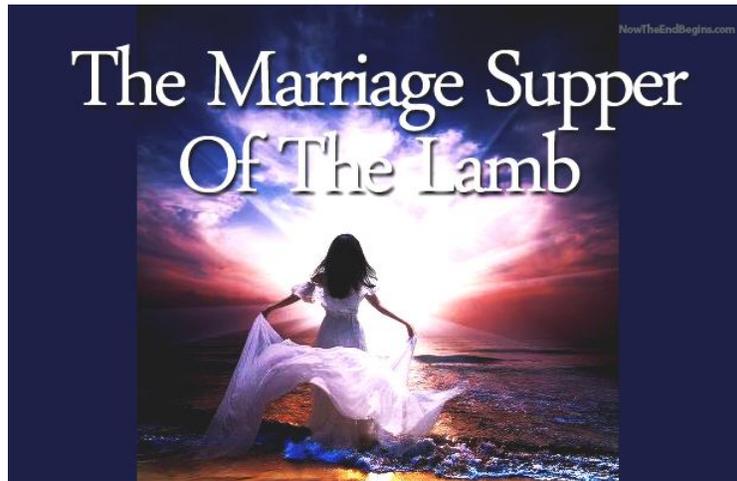


## September Week #4 Devotionals & Consideration



I remember when I first knew that I wanted to be a follower of Jesus. I was five years old. My mother had brought us up with Bible stories, and I wanted to be good, but a Sunday School teacher shared something more that made me decide that I was going to follow Jesus.

I asked if I could be baptized, but was told I would have to wait. When my eighth birthday came, I was surprised and sorry to learn that I would have to still wait a little longer for a group of kids to have their birthdays.

Eventually, I was baptized and the congregation witnessed me make a covenant based on a decision I had made three years prior to “Come to Jesus.”

As a young person, I was in a summer internship and was a tour guide at the Kirtland Temple. We were schooled in the many aspects of The Temple and the historical and religious context of the time. We were encouraged to be “interpreters” of the information at hand. Yes, we were there to share about the building and applicable church history, but all of that was, in my mind, diminished to a tourist curiosity without the foundation of Jesus Christ. So, I determined to use any and all opportunities to talk about Christ.

Around the time that I was a guide at the Kirtland Temple, I decided that the best way for me to really gain an understanding of the message of Jesus was to study everything He said in the New Testament.

Because red-letter text was not available in the Inspired Version, I built up the courage to permanently alter my scriptures and highlighted every word of Jesus in the four gospels with a pink highlighter.

Weeks 3 and 4 of this devotional study draw upon the words of Jesus to those who had *Come to Christ*.

Who were some of those people? Why did they come to Jesus? What did they experience? How did they respond?

The first people who came to Jesus were the shepherds. After hearing the angels’ proclamation, they “came with haste” and found the babe lying in a manger. Their response was to “make known abroad” the news.

The next people who came to Jesus had actually been waiting for His coming. After the birth of Jesus, after the days of Mary’s purification were accomplished, Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the temple.

There was in Jerusalem a man by the name of Simon who had been waiting for the “consolation of Israel.” The Holy Ghost had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the “Lord’s Christ.” He “came by the Spirit to the temple.”

When Jesus was brought, Simon took Him in his arms, praised God and blessed Jesus. He prophesied to Mary of the mission and future of her son.

Also at the temple was Anna, a woman who had been a widow for 84 years. She had spent her days fasting and praying at the temple. She gave thanks for Jesus and spoke of Him to all who “looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”

Sometime later, while Jesus was still a very young child, the wise men from the east came looking for “the Messiah of the Jews.” They had seen His star and had come to worship Him. These people who came to Jesus had learned of a promised Messiah. They came to worship and to praise God. They shared with others their joy. Should we not do the same?

The four gospels share numerous accounts of people who came to Jesus. Crowds followed Him or came to where He was for healing.

Early in His ministry, He went to Capernaum. While visiting the synagogue, He cast an unclean spirit out of a man.

That evening, at the house of Simon and Andrew, the whole city gathered at the door with those who were diseased and who possessed devils. Jesus healed many and cast out many devils.

Very early in the morning, Jesus went into the desert to pray. His disciples followed and said, “All men seek for you.”

Later, Jesus healed a leper. Jesus told the leper to say nothing, but the man went and told the news widely. Because of

this, Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but people came to Him “from every quarter.”

What were these crowds looking for? They were looking for healing. If we were there would we not do the same? And don’t we also seek Jesus because He is the healer of mind, body and soul?

Pharisees and doctors of the law came from every town in Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem to hear Jesus.

On one occasion, men brought a paralyzed man and because of the crowd, they lowered the man through the roof. Jesus said, “Thy sins are forgiven thee.” The Scribes and Pharisees said, “Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” Jesus responded, “Does it require more power to forgive sins than to make the sick rise up and walk? But, that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, I said it.” Then, to the man He said, “Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thy house.” The man glorified God, the people were amazed and glorified God, and they were also filled with fear.

We, too, have come to Jesus to receive forgiveness of our sins and to receive healing. We, too, should glorify God and have a Godly fear and respect of the power of God.

Because of the multitudes, Jesus went up to the mount. There, He preached the Sermon on the Mount, which deserves careful study. The beatitudes are a treasure of Jesus’ words. All of [Matthew 5, 6 and 7](#) should also be read.

After the Sermon on the Mount, more multitudes came to Jesus. He taught them using parables.

The New Testament has at least 40 parables told by Jesus. They are found in [Matthew 5, 7, 9, 13, 18, 20, 21, 22, and 25;](#)

in [Mark 2, 4, 12 and 13](#); in [Luke 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21](#). When Jesus told the parables, He was speaking to crowds that included men, women and children.

We read Bible stories to our children and use them for Church School and Vacation Church School classes. We should read them for ourselves and not relegate them to only children's ministries.

Sinners came to Jesus. When Jesus was eating at the house of Simon, the Pharisee, a sinful woman brought an alabaster box of ointment and stayed at His feet weeping. She washed His feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, and anointed them with ointment. When the host questioned, Jesus told this parable: "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when he found they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?" Simon answered, the man who was forgiven the most. Jesus agreed. He said, "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but this woman since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." He said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven...Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

Other sinners also came to Jesus. Matthew, the tax collector, left his unsavory job to follow Jesus.

Zacchaeus, who was chief among the publicans, became honest. He gave half of his goods to the poor and paid back those he had defrauded fourfold.

We are sinners. When we come to Jesus, do we leave our sins and make reparation for what we have done?

Do we have gratitude to Jesus for forgiving us?

Children also came to Jesus. He blessed them and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of heaven."

Jesus viewed the Jews as children. He said, "How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens, under her wings, and you would not."

Jesus wants us to *come to Him*. Like those who came before, will we also *come unto Him* by believing, repenting, listening, learning, and proclaiming what He has done?

