

## **What Effect Has Jesus Had On Your Life? Wallace Francis**

What effect has Jesus had on your life? Honestly, now, has your relationship with Him made any real difference? Can you look back on your life's path and see a great sweeping turn when you acknowledged Him as Lord and Savior? Or, can you see times of trouble or times when your faith was challenged that His abiding presence made a difference in how you acted (or reacted)? And what did you do after Jesus caused the course correction in your life? I've been asking myself these questions this last week because I've noticed that everyone who crossed Jesus' path in the gospel of John was changed in a profound way.

Andrew and John left their family business to follow Jesus. Andrew was so excited that he told his brother, Simon Peter, "Simon, come quick, I've found everything that the Bible promised in this man, Jesus!" The next day, Jesus said "Follow Me" to Philip and he did, grabbing Nathanael on the way. These guys' lives were irrevocably changed when they met Jesus. Who cares about money, power and prestige when you're face to face with "the Son of God, the King of Israel"? Has He affected your life the same way? Really?

He turned the religious world upside down when He chased the moneychangers out of the temple, challenging the entrenched religious leadership to reconsider their generations old religious system. Some of them, Nicodemus for example, rejected the man made traditions for a living, saving faith in Jesus. Others, to their eternal despair, clung to their traditions and became bitter and vindictive towards the Savior. But, John the Baptist, who was an imposing religious figure of the day and had a wide following, relinquished his own ministry and joyfully declared that "He (Jesus) must increase, ... I must decrease." Has Jesus changed the way you view Heaven and Hell? How about the things of this world that you hold so dear?

The woman of Samaria was stopped in her tracks by her meeting with Jesus. And she willingly left her water jug, and the "normalcy" of her sinful life, to run back to her family and exclaim, "Come, see a man who must be the Christ." And the Samaritan villagers invited this Jew and His disciples to stay with them for two days. Can you imagine that? The Jews and Samaritans were almost enemies; racial prejudice had kept them apart for seven hundred years! But in the presence of Jesus, the hatred on both sides melted away and many of the Samaritans believed that He was "the Savior of the world". Has He affected your relationships in that way?

His miracles changed both physical and eternal lives. The nobleman's son, the paralytic at the sheep gate pool, the five thousand fed from a child's lunch bag, walking on water, sight for the man born blind, resurrection for Lazarus. What an impact He had on everyone whose life came in touch with His! Have you experienced the miracles in your life? Rejoice, if you can, with the blind man who said "once I was blind but now I see"!!

And His teachings - life changing revelations! Not like the scribes who simply quoted the Bible, but new and fresh. Oh, you couldn't hear Jesus and leave without knowing that you'd been in the presence of God himself. He even told you so, in no uncertain terms and in enough different ways that you couldn't stand passively by and only say "Now there's a great teacher."

No, Jesus' teaching divided truth from falsehood and life from death. And it still does. To those who believe, His words give true freedom from the shackles of this world and the sin that is so pervasive in it. To those who reject Him - judgment, despair and darkness. Have you experienced this true freedom today? When doubts have crept into your life, when you're in the pit of despair, can you join with Peter in saying "Where shall we go, Lord, only You have the words of eternal life."

Mary poured out perfume at her Master's feet and "the house was filled with the fragrance ...". Don't you think that, if we pour out our lives afresh to Him today, the fragrance of our dedication will fill not only our homes and our church but our communities and, eventually, the whole world.

Pledge with me to renew yourself today to live a life that has been profoundly changed by Jesus. A life that has been transformed! Resurrected from the death of sin and judgment to His life of freedom and service. Show it! Tell it! Live it! Yes, Jesus has made a difference in my life!