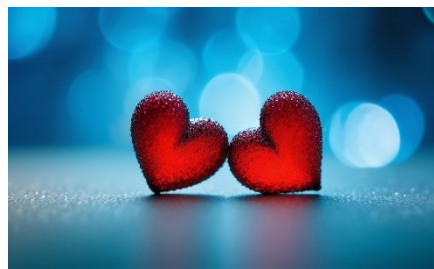




I suppose that we have all changed our minds at some time or other. Why do we do this? If we wish to purchase a particular item, we may know exactly what we want, but may not be able to find that item for sale so have to change our minds and settle for second best. Sometimes we find the thing that is just what we want, but the price is too high so we change our minds and go for something cheaper.

What about people? We can occasionally discover that a person is not as nice as we thought they were and has repeated to others what we shared in confidence. Of course, the opposite can also arise, when someone with whom we did not feel we could 'gel', was the one person who came to help us in our time of need.



What about boyfriends/girlfriends? For those of you who are married, did you marry your first love? First love – The one you dreamt about and thought about every minute of the day, the one who gave you goose pimples whenever you heard his/her name mentioned. Were there wedding bells or did you change your mind and go for

number 2? (Or maybe number 3 or 4!)

As it is coming up to Easter I have been thinking of the people who changed their minds about Jesus. This gave rise to many unanswered questions as I pondered over reasons. James, the half-brother of Jesus, was one of these. He is hardly mentioned in the Bible during the life of Jesus and it does not appear that he was one of His followers. When He was on the cross Jesus asked the disciple John to take care of His mother. Previously, when the brothers of Jesus are mentioned, James is named first so I would assume that he was next in age to Jesus and if that was so, he would naturally be the one to take care of His mother.



I wonder why James did not become a follower of Jesus and one of His disciples during His life-time? Mind you, what would we think if one of our brothers claimed to be the Son of God. We would think that he was troubled in his mind and needed medical help. It would be beyond anything that we could accept as a fact. After the death of Jesus we find that James was not only a keen follower but was actually the leader of the Church in Jerusalem. Paul refers to him as, 'A pillar of the Church.' What a change of mind – From unbeliever to Pastor!



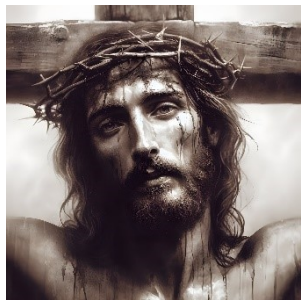
I would think that the person who springs to most of our minds is Judas. It is difficult for us to understand why Judas changed his mind to such a great extent. At one point he must have been a really keen follower of Jesus to be chosen as one of His twelve special disciples, who was sent out along with the other disciples to minister to people. In addition to this, he was also the treasurer of that little group so must have been considered reliable and trustworthy.

What made Judas change his mind? Was he expecting Jesus to be quite different from how He actually was? Was he disappointed in some way because Jesus was not releasing them from the Roman rule? Were there personal circumstances in his life that led him to pull away from Jesus? Whatever it was, he obviously reached an all-time low and the Bible tells us that, '*Satan entered into the heart of Judas.*' (Luke 22:3) When he went to the chief priests they offered him thirty pieces of silver for the betrayal of Jesus – The price of a slave. We are told that he used to steal money from the money-bag. Was he so obsessed with money that he would stoop so low? We do not have the answers to these questions. It is recorded that he repented and took the money back. (Matt. 27:3-5) What drastic changes of mind.



Another person who had a change of mind was Peter when he followed Jesus into the courtyard after His arrest. What would we have done? Would we have agreed to being a follower of Jesus, resulting in our own deaths, or would we have done the same as Peter and denied Jesus so that we would continue to be free and preach the gospel?

There are many Christians in some parts of our world today who are faced with the same dilemma. Peter was most certainly very much used by God following the death of Jesus as he went about tirelessly preaching the gospel. Was he right to change his mind at that moment in time?



This is what Jesus went through for you and I. He had prayed previously asking if there was another way to enable us to be brought into the presence of a holy God. Nevertheless, He accepted the plan that the Father had because He knew that there was no other way.

Maybe you are a person who has had a change of mind about Jesus. Were you once someone who would be worshipping at your local Church on a Sunday but now no longer attend – whatever the excuse? Does your Bible remain closed from one week to another? Are you no longer in a constant relationship with Jesus through your prayers? If the answer to these questions is 'Yes, that is correct', can I encourage you to change your mind and get back to where you once were. Jesus did not change His mind because of His love for you. He knows our hearts. He knows why we do or not do things. He still loves us whatever we are like and was still prepared to go through a horrible death for each one of us.

Perhaps you have never had time for Jesus, or have not been interested. Perhaps the actions of other people have put you off and you think that you are better managing on your own and do not need Jesus in your life. How about changing your mind and trying to get to know the One who hung on that cross for you. Ask Him for His forgiveness and to reveal Himself to you in some special way. I am sure that you will not be disappointed.

Changing our minds about shopping or other every day actions are nothing compared with the change of mind that following Jesus brings. It is a guarantee that we will be with Him for ever in eternity. This is something to decide **TODAY** as tomorrow may be too late.

Remember:- **JESUS DID NOT CHANGE HIS MIND**