

What Now?

If you clicked on the “What Now?” button, I would say that congratulations and welcome are in order. You have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and are now a member of the family of God. Your name is written in the Lambs Book of Life and again I say, congratulations and welcome.

You may be wondering why this is important. In Matthew Chapter 13, Jesus tells the parable of the sower and the seed. In this parable God is the sower and the seed is the Word of God; Jesus explains the parable in verses 18 – 23. I believe God is always sowing or scattering seed, which is what happened with you as you read, “Who Is This Jesus”, God’s seed was planted in your heart.

Jesus, explaining the parable, said of the seed which was sown, some fell along the path, which is probably where you are at right now. Some fell on rocky ground, some among the thorns, and some on good soil. The seed in the pathway has no cover and is snatched up by the enemy. For the seed to be protected it must be covered with soil.

The rocky ground has soil, but not much, so the seed cannot take root. I have wondered about the rocky ground, and what are the rocks in our life? We all have them, right? Maybe bitterness, resentment, anger, addiction, bad church experience or maybe every Christian you know seems like a hypocrite. Just a thought, but to me, a rock is anything that keeps the Word of God from taking root. I am not a farmer, but I do know, if I am planting something and I come across a rock, I throw it out. Having said that, I know some rocks are bigger than others; you must consistently chip away at them.

Some of the seed fell among thorns. The thorns represent the cares of the world and deceitfulness of riches. I do not know anyone who doesn’t, on occasion, spend time in a thorn bush. It is a battle we all have to be aware of and fight. I can tell you from experience, as I grow and mature in the Lord, I find myself spending less time in the briar patch.

Finally, there is the good, rich, fertile soil. The goal with this writing is to help you get the seed of the Word of God out of the pathway, past the rocky ground and the briar patch, and into the good soil of your heart, where it can take root and begin to grow.

Why is this important?

If the seed lays in the pathway for too long, the enemy will snatch it away. The enemy of your soul is the devil; he comes to steal, kill and destroy, and would love nothing more than for you to forget about the decision you have made to follow Jesus Christ. If he has not already, he will begin to put doubt in your mind about your decision to follow Jesus.

Again, our goal at FTC Ministries is to help you take the seed, move it off the path, past the rocky ground and into good soil. The rocky soil is better than being left along the path. At least in the rocky ground the seed can begin to take root. The problem is that the roots will not have any depth, and at the first sign of trouble, you may cut and run.

Back in 1988, I had been a Christian for about two years, and I was talking to a guy I worked with about Christianity; he said with some animosity in his voice, "I tried it, but it just didn't work for me". Therein lies the problem; first, we should not be "trying" Christianity, second, we should never come to God with a, "what's in it for me", attitude. The Word of God never took root in the good soil of his heart. Our hope and prayer for you is that you will not have a similar story.

The inspiration for the writing of, "Who Is This Jesus", came from a conversation I had with my boss. I had not worked with him before, so I was just trying to find out about him, and especially where he is spiritually. By his own admission, he has no knowledge of the Bible or Church. When I say, "no knowledge", I mean literally zero knowledge. If that best describes you, this process may seem complicated, but it is really quite simple. Do these three things: pray, read your Bible, get involved in a local church. A good Bible believing, Bible preaching church, that is. Beware, there are churches today that do not preach the Word of God accurately. They preach a perverted doctrine; some to the point of complete heresy. Start reading your Bible, ask the Holy Spirit to lead you, and He will.

Prayer is how we communicate with God. Jesus teaches us to pray to the Father in His name, that is, the name of Jesus. God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die for you, and He wants to hear from you. Some believe it is okay to simply think about God and meditate on Him. That is a good thing, no doubt about it, but our Heavenly Father also wants to hear our voice. Jesus taught His disciples, what we call, the Lord's Prayer. In other words, He taught them what to say as they prayed. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, just a few days before His crucifixion, the people were laying their cloaks and palm branches on the ground in front of Him like a red carpet, and shouting praises. The pharisees, who were the Church leaders at that time, were outraged, and told Jesus to rebuke them. Jesus

responded by saying that if they were silent the stones would cry out. Praise and giving of thanks should always be a part of our prayer life. The Bible tells us to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Back to the point, God not only wants your thoughts and meditation, but your prayer and praise as well. He wants to hear your voice.

Reading the Word of God - the Bible – is the surest and safest way to learn about God. We learn about God through experience, prayer, nature, and the universe, but our spiritual roots must run deep through the Bible, otherwise we are open for deception to creep in.

I enjoy the Gospel of John; consequently, I would suggest you start with the Gospel of John and a few chapters from Psalm every day. Pray before you read, while you are reading and after you finish, that the eyes of your understanding would be opened. I like to write as I read, and I never know where the Lord will take me.

For a Bible, I would suggest using a good study Bible. I use the ESV Study Bible, it is not red letter and does not always capitalize where I think it should, but it is a great tool. I have also used the Spirit Filled Life Study Bible, New King James Version, for years. It is an excellent tool as well. Of course you can't go wrong with the King James Version, New American Standard Bible (NASB), or the New International Version (NIV), but many find the New Living Translation (NLT) easier to understand. You can simply click on the christianbook.com link on this website for great prices.

Get involved in a Bible believing, Bible preaching local church. For a lot of people, just to hear the word "church" makes them cringe. For whatever reason, some people have a bad perception of the Church, but Jesus loves the Church so much that He was willing to lay down His life for it. The Bible says that Jesus Christ is the head and we – me and you, the Church – are the body. The Church was meeting when Jesus was alive on the earth. After He ascended back to heaven, they continued to meet, and nowhere in the Bible does it tell us not to meet. It does however warn against not getting together. There truly is strength in numbers.

Congratulations again on your excellent decision to follow Jesus. We are excited for you, and God rejoices over your salvation. We want to help you grow in Christ in any way we can by answering any questions you might have, praying with you and for you, and offer instruction and guidance as needed. May God bless you, and keep you, and make His face to shine upon you.