

FIRST JESUS: "SERVICE"

THESIS: Think First Jesus

TEXT: Revelation 1:1-8

OPEN: *foxnews.com* "A biohacker risked fatal consequences by translating Bible passages into DNA code to build unknown proteins which he then poured into his body." The French teenager performed this "never-before" procedure because he 'wondered whether it would be possible.'"

Let's be "first" about something else that leads to an immortal transformation. In **Revelation 1:1-8** discover the blessing of serving Jesus in the here and now which matters for the hereafter.

1. THINK FIRST JESUS BY TAKING TO HEART HIS WORD.

A. **Revelation 1:1-3** "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."

1. **Blessed** (Greek: *makarios*) means fortunate, good, happy, or joyous.

a. Taking to heart God's word is a blessing and makes you a blessing.

1. **James 1:25** "The man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does."

b. The Apostle is proclaiming what he writes is God's Word and explains how it is so (*Rev 1:1-2*).

1. **1 Corinthians 2:6-7, 9-11, 13, 16** "As it is written: 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him'—but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God...This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words...We have the mind of Christ."

a. **Mind** (Greek: *nous*) means insight, plans, thinking, or understanding.

1. The Holy Spirit living in the apostles and prophets has searched what's on God's mind and has given them God's thoughts—His insight/plans which is Scripture—the Word of life (*Philippians 2:16*).

a. Invitation: "Meal with Matt" PVCC core beliefs session February 3rd at 11:30 a.m. It includes why you can believe the Bible is God's Word.

2. The Lord predestined before creation that we would receive His word through the apostles and prophets for our honor or good opinion (glory).

a. **1 Corinthians 2:6-7** "We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began."

3. It's not just that the prophets are given what's on God's mind (spiritual thoughts), but they're given how God wants it said (spiritual words).

a. **1 Corinthians 4:6** "Do not go beyond what is written."

4. Proverbs says "that as a man thinketh so he is." The Word of God is brilliant, so by meditating on it and doing it—you'll be brilliant, too.

a. **Psalms 119:98-100** "Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more insight than all my teachers do, for I

meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.”

- b. **Insight from Charles Wesley:** “The Bible must be the invention either of good men or angels, bad men or devils, or of God. It could not be the invention of good men or angels, for they neither would nor could make a book, and tell lies all the time they were writing it, saying, ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ when it was their own invention. It could not be the invention of bad men or devils, for they would not make a book which commands all duty, forbids all sin, and condemns their souls to hell to all eternity. Therefore, I conclude that the Bible must be given by divine inspiration.”

B. **Revelation 1:4-6** “Grace and peace to you from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father—to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.”

1. **Historical:** Together as the church we are a “kingdom” which symbolizes our royal standing in connection with the exaltation of Christ as ruler of all. Individually we are “priests of God” which indicates our service to God. The separation of the O.T. priests from secular pursuits was intended to denote that we are to show primary interest in the things of God. The O.T. priests were responsible for teaching people the Word of God. The church/Christians now make known God’s Word to the world.
 - a. **Ephesians 3:10-11** “The Lord’s intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
2. There are lots of opinions out in the world as to who Jesus is. Some say that He is only a moral man, a spiritual guru, an enlightened one, a great prophet, but stop short of confessing Him as Lord and God. Who is Jesus Christ?
 - a. Jesus is the Faithful Witness. “Witness” (martyr) is one who may suffer death for allegiance to a cause. What was the cause that Jesus died for? “To Him *who loves us and has freed us* from our sins by His blood” (*Revelation 1:5*).
 - b. Jesus is the Firstborn from the dead. Here’s a question for you: How can Jesus be called the “firstborn from the dead” if He was not the first one to experience a resurrection (i.e. ruler’s daughter and Lazarus)?
 1. **Firstborn** (Greek: *protokos*) is a superior position and when applied to Jesus Christ it indicates His priority and pre-eminence over all creation. He is the Supreme One of the resurrected.
 - a. As the “Firstborn from the dead,” there is no one equal or superior to Jesus—He’s number one. For people to refer to Him as simply a moral man, teacher, or prophet is a tragic mistake. He’s first & foremost. Since He’s God’s Son then He is sovereign & Lord of all.
 - b. As the “Firstborn from the dead,” this reveals that there will be others to follow Him in resurrection from the dead. Jesus may be the first, but He’s not the last of those who will be resurrected from the dead. He’s the prototype of the resurrected ones.
 1. **Philippians 3:20-21** “Our citizenship is in Heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.”
 - c. Jesus is the Ruler of the kings of the earth. This means that everyone will have to answer to the Christ one day. Ultimately, Jesus is in control of world events and even those things or persons who adversely affect you.

1. **Application:** If you're being challenged or mistreated by others, please remember that just like you, one day those people must answer to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Pray for their soul and do the following as well:
 - a. If you're cursed—bless them in return (*1 Corinthians 4:12*).
 - b. If you're persecuted—endure it (*1 Corinthians 4:12*).
 - c. If you're slandered—answer kindly (*1 Corinthians 4:13*).

CONCLUSION: Taking to heart God's word is a blessing and makes you a blessing.

Invitation: Wednesday Bible study of Revelation 13 begins January 16th (6:30 pm). Among the topics: The mark of the beast (666), the mark of God, and the 144,000 of Heaven. There's a current day illustration relating to the mark of the beast plus we'll discover specifically in the Bible whose the beast of 666.

Revelation 1:7-8 "Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be! Amen. 'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty.'"

CLOSE: Let's think first Jesus by reading/hearing His Word and taking it to heart.