

## The Mind of Christ Class Week 10

March 27, 2019

Last week I didn't quite finish "Jesus at 12 years of age" so let's go back to **Luke 2:41-50** and say a few more things about that. This was a trip made to Jerusalem and Jesus was left behind accidentally. This brings up all kinds of questions in my mind, as we'll see.

<sup>41</sup> Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast; <sup>43</sup> and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But His parents were unaware of it, <sup>44</sup> but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day's journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. <sup>45</sup> When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem looking for Him. <sup>46</sup> Then, **after three days** they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. <sup>48</sup> When they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, your father and I [t] have been anxiously looking for You." <sup>49</sup> And He said to them, "**Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's [u] house?**" <sup>50</sup> But they did not understand the statement which He [v] had made to them.

It seems to me from what Jesus says, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" ... and by the way, to my knowledge, these are the first recorded words of Jesus – at least in the New Testament. Some people believe that when it says, "the angel of the Lord said" in the Old Testament it is Jesus speaking. That's another discussion, but at least in the New Testament, these are the first **red** letter words of Jesus – Jesus' first words spoken.

He says, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" It seems from what He says, and I don't want to make too much of it, that He expected His parents to know where He would be. Now I don't mean that he meant to be there for three days while they were on the road looking for Him, but perhaps He was saying, "You know, when we are in Jerusalem, I hang out at the Temple. You should know where I would be." That's like saying, "When I'm in Nashville, Tennessee, I hang out at Music Row..." There are certain places where you would know where to find somebody – where they're going to be. By now, they **could** have known, since He was a good son and not into mischief, that He would not have gone to sinful places and be with sinful people (unless, of course, He was trying to convert someone. I don't know if He was evangelizing at twelve years of age).

The word "know" is eido, εἶδω, and it means "to see, to be aware". His parents were not aware of where He **had** to be. Jesus said that this was where He **must** be – it *behooves* Him to be. It means to bind, tie, or confirm. In other words, it was inevitable – He **had** to be there. It was a "must". It wasn't just that He **wanted** to be there; it was an obligation. So, did the Spirit lead Him there or did God tell Him to go there for some special role that

might take place in His future ministry? All these are questions. Had Jesus talked to His parents about this? Maybe He had mentioned that ‘when we go to Jerusalem, I’d really like to hang out with some of the teachers of the Law’ and they thought, ‘yeah, right’, but He was serious. Maybe He **had** really told them about that but they had forgotten. They didn’t make sure that He was with them when they left, so He stayed where He told them He was going to be. Maybe they just didn’t “get” it, or “understand” it. So, that’s what I get from the text here.

The idea of His being about His Father’s house... The New American Standard says “I had to be about my Father’s **house**”. The word “house” is in *italics* meaning that the word is not in the original Greek. In the King James Version it says, “I must be about my Father’s business”, but the word ‘business’ is not in the text. Neither the word ‘house’ nor ‘business’ is in the text. It’s really a phrase “εν τοις του πατρος μου” – translated word for word as “did ye not know that in the [affairs] of my father, it behooves...” The Greek is not very specific. The word ‘tois’ is the dative article meaning “to be” and it’s in the masculine form. Patros (πατρος) is in the genitive singular and is possessive form so it is “the Father’s ‘something’”. Neither the words **house** nor **business** are in the text so it was the Father’s *whatever*... Whatever the Father’s ... was, He was ‘about it’. It’s quite open-ended, the way His life was open-ended. If the Father was involved in it, He was involved in it. Everything I see the Father do, I do. , “**Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does, the Son also does**” - John 5:19. I don’t speak anything on my own. I only speak what the father gives me to speak. “**For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken.**” John 12:49. Jesus was totally involved in whatever the Father was involved in.

So, Jesus was absolutely under obligation to do the work His Father sent Him to do, and even though He was 12-years-old, He must have recognized that He had come down here to do **His Father’s** work. Whether it was to be in His Father’s house or be about His Father’s business we can’t say. I guess those who translated the Bible had to put something in there. They couldn’t just leave it, “The Father’s ...” leaving it open-ended. So even at 12, Jesus was totally focused on being ‘possessed’ by His Father. He was **His** Father’s possession. So what did his parents find Him doing? He was talking about what His Father ‘said and did’ fulfilling the Scriptures. He was talking about His Father’s business...His words...who **He** is and what **He** is doing.

Mary and Joseph didn’t understand what Jesus was saying. The word is “rhema - ρημα” is the **word ‘uttered by another person’** as opposed to the ‘written word’. It seems that even after this, they did not understand Jesus’ special relationship that He had with His Father. That was a sticking point all through Jesus’ ministry. (Don’t you understand the special relationship that I have with My Father?) That’s what people didn’t get. And when He called God **His own Father** in John 5:18, **that’s** what caused the outrage to the Jewish people. <sup>18</sup> **For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.** So, even at 12 years of age, Jesus was talking about His Father – and it’s a big deal because it’s not typically Jewish. The Jews didn’t refer to God as ‘Father’ in the Old Testament.

Throughout Jesus' ministry, they didn't understand the special relationship, but this is one major key to understanding the mind of Christ. If we want to understand the mind of Christ, we have to understand the relationship that Christ had to His Father. This is a major point and we see it emerge even at 12 years of age in that one brief statement that He made in His first recorded words of Him speaking.

Then it goes on to say that Jesus subjected Himself to His parents—He was in submission to them. So Jesus could be in submission to them and **STILL** be in submission and in total unity with His Father. He saw no contradiction in following His parents and being totally obedient to His Father.

Now I concede that there could be...and there were... times when Mary and His brothers came to get him because they thought He was mad (**Mark 3:20-21 and 31-35**).

<sup>20</sup> Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. <sup>21</sup> When his family [b] heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. <sup>32</sup> A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

Jesus didn't play into that. He didn't go along with that.

<sup>33</sup> "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. <sup>34</sup> Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>35</sup> *Whoever* does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

Even with Mary and the turning of water into wine, He basically gave in to her, but there is no contradiction between the relationships that we have on earth and the relationship we have with the Father. When there are, (and Jesus spoke about this in Matt. 10:34-39), when there are those conflicts, you must obey God rather than man. (Peter also said this in Acts 5:29). But at this point, (in **Luke 2:51**) Jesus is willing to be under the authority of His parents. To submit, here, is voluntary as **all** submission is voluntary in Scriptures. Jesus is laying down His own will to His parents' will. Jesus' alignment to His Father is absolutely essential to His thinking or his mind.

Mary's response to all of this is typical of a mother for something that is not completely understood. Remember that last week we looked at the idea that they were astonished. We saw the element of 'astonishment' by Mary and Joseph. That astonishment was because it didn't quite make sense to them – it didn't "fit together" for them. The teachers of the Law were astonished, but so were His parents. It says that she treasured these things in her heart (Luke 2:51). The word is diatereo (διατηρω) meaning to watch thoroughly, to observe strictly, to keep, to guard with care, or to retain. Mary kept these things sealed up, retained in her heart, and she thought about them. From this word, it seems the effect was profound. This was the effect that Jesus had on *many* people. They would see what He did and hear what He said and they would take it to heart and think about it. But was the experience a pleasing one?

Was the experience of treasuring these things in her heart a pleasing experience or was it a disturbing experience? We can store things up in our heart, but it may not necessarily be pleasing. It may be just ‘shut up’ in there. Maybe it was one that was fraught with anxiety. She had already been told by Simeon when Jesus was a baby, that her soul was going to be pierced by Him. (Luke 2:34-35, <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, <sup>35</sup> so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. **And a sword will pierce your own soul too.**”)

Compare this with **Luke 1:29**. When Gabriel came to Mary, she was pondering, “**Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.**” The word means “to reckon thoroughly” or “to deliberate”. Things are going on in Mary’s head, too. She has been collecting over the years, bits and pieces of a very large puzzle that she is trying to put together in her mind about “who is this child?” “What matter of child is this?” “What is happening here?” Piece by piece this is being put together for Mary. Did Jesus ever sit down with her, at any point in His life (and I’m just asking questions—we have no evidence) and say, “Mom, I am going to spell the whole thing out for you. I’m going to let you know what this is all about because you are the closest person to me on this earth. You are my mother. You brought me into this world and I know that you have been storing all these things up in your heart. I’d like to lay it out for you. I want to tell you what this is really all about so that you don’t have any more doubt or questions about that.” Again, we don’t have any sense that Jesus did that.

Do you have any questions about Jesus at twelve and what we have been talking about?

**Brian Henegar** – Since this is something that Jesus’ family did every year, could this have been a sort of divine providence for Him? He didn’t really do things on his own, but at this age, nearing 13, he was approaching adulthood. In the years to come, could this have become more of a regular thing? It seems like it was almost by *accident* that this happened, and I know that Joseph and Mary were scared, but it kind of makes sense that this type of thing may have happened more and more over the years. (Not word for word but according to my best hearing).

**Rod:** Exactly. That is possible.

**Jean:** At his age, we don’t really know what Jesus knew. Do you think He knew who He was at this age? Was He born knowing all these things?

**Rod:** The indicators to me, and we’ll look at it in the next verse, is that He grew in these things. He didn’t come out of the womb being a typical scholar ... it accumulated over the years. How, both the supernatural and the natural played into that, we don’t know.

**Buffy** – trouble hearing but something about Jesus being God eternal ...

**Rod:** Yes, but the idea of Him emptying Himself in Phil. 2:6-7 and taking on the nature of a man, indicates from the next verse that Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men. There was an **increasing** measure of wisdom in Him.

It is hard for us to understand how He matured. We're just speculating. It is probably a mixture of natural maturing that we all go through, learning by experience and teaching, and then, perhaps, a supernatural infusion of information or knowledge into Him as well.

We see that in the life of Paul. Paul had his normal upbringing as a Jewish boy. He learned the Law and went to Gamaliel's school, but then he also had those direct revelations when He was in the Arabian desert for three years (Gal. 1:11-12, 15-18).

“For I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me – that it is not a human affair; for I neither received it from a human nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ”<sup>15</sup> But when **God**, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased<sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being.<sup>17</sup> I didn't go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, but **I went into Arabia**. Later I returned to Damascus.<sup>18</sup> **Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem** to get acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days.

No man revealed the gospel to Jesus...it came directly by God.

**Mike:** I think this was mentioned last week, but what sticks out to me is that as a parent, missing of a child for three days, I can't imagine what must have been going through Mary and Joseph's minds. I mean, if we lost one of our kids for five minutes, we'd be going crazy. And this is **God's** Son who they lost.

**Rod:** Yes, and I mentioned last week that this three days could be similar to the three days and three nights that Jesus was in the tomb. It didn't have to be 3 twenty-four hour days. It could have been part of three days. If this is so, it could have been part of one day, a full day, and part of a third day. It could have been 24 hours and two minutes. But, yes, that would be a long time to be missing a child.

**Jean** – Jesus must have had a great interest in what they were hearing by His being there.

**Rod:** Yes. It says that they were astonished at His intelligence. Intelligence means “the ability to put things together. It is being able to put concepts together.” They were amazed at that. And he had been referred to as just a “child” in verses 40 and 43.

Verse 52, “**And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man**” this is similar to the verse back in verse 40, “**And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.**” I don't know if Brenda remembers this, but verse 52 was the motto of the Christian school that we went to. I remember it because I grew up there. . . it was pounded into our heads. That was the model for the way that we were supposed to grow. So here it adds that Jesus is getting taller (stature). This “stature” **could** be spiritual stature because that same word is used in Ephesians 4:13. It says “**Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**” It can't mean that we are trying to get as tall as He is but we are becoming like Him. But here, I believe it indicates physical stature. He's getting taller – bigger and everyone is

noticing that. “Look how big you are getting.” Boys seem to go through that growth spurt around this age. Girls a little bit earlier than that, but boys certainly around this age. He is also increasing in favor or in grace with God and man.

So how did Jesus at age twelve, help us to see how He thinks? It reminds us of Psalm 27:4, “[One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek \(or inquire\) of him in his temple.](#)” Did the teachers of the Law understand what a unique opportunity they had to learn from the One who created them? This was the unique Son of God, the Lamb of God, who would remove their sins and give them eternal life? How often have *we* longed to sit with Jesus and ask Him so many questions? Did they even understand what an opportunity this was, or years later did some of these same teachers try to trick Him to discredit Him? If they were astonished by Him at twelve, just imagine what kind of match He was at thirty. And it may have been some of these same teachers, eighteen years later, who were confronting Him. Maybe they had remembered back to discussions they had had when He was twelve years of age? Man, this guy is sharp!

Is that why, when he would say something to them, they’d just be quiet? They just wouldn’t know what to say. They couldn’t answer Him.

**Brian Smith:** When they didn’t know what to say, they would come back with an insult. They’d accuse Him ... **You have a demon!** They’d call Him names.

**Rod:** They came back with ‘ad hominem’ arguments (fallacious argumentative strategy whereby genuine discussion of the topic at hand is avoided by instead, attacking the character, motive, or other attribute of the person making the argument).

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ad\\_hominem](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ad_hominem)

Instead of substance of the argument, they would attack the man. So, in this way of thinking, it is His mind or thought process that I want to imitate.

When Jesus left God’s house that day, did Joseph ask Him what they had been talking about for so long? Did they talk about this on the way home? I have so many questions that I want to know about my Lord, Jesus. But this is what the Holy Spirit chose to reveal, so I say, “Thank You.”

That’s the section of Jesus at twelve years of age and I wanted to spend a long time on that because it is the only thing we know about His middle years.

Alright, I’m following A. T. Robertson’s “Harmony of the Gospels” so now we’ll go to Luke 3:1-2. Robertson combines this with Mark Chapter 1 and verse 1. So we read:

[In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Tracoinis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—<sup>2</sup> during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. And Mark 1:1 The beginning of the \[gospel\] good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. Robertson puts these scriptures together.](#)

The question is “who runs things politically and what was the stage like when John the Baptist and Jesus began their public ministry”? All of these figures will play a role at the right time. Remember that Gal. 4:4-5 says, “**But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.**” It says that at just the right time, Christ was born into the world. So what made it the “right time”? This discussion has been debated for centuries. What made it the right time “**politically**” speaking may have played into this.

Putting Luke 3:1-2 and Mark 1:1 gives us a frame. We won’t spend a lot of time here, but all of these figures will play a role at the right time in waiting for the Messiah to be revealed. Just as Herod the Great was used to try to destroy Jesus, each of these men and their successors would be used on one way or another in this drama ... some more than others.

**Tiberius** was the third Caesar after Julius and Augustus, his adopted father, and the Caesar who ordered the Census at the time Jesus was born. Tiberius reigned from 14 A. D. to 37 A. D. He spent much of his time in seclusion, and later on when Jesus was shown his image on a coin, He said in Matthew 22:21 “**Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.**” Jesus was also accused in his trial for being *in competition* with Caesar - John 19:12 “**If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.**” Since Jesus said He was a king, he was in competition with Tiberius Caesar.

**Pontius Pilate** of Judea was a person who figured prominently in Jesus’ life and death. He ruled from 26 A. D. to 36 A. D. He was the fifth Roman Governor of the region and his origins and history are unknown except in legend. He provided the major political influences in Judea during Jesus’ ministry.

Pilate’s counter-part in Galilee, where Jesus spent considerable time was **Herod the Tetrarch** (or **Herod Antipas**), son of Herod the Great. Herod the Great ordered the massacre of the children. Herod Antipas was one of the sons who survived his father’s wrath. Herod Antipas is the Herod who divorced his wife Phasaelis and married his brother, Philip’s wife, Herodias. So Antipas figured into the life of Christ in that John the Baptist condemned this marriage and was executed for that. Jesus also stood before Herod the Tetrarch in **Luke 23:6-7**. Pilate asked if Jesus was a Galilean and when he learned that Jesus was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

### **Luke 23:8-12**

When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform a sign of some sort. <sup>9</sup> He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. <sup>11</sup> Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. <sup>12</sup> That day Herod and Pilate became friends—before this they had been enemies.

So this man figures into the life of Christ through his relationship with John the Baptist, and later during Jesus' own trial where He was mocked by Herod Antipas.

**Philip** "of Iturea and Traconitis" was another son of Herod the Great who had two territories. He was the half uncle to his own wife. They had a lot of freedom in marriage.

**Lysanias, the Tetrarch of Abilene** was in the north area near Damascus. Jesus didn't spend a lot of time there. We don't know why he's mentioned unless it's to fix dates.

Then there are **Annas** and **Caiaphas**, the High Priests. They figured prominently in Jesus' life. They were father and son. Annas seemed to have considerable influence and stayed right in the picture while Caiaphas was "in charge". Politically Annas had a lot of power with regard to the death of Jesus.

So the political scene had particular importance and influence on Jesus' thinking.

**First**, the evil one (Satan) worked through the powers of the world to go up against Jesus. This is a theme we see throughout the Old Testament. The powers of the world were often in opposition to the people of God. These dramas have played out in history through the Old Testament.

Remember when the devil tempted Jesus, one of the things he said he would do for Jesus was to give Him all the kingdoms of the world. So he seems to have some sway or control over the political powers that be. (Ron, you had better think about that before you run for office. Satan has particular influence over political leaders. But it can work out the other way too. Cyrus the Great was influenced by God to send the Israelites back to Jerusalem.) This happened under every major empire: Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greek, Rome, and in every case God intervened to control the powers and to advance His plan of redemption.

**Second**, the story of expectation was that the Messiah would be a worldly political leader. Think about this: Here, the people of the day were thinking of the messiah in a political sense. Much of the research that has been done of the intertestamental period regarding the mindset of the people about the coming messiah verifies this. So they would be thinking about his opposition to the current powers that be. If we were looking for a savior in America to ride up and become the greatest leader in America, we would think about it in the backdrop of our current political landscape. To this is sort of how Jesus had to somewhat separate Himself from those stereotypes of what those politicians were like. He was definitely the outsider. He wasn't in the beltway. He came to *confront* the leaders.

John the Baptist, right out of the gate, was at odds with Antipas and his illegitimate wife, and *that* got him killed. Jesus is constantly in battle with, at least, the Jewish religious leaders, and less so with the Romans. But that was against the backdrop because the Jewish leaders were often doing things because they didn't want to get into trouble with the Romans. They would attack Jesus, or at least try to neutralize Him, so the Romans wouldn't come in and make them even less powerful than they already were.

Politics is always there, and every now and then it erupts. It was major in the crucifixion. The Jews wanted another David who would usher in the age of peace, prosperity and religious influence throughout the world. Many had their hopes set on Jesus doing this.

**Third**, the politicians and religious leaders shaped the thinking of the people. This influence or leaven permeated all levels of society. Jesus had to cast out the leaven and purify the house. Jesus had to redirect people's hearts back to God as their King and leader, and avoid getting high-jacked by the political agenda (as they tried to do in John 6 where they wanted to take Jesus by force and make Him a king).

John the Baptist also entered this world and as the prophetic forerunner of Jesus, God came to John and "rhema" spoke to him. John was a prophet, preacher and proclaimer to confront the common people, the political and religious leaders of his time. Surely the setting of this first wave response of John the Baptist took some space in Jesus' thoughts.

We have to think about the political landscape of the time, and how this played into the mind of Christ. I know that I can't go more than a couple of hours without the political landscape of our world in my mind. (Giggles) I'd like to get it out of my head sometimes and take a breath. Any thoughts on that?

How did Jesus see the politics of His day? Did he isolate from it? I mean, if they had had TV in the days of Jesus, what station would He be watching? Would He have joined a political party? Would He have been independent? Would He have given any attention what so ever to politics? Did he act a-politically? Did he avoid positions? Were there a lot of things going on out there in the political world that Jesus ignored (I don't really care; it's not my agenda.) Example - I don't care if you legalize marijuana or not. Did he take the position du jour (of the day). I don't care if you ... whatever...you pick the condition.

**Brain Smith:** I think He would have gone to the heart of the matter. Remember the man who hollered out in the crowd "make my brother share the family fortune with me." Jesus answer was "it's not about money. Be content with your wages." It's not the answer they wanted, but ...

**Rod:** Jesus would get to the heart of the issue. How did He view the work of John the Baptist in preparing hearts to receive Him? Did Jesus find ways to confront the leaven of the world that affected the hearts of men? Did Jesus do spiritual battle with Rome, Judea or Galilee? Did His messages have political implications? Did He seek to replace the world's system of government, and if so, with what? How would His kingdom co-exist with the worldly kingdom? What was Jesus' strategy in regards to those mentioned? What was the mind of Christ regarding political and religious leaders?

That opens up all kinds of questions. People in some religions have opted for absolutely no political involvement whatsoever. You must not even vote. We are the kingdom of God, not the kingdom of the world. "We separate ourselves totally from that, other than our having a moral obligation to be salt and light; leaven within the kingdom of the world to bring about change. We influence people that way."

Jesus was in this political mess, soup if you will. I imagine somebody has done a study on this. I haven't read one ... Maybe they pointed out who Jesus would rub shoulders with in bumping up against the political winds and waves of the time and how that affected His thinking. I just raise those points for your consideration.

I would think if He were here today, He might just say, "**Enough! Just grow up!**" (Giggles). He might just exclaim, "How long must I contend with you?" (Mt. 17:17)

**Jean:** if there were a right and a wrong for whatever they had back then, He would be thinking along the godly part if there was one. He even taught us to pray for our leaders.

**Rod:** He did.

**Carole:** I would say that He got involved heavily with morality, but not politics.

Well, again, it's just something to think about. He **had** to be effected by it when John the Baptist was executed. Jesus proclaimed that John was the greatest person ever born of woman (Matthew 11:11). John was His cousin and to see him get caught up in this political drama ... although for John it wasn't so much political as moral. But the political power that was wielded against John was tremendous. That was the precursor of all the political power that was going to come up against the kingdom ... the persecutions.

So Jesus knew that even if you are not that involved in it, people often see the Kingdom of God as a threat to their power and control, and there will be a backlash, sometimes violently.

**Ron:** "I got a question from my brother a few weeks ago. What do you think about a flag in front of the church or in the church? Their congregation is going through a real debate about what that looks like. I told him that we have a flag **on** the grounds and **in** the building. Obviously, we don't have an issue with it, but it seems to me that our motto is "in God we trust" for the state of Florida, and the scripture is really clear about "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" - Psalm 33:12. It's right to honor God if we're going to involve politics with being the citizens of a nation. We need to pray for and try to put people in positions who can help **promote** God's truth and values. What is destroying this nation is that we have abandoned them. We can see where that leads. I think this nation was built on this truth."

**Rod:** Certainly Jesus must have looked at Judaism even in the hands of the Jewish kings at the time, the puppet Kings of Rome, and even 'high priests' and thought, "Man, you didn't learn anything from the Old Testament. You didn't learn anything from the way God arranged this to be. You could be such a huge dynamic influence of right and good; of morality and the Law, if you just would." But you have drunk the 'Kool Aid'. It has gone to your head and you operate from your own power and greed.

Jesus did influence that. He did attack that.

**Ron:** For example, the decisions that attract the way we fall away from God ... I mean it's politicians. They're the ones who said that even a five-year-old can decide whether he's male or female, and you cannot talk to their parents about it. Political decisions are being made about marriage and things that go flatly against the truth that God has given us. So I think it's right to be involved politically, to pray for, and to have people in positions of authority.

**Rod:** Tomorrow morning I will be hearing David Barton. He is speaking for the Sarasota prayer breakfast. David Barton has done significant research into the documents of the founding fathers and I am sure he will be speaking about what you are saying.

**Jean:** You can access the videos he has. Every state in the country, in their constitutions, have the words, "Under God".

**Brain Henegar:** Brian made a comment before about Jesus focusing on the deeper issue about the compassion and humanity that we show to one another. No matter how we think from a political spectrum, from certain liberals or to think about how it effects people on an individual basis, that they realize that there is a societal issue, but there is also, it sounds to me, an individual and compassion issue as well. On one side, I can see it from the protection of the nation – like "that" side of it, but the compassionate side that we want to take care of the people who are here as well. That is an obligation that God really speaks to – having compassion for the poor and compassion for people that wins doubt over anything else when it comes to individuals and numbers with Jesus and the people. [I missed a lot of this but tried my best to hear Brian].

**Rod:** Exactly.

We're out of time. I will pick up next week with the statement in Mark 1 verse 1, "[The beginning of the gospel \[good news\] about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God.](#)" Even though it is one brief statement, we are going to learn how the word "gospel" is used. It indicates a word that is going to dominate the Kingdom of God. It is not a minor, but a major word that is used. We will have to take a good look at that before we go into another story.