo the apostles' testimony about Him.
- That's what authenticates our testimony of Him.
- And that's the basis for our confidence that we have "fellowship with" the

apostles, which is, John clarifies, actually a “fellowship with the Father and with His Son.”

- And the result of that is joy (v. 4).
- The more we know of Christ through the apostles’ testimony—and particularly of His private, inner, personal life—the richer that fellowship will be.

REMINDER: Knowledge *about* Jesus and knowledge *of* Jesus are not the same thing.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

*<sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the **light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.** <sup>5</sup> For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give **the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.***

Two phrases to capture are:

- *the **light** of the gospel of the **glory** of Christ, who is the image of **God***
- *the **light** of the knowledge of the **glory** of **God** in the face of Christ*

It would be hard to find a more captivating expression for the personal life of Christ than that.