



# KINGDOM OF THE CULTS

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## LESSON 8—The Jesus Cult

It comes as a great shock when people, for the first time, hear of The Jesus Cult.

### WARNING

Since the earliest times most Christian churches showed a lamentable inability to distinguish between the truth of God's Word and false presentations of it:

*"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:6-8).*

The congregation in Corinth suffered from the same lack of discernment and spiritual insight:

*"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent [deceived] Eve through his [craftiness], so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him" (2 Cor. 11:2-4).*

From the quoted sections it is evident that there are three things that are falsified by the enemy of our souls to deceive Christians and cause them to go astray. These perversions are:

- ◆ **another Jesus;**
- ◆ **another spirit; and**
- ◆ **another gospel.**

Satan's strategy to attack, misrepresent and pervert the Christian message has been continued unabated throughout the entire church dispensation. It is our duty to uncover and reject the particular forms of deception that are characteristic of the time in which we live.

### ANOTHER JESUS

The following are some of the most common ways in which the image, person and work of the Lord Jesus are distorted in order to introduce a counterfeit Jesus.

#### Jesus the prophet

In many sects such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, and also in non-Christian religions such as Islam, the Deity of Jesus is denied. He is merely portrayed as a prophet and human teacher, while explicitly denying that He is the Son of God.

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## Page 1 Continued—Another Jesus

*"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist, which denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 Jn. 2:22-23).*

The antichristian denial of the Deity of Jesus Christ is sadly also gaining ground in many 'Christian' churches today. There is an increasing theological tendency to deny the miraculous conception and virgin birth of the Lord Jesus, thereby rendering Him an ordinary human being. If He was not God the Son, He would not have had a perfect life to sacrifice for the salvation of a fallen race of men.

In the first Adam we all died spiritually by inheriting his sinful nature. A dying world needs a second Adam who is a perfect God-man to introduce God's divine nature to us, which is His sinless, eternal life (1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:14-18). Jesus is this Man who is at the same time the Son of man, the Son of God, and God Himself. To deny His Godhead by depicting Him only as a prophet, is to rob the world of its only Saviour. Jesus warned many will come in My name and say I am the Christ—Matthew 24:5.

**For as in Adam  
all die, so in  
Christ all will be  
made alive.**

1 Corinthians 15:22 NIV

### Jesus the example

In the preaching of many of the formalistic and spiritually dead churches of our time, reference is often only made to the life of Jesus as an example that should be followed by His disciples. Christian virtues are propagated without the Christ who alone can realise the new life through an experience of re-birth. In watered down messages of this nature, no emphasis is placed upon the cross of Jesus and His blood that was shed for sinners. People are only exhorted to love their neighbours and live morally good lives. An anaemic Gospel.

One of the results of this type of preaching is that Jesus becomes so unreal to people that they only have a vague perception of Him in their minds. They serve Him through mental consent but spiritually He is not a reality to them because they have not yet become new people who received Christ in their lives through faith. Although they talk about God and the Lord Jesus, they don't know Him personally and only follow His example by serving an 'image' of Him.

### Jesus the giver of gifts

Many people worship Jesus mainly for the sake of certain benefits that they can derive from their association with Him. He must heal them and bless them by providing in all their material needs. They see Jesus as the One who restores to mankind the exalted position that they had before the Fall. They must regain their dominion over creation, wield great powers and even become gods in their own right and the name Jesus is a means to their ends. A "magical power" as used in the mystic religions.

Such people also end up serving 'another Jesus'. They don't identify with the crucified Christ, and they reject persecution, disease and suffering as the consequences of a poor faith. Through visualisation and positive thinking they create their own reality in which they become masters of their own destiny. By relying on various powers in their life, they don't put their trust in the crucified Christ to sustain them.

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## Page 2 Continued—Jesus giver of gifts

Jesus had a large following when He healed the sick and performed many other signs and wonders. However, the majority of His opportunist and sensation-seeking followers deserted Him when He emphasised union with His body that was to be broken, and His blood that was to be shed for sinners, as the only basis for true fellowship with Him. To many of the opportunists, this was a hard saying: *"From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him"* (Jn. 6:66; see also v. 53-65).

Many people configure their own popular Jesus whom they are following. They are offended if somebody indicates to them the spiritual risks of building their faith on a Jesus who is confined to signs and wonders, rather than the Crucified One who suffered and died that we may be forgiven and live new lives unto God. Such people are pride and ego driven.

### Jesus the political liberator

In the Third World a Jesus is often proclaimed who is a freedom fighter and one who associates with the oppressed. He has come to set the political captives free and to uplift them on the socio-economic level of their existence.

This Jesus is only involved with the secular affairs of men. He doesn't liberate them from sin, but from impeding political, social, and economic conditions. He blesses them in their struggle against the oppressors without denouncing their immoral behaviour or fixing the attention on their spiritual struggle against the enemy of their souls.

### Jesus the sinner

The Jesus who is depicted in many of the Hollywood films is a sinner like any other fallen man who is controlled by his sinful passions. This blasphemous presentation of Jesus is the theme of films such as Jesus Christ Superstar, The last temptation of Jesus, and Jesus of Montreal. In the last-mentioned film the counterfeit 'Jesus' stays with other young people in a flat in Montreal where they live licentious lives and also over indulge in alcohol.

There are no limits to the evil imaginations of people who distort the image and person of Jesus under the influence of Satan. Jesus is even depicted as a homosexual by some of them. On a painting that was exhibited in Bishop Tutu's cathedral in Cape Town, Jesus is portrayed as an Aids victim who is full of sores. All these things are part of the age old campaign against Jesus by His many adversaries. In Biblical times He was also branded as a sinner and drinker who associated with immoral people: *"Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of [tax-collectors] and sinners"* (Mt. 11:19; see also Jn. 9:16, 24).

**The true Jesus** whom we worship, is without sin. He is *"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens"* (Heb. 7:26; see also. 4:15). *Don't profane and mock the holy name of God and His only begotten Son: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"* (Gal. 6:7).

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### The cosmic Jesus

The intensified campaign of falsifying the name, character, and work of Jesus is aimed at preparing the way for the great end-time counterfeit Christ, the Antichrist. Jesus Himself warned us against the deception of the masses that will be perpetrated in His name:

*"Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall deceive many" (Mt. 24:4-5).*

The New Age Movement promotes a Jesus who is the personification of the messianic expectations of all the religions in the world. To the Christians he is the Christ, to the Jews the Messiah, to the Hindus Krishna, to the Muslims the Imam Mahdi, and to the Buddhists Maitreya Buddha. He is, therefore, the cosmic Christ, or universal Christ, of all faiths and as such the head of a spiritual hierarchy that supersedes and unites all religions on earth.

The Antichrist will manifest all the evil characteristics that are typical of the various falsifications of Jesus. He will be the *"man of sin... the son of perdition... whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who perish" (2 Thes. 2:3, 9-10).*

To be able to identify all the distortions of the counterfeit Jesus, the true Jesus must be known, served and worshipped with an undivided heart. We must grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

### MODERN CHURCHES

Some of the modern or franchise churches speak of Jesus and the uninformed innocently assume they are referring to the historic Jesus of Scripture. The "Jesus Cult" tends to bless in "Jesus" name.

Is there an impersonating spirit at work, and is the name "Jesus" being used like an Aladdin lamp or mystical evocation to call a deceiving spirit into action?

*See 2 Cor.11:13-15.*

### Who is the true Jesus?

The One who God's Word reveals as the Second Person of the Trinity who is now declared the Lord Jesus.



The deity of Christ, His birth, atoning sacrifice, His resurrection, ascension and His mediation are the key touch stones.

