

Wolves in Sheep Clothing

Matthew 7:13-15



"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. ¹⁵ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Matthew 7:13-15

The landscape of America is changing! Mosques, Temples, Shrines are springing up. It is common in our world today to see Muslims praying, monks in their loose robes looking peaceful as they slowly move about, or to see the Dali Llama, a Tibetan Buddhist leader, on TV talking about peace and loving people. Most of us have had the experience of Mormon missionaries or Jehovah Witnesses knocking on our door. George Braswell said, "Religion appears to be healthy in America, given its visibility and extensiveness across the nation."¹

"In 1968 the Beatles proclaimed Transcendental Meditation was the answer to all mankind's distress." ² After the Beatles broke up George Harrison, the Beatle that died in the last 2002 deceived many with the song "My Sweet Lord" in which he started out with Hallelujah and then switched to Hare Krishna.

While Christianity has all but been outlawed in our public schools other alternative religions and cults flourish. I have an email

Chapter One

Christianity: The Truth!

dated 13 Jan 2002 that quotes a copyright story of *WorldNetDaily.com* that is disturbing.

"In the wake of Sept 11, an increasing number of California public school students must attend an intensive three-week course on Islam, reports ASSIST News Service...

The course mandates that seventh-graders learn the tenets of Islam, study the important figures of the faith, wear a robe, adopt a Muslim name and stage their own jihad. Adding to this apparent hypocrisy, reports ANS, students must memorize many verses in the Koran, are taught to pray "in the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful" and are instructed to chant, "Praise to Allah, Lord of Creation." ³

-2-

If this does not disturb you it should because how often does the rest of America follow the lead of California.

This just illustrated the great need we have in the Christian Church to understand the religions around us so we can prepare and counteract such things as this. "One very practical need for understanding religions is for better methods of outreach to them or for better means of encountering their outreach." ⁴

In **2 Timothy 4:2-4** Paul told Timothy, and us, to, "***Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*** ³ ***For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*** ⁴ ***And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.***"

1 Timothy 4:1 says, "***Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.***"

Today we as Christians are portrayed as narrow minded and closed to others. While this seems to be true anybody only needs to look at the openness of cultures that embrace Christianity and the closedness of the groups and nations that embrace false religions and cults.

If we are narrow minded, and indeed we should be, it is because there is only one God and one way to heaven. Remember Jesus said in our text, "***Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and***

narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Jesus went on to say, **"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves"** concerning those that teach false doctrine.

Throughout the New Testament you will find warning after warning about departing from the faith of Christ and false teachers coming. Paul warned in **Acts 20:29 "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."** We certainly have seen this come to pass.

"Some researchers estimate that new religions and cults originating the last two hundred years have increased their membership figures in this century by 2,000 percent to 3,000 percent."⁵

The American Family Federation estimates there are between 3,000 to 5,000 active groups. There are estimated to be 150,000,000 people involved in these.

Allow me to now ask several questions and attempt to answer them as a format for this introduction.

I- What is a "cult" and/or "false" religion?

While there two terms can and are used interchangeable I wish to make a distinction between them. A false religion is a world religions that is not in any way based on Christianity while a cult is one with Christian ties in some way. We will use these two terms however during this study interchangeable because both are false when compared to the Bible.

Allow me to offer a couple of definitions for a cult. First, according to Ankerberg and Weldon.

"The term "cult" comes from the French *sulte* and Latin *cultus*, "cultivation," "reverence," from *colere*, "To cultivate worship." According to Shipley's *Dictionary of Word Origins*, the word can be traced back to "argiculture" and indirectly to "acorn": the term "agriculture" is Latin, *agri cultorea*, "tilling the field, from *colere*, *cult*, to *cultivate* (cultivating the favor of the gods is to attend to them, to worship them)..."⁶

They concede that the word cult is difficult to define. They also make a distinction between cults and what they call a, "standard world religion." They give a definition of a cult as, "a separate religious group generally claiming compatibility with Christianity but whose doctrine

Christianity: The Truth!

contradicts those of historic Christianity and whose practices and ethical standards violate those of biblical Christianity." ⁷

Webster's Third New International Dictionary (unabridged) define "cult" or "cultic":

1) religious practice: worship; 2) a system of belief and ritual connected with worship of a deity or a spirit, or a group of deities or spirits; 3) the rites, ceremonies and practices of a religion as the *cultus* of Roman Catholicism, involving ceremonial veneration paid to God, Virgin Mary or the saints; 4) a religion regarded as unorthodox or spurious; 5) a system for curing disease based on dogma or principles set forth to the exclusion of scientific evidence; and 6) excessive devotion to a person, idea or thing." ⁸

-4-

Larson says, "a group is cultic: (1) if it ignores or purposely omits central apostolic doctrines; or (2) if it holds to beliefs that are distinctly opposed to orthodox Christianity." ⁹

II- Does simply claiming to be Christian make a group Christian?

One thing that makes certain groups so deceptive is they claim to be Christian. They use the same words, but with different meanings, and quote the same scriptures, but with a different interpretation. Just simply by the fact they carry the name "Christian" many let their guard down and don't look at what they teach.

This begs the questions, "is there such a thing as absolute truth?" and "does truth matter." There can only be one truth not many truths that contradict each other. Our purpose is to discover the truth in this study. Ankerberg said, "The great German reformer Martin Luther was correct when he wrote that, in the end, there were only two religions in the world, the religion of works and the religion of grace. No one has yet satisfactorily explained how, apart from divine revelation, we find only one religion of grace among thousands professing works." ¹⁰

Most cults are openly hostile to Bible based Christianity and feel they are sent to straighten out the wrong. They deny the basic tenets of the Christian faith as they attempt to claim the umbrella of Christianity. I remind us all that Satan knew and quoted scripture to Christ at temptation. (see **Matthew 4** and **Luke 2**)

III- Why are the cults so attractive and why do people join?

The most obvious reason people are a particular religion in many cases is because of the culture into which they are born. Hindu's

are in most cases born in Hindu countries and Muslims are born in Muslim countries. Certainly this can be understood as a reason. They still need to hear the gospel however.

One might have the false impression that those who join the cults are people who have not been exposed to religion and a cult is their first religious experience. This however is a false assumption. John Ankerberg quotes from Dr. Paul R. Martin, a cult expert. Martin says, "...research indicated that a "sizeable proportion of those involved in cults or extremist groups come from some type of evangelical church base. Of the cultist I have personally worked with, approximately 25% came from evangelical or fundamental churches and over 40% had backgrounds in large, more liberal Protestant denominations." ¹¹

-5-

One might ask why or how could this be. I submit that many people are so ignorant of even the most basic tenets of the faith that they will easily be misled by a lie that sounds good. *Larson's New Book of Cults* says, "In a society that is biblically illiterate, the deception of a cult is particularly enticing if it claims to have "restored" certain truths that have been lost or undiscovered." ¹²

"Pollsters Barna and others have found that Americans are "basically ignorant" of even simple Bible teachings, and the connection here to the rise of the cults is more than incidental." ¹³

The problem may be even rooted deeper than this. If those who have the charge of preaching and teaching the truth do not believe then we have problems. Ankerberg gives some startling statistics he referenced for September 7, 1991 *Chattanooga New Free Press*.

"...national opinion polls reveal that 35 percent of America's evangelical seminarians deny that faith in Christ is absolutely necessary for salvation; 35 percent of the entire adult evangelical population agrees that "God will save all good people when they die, regardless of whether they've trusted Christ"; 30 to 51 percent of Protestant pastors do not believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ; 53 percent of those who claim to be Bible-believing conservative Christians "Said there is no such thing as absolute truth"; 43 percent of born again Christians agree that "it does not matter what religious faith you follow because all faiths teach similar lessons about life"; 30 percent of born again Christians do not believe that "Jesus came back to physical life after he was crucified." Up to 70 percent of adults generally believe that "it

Christianity: The Truth!

does not matter what God, force or higher power you pray to because it will respond regardless." ¹⁴

Larson says because of the influence of the eastern religions on us, "...many "Christians" pay lip service to the church of their choice while philosophically adhering to an occult/mystical/Hinduistic/Buddhist/Taoist/spiritualist concept of life." ¹⁵

-6-

This brings up a very important reason. Lack of totally being sold out to Jesus. Remember what He said to the church of the Laodiceans in the book of the Revelation? ***Rev 3:15-16 "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."***

Dear God help us to know You and Your Word so we will not be deceived by a lie.

IV- What is the common ground of all cults?

While there are many things that Christians disagree on there are also many on which we have common ground. Most cults and false religions have many things in common as well. Notice what Larson says concerning this:

"These are things that most cults share in common: (1) a centralized authority that tightly structures both philosophy and life-style; (2) a "we" verses "they" complex, pitting the supposed superior insights of the group against a hostile outside culture; (3) a commitment for each member to proselytize intensively the unconverted; and (4) an entrenched isolationism that divorces the devotee from the realities of the world at large." ¹⁶

He goes on to say, "All cults have one thing in common. They consider the claims of Christ as optional, not essential to salvation." ¹⁷

The one doctrine that is essential that everyone get right is the doctrine of Christ. Hear these words well beloved, ***1 John 2:22-23 "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. ²³ Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."***

V- What are the critical doctrines we will explore?

As a part of our study of the *Wolves in Sheep Clothing* I feel it is important to know what we believe as we attempt to discover the

error of others. I feel there are five basic doctrines that we need to explore as we look at what these various religions and cults believe.

- 1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to them?
- 2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to them?
- 3- God: What is their concept of what God/gods is like?
- 4- Man: What is their concept of man's origin, purpose, future hope?
- 5- Bible: According to them how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

We will attempt to lay the Word of God beside their doctrines and see the sharp contrast between light and dark. All of these may not be applicable to each cult or religion and others may be needed to explore their beliefs and how we can learn to respond to them.

I wish to leave us with words of encouragement. **1 John 4:3-4**
“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God...⁴ Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

-7-

Chapter One Notes:

¹ Braswell, George *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America*, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1973, p. 2

² Larson, Bob, *Larson's New Book of Cults*, Tyndale House, Wheaton, Ill. 1989, p. 10.

³ Worldnetdaily.com

⁴ Braswell, George *Understanding World Religions* revised, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1994, p. 4

⁵ Ankerberg, John & John Weldon, *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR, 1999, p XV.

⁶ Ibid. p XXI

⁷ Ibid. p. XXII

⁸ Webster's Third New International Dictionary

⁹ Larson, p. 20

¹⁰ Ankerberg, p XX

¹¹ Ibid. p. XXIX

¹² Larson, p. 15

¹³ Ankerberg, p. XVII

¹⁴ Ibid. p. XXX

¹⁵ Larson, p. 38

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 14

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 29

Christianity: The Truth!

-8-

DO NOT PRINT

Islam: Same God or Old Lie?

Exodus 36:14



"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." Ex 34:14

The second largest religion in the world is known as Islam and its followers are known as Muslims. Islam means "submission" and Muslim means "one who submits." Some call those who follow Islam Muhammadians, which is very offensive to them. They say they follow Allah not Muhammad.

Church Planting & Evangelism published by the North American Mission Board in the Winter 2002 edition give the following statistics:

- Together, Christianity and Islam claim one-half of the world's population.
- 1.9 billion or 31% of the world's population are of Christian religion.
- 1.2 billion or 19.6 % of the world's population are followers of Islam.
- 49.4% the number of other religions and non-believers.
- One-fifth of the world's population, one in five, are Muslim.
- 200 million- The number of Muslims worldwide in 1990.
- 1.2 billion- The number of Muslims worldwide in 2000.
- 4.1 million- The number of Muslims in the U.S. which has more than quadrupled in the past three decades.
- Although usually associated with the Arabs of the Middle East, less than 10% are in fact Arabs. Muslims are found all over the world, of every nation, color and race.

Chapter Two

Christianity: The Truth!

- 58- The number of Southern Baptist Congregations with members of primarily Middle Eastern descent. ¹

Islam is not only the second largest religion in the world it is the fastest growing religion. For us as Christians to impact our world we must understand Islam and Muslims individually.

N.S.R.K. Ravi, a specialist with the North American Mission Board in New Age and world religions, says "Part of Southern Baptist's hesitancy to share Christ with Muslims is due to an unfamiliarity with the faith...Islam...is both a world religion and a political system and that make it difficult for many to understand....It is considered to be one of the simplest and least complicated religions to practice and governs all aspects of its adherent's life." ²

-10-

II- The Books of the Islamic Faith and Practice:

The faith of Islam is formed from two primary sources. One is the Koran (also spelled Quran and Qur'an) and the Hadith.

"Muslims believe that the Qur'an was revealed to their prophet, Muhammad, in the Arabic language, which is the very language spoken by Allah in heaven. Allah is the author of the Qur'an and Muhammad is the channel of Allah's word to the people. Actually Qur'an means to recite. The Qur'an was written down soon after the prophet's death in the seventh century A.D." ³

Muhammad did not write the Koran but it was written from memory by his followers after his death. Robert Morey says, "It is apparent from the early biographers that Muhammad had no premonition of his own death. He had made no arrangements for a successor. He did not set up any kind of governmental bureaucracy to run things in the event of his death.

Neither did he gather or put together his various revelations into what is now known as the Quran." ⁴

Do you not find it amazing that God gave this to Muhammad but he did not write it down? There are many things that were forgotten and I am sure many things not remembered correctly.

In addition to the Koran there is another book known as the Hadith. Let me give us another quote to help us further understand the Koran and Hadith.

"*Quran* (also spelled Koran or Qur'an) is Arabic for "the recitation," and refers to the collection of revelations supposedly given by Allah through his archangel to

Muhammad and preserved as the Islamic scripture. Muslims believe in the Law of Moses, the Psalms of David, and the Injil, or gospel of Jesus Christ. However, they believe that those Scriptures were superseded by the scripture given through Muhammad, and that the Bible used by Christians and Jews is a distorted version of those other scriptures. Wherever the Bible contradicts Islam, the Muslim says the Bible is incorrect. *Sura* refers to the divisions within the Quran, and roughly corresponds to our “chapter.” The Quran contains 114 revelations, each composing one *Sura* or chapter. The shortest revelations appear first, the longest ones last. There is no chronological arrangement in the Quran. Also important in Islamic literature is the *Hadith*, Arabic for the “collected traditions.” These are the supposed words of Muhammad and are the customs that provide source material for the intricate political and social structure of Islam.”⁵

A- Satanic Verses:

A few years ago a literally work came out called *Satanic Verses* and the author was put under contract for death. (This title was taken from the history of Islam.) Shortly after he began to preach Muhammad came under fire for his message that there is only one god.

“In order to appease his pagan family members and the members of the Quraysh tribe, he decided that the best thing he could do was to admit that it was perfectly proper to pray to and worship the three daughters of Allah: Al-Lat, Al-Uzza, and Manat.

This lead to the famous, “satanic verse” in which Muhammad in a moment of weakness and supposedly under the inspiration of Satan (according to early Muslim authorities) succumbed to the temptation to appease the pagan mobs in Mecca...

When his disciples at Medina heard of Muhammad's fall into polytheism, they rushed to him with rebuke and counsel...

He then reverted back to his monotheism and stated that Allah can “abrogate,” that is, cancel, a past revelation.

After Muhammad's death the “satanic verses” were not included in the text of the Quran. They were abominated.”⁶

I find it interesting to see that while Muslims teach that God has no Son they teach Allah has three daughters.

Christianity: The Truth!

B- Five Pillars of Islam:

There are five so-called "Pillars" of Islam found in the Koran. These are five in number. They are duties that Muslims are expected to perform. Ron Rhodes in his Quick Reference Guide "*Islam, What You Need To Know*" gives us the following explanation of these five pillars.

1. *Creedal recitation.* Muslims are expected to publicly recite the *Shahadah* (literally, "to bear witness"): "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah." This recitation, with conviction, makes one a believer.
2. *Prayers.* Muslims are expected to perform *salat*, or offer prayers, five times a day: at dawn, noon, afternoon, evening, and night. These prayers involve a series of postures (standing, kneeling, hands and face on the ground, and so forth) while facing Mecca, the holy city.
3. *Give alms.* Muslims are expected to give alms (*sakat*) to the Muslim community that amount to one-fortieth (or 2 ½ percent) of one's income. This offering benefits widows, orphans, and the sick, or it can be used toward furthering Islam (for example, building mosques and religious schools).
4. *Fast.* Muslims are expected to fast during the month of *Ramadan* (the ninth month of the Muslim lunar year). During this month Muslims abstain from food, drink, smoking, and sexual relations during the daylight hours. At sundown they are allowed to partake of these things again until sunrise the next morning."
5. *Pilgrimage.* Health and finances providing, every Muslim is expected to make an official pilgrimage to Mecca (*Hajj*) at least once in his or her life. If one is unable to go, one is permitted to have another person make the Hajj for him as a proxy." ⁷

We will explore the doctrines of Islam later in more detail.

II- The Founding of Islam:

As we have seen Muslims are expected to publicly recite what is known as the *Shahadah* (with literally means, "to bear witness"). The *Shahadah* is, "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah." We will discuss Allah later. For now we ask who is this Muhammad and was he a prophet? It is true of most religions that it is impossible to separate the religion from its founder. Such is the case

with Islam. While there are many non-Arab Muslims its foundation was in the Arab world.

A- Arab Roots and Conflicts with Israel:

“According to Scripture, the ancestors of modern Arabs can be traced back to Shem and are properly known as Semites. Shem’s descendant Eber gave rise to two lines: Peleg’s line, from which Abraham is descended, and Joktan’s line, which contains the names of many Arab groups. However, many Arab tribes trace their ancestry to Ishmael, the firstborn son of Abraham.”⁸

-13-

Martin says also, “Muhammad was born in Mecca, near the Middle Western coastal region of Arabia, between 570 and 580, to Abdullah (or Abd Allah), who died two months after he was born, and Aminah, who died when he was six. Mecca was a large commercial city known for the Ka’aba (“cube”), a building famous for its 360 idols containing images of the moon god Hubal, *al-Laôt*, *al-ËUzza* and *Manaôt*, and the Black Stone. Muhammad’s family was of the relatively poor Hashemite clan of the Quraysh tribe, and it is the patriarch of that tribe, Fihir (known as *qirsh*, or “shark”) of the *Kinaônah* tribe, who Muslims claim to be a descendant of Ishmael and an inheritor of God’s promise to Hagar in Genesis 21:18.”⁹

Two times we have seen that the Muslims claim to be descended from Ishmael. Is this a historically accurate statement. This is a very important issue because it is through this claim that they say they have claim to the Promised Land through Abraham. This issue is in the news today so if you would allow me to pursue this for a moment because of its importance.

Robert Morey, the head of a group called *Faith Defenders* (WWW.FAITHDEFENDERS.COM- 1-800-41-TRUTH), has published a tract called “*Who Owns the Land of Israel?*” Morey says there will be no peace in the Middle East until this question is answered honestly according to historical facts and not myths and legends. He goes on to list 10 historic facts concerning this issue. Let me quote from Morey concerning this issue.

“The Torah [Old Testament] is contradicted by the Qur’an at nearly every point. According to Surah 2:119-121, [My note: a Sura or Surah is much like a book in our Bible] Abraham and Ishmael did not dwell in tents in Israel but in the city of Mecca

Christianity: The Truth!

in Arabia. Together they rebuilt the Kabah and place the black stone in the wall. It was Abraham who started the tradition of an annual pilgrimage to Mecca, throwing stones at the devil, etc. Abraham took Ishmael (not Isaac) to nearby Mount Mina to offer as a sacrifice to God." ¹⁰

Morey points out that Ishmael had twelve sons. (Genesis 12:11-16) He states, "They intermarried with the local population in North Arabia and produced several nomadic tribes known as the "Ishmaelites."" ¹¹

-14-

He says, "The Ishmaelites are mention as a distinct tribe in the Assyrian records. They later intermarried with and were absorbed by the Midianites and other local tribes. In Genesis 37:25-28; 39:1, the Ishmaelites are called the Midianites and in Judges 8:22-24 cf. 7:1f, the Midianites are called the Ishmaelites. The identification cannot be any stronger." ¹²

He further states, "There is no historical or archeological evidence that Ishmael went south to Mecca and became the Father of the Arab race." ¹³

We must also remember that Abraham had other sons by his second wife Keturah (Gen 25:1) after Sarah die. There were six recorded in the Bible and one was named Midian.

"In the time of Joseph we find the Midianites associated with the Ishmaelites so closely that it is hard to define their relationship; perhaps there was a company of Midianite merchantmen in the Ishmaelite caravan (Gen 37:25,27-28,36). In all likelihood the descendants of Ishmael, and Midian, as well as of other exiled children of Abraham, had intermarried. In Judg 8:24 the Midianites seem to be called Ishmaelites." ¹⁴

So it seems that the Arabs were not descended from Abraham through Ishmael at all and therefore do not have a claim to the land of Israel. This however is played up in the news constantly as a fact.

So we might ask who are these Palestinians who claim the land of Promise? Let me give a quote from an Arab-American journalist Joseph Farah from www.worldnetdaily.com that I received in an email back some months ago. It is dated 30 Oct 2000.

"Isn't it interesting that prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, there was not serious movement for a Palestinian homeland? "Well, Farah," you might say, "that was before the Israelis seized the West Band and Old Jerusalem." That's true. In the

Six-Day War, Israel captured Judea, Samaria, and East Jerusalem. But they didn't capture these from Yasser Arafat.

They captured them from Jordan's King Hussein. I can't help but wonder why these Palestinians suddenly discovered their national identity after Israel won the war.

The truth is that Palestine is no more real than Never-Never Land. The first time the name was used was in 70 A.D. when the Romans committed genocide against the Jews, smashed the Temple and declared the land of Israel would be no more. From then on, the Romans promised, it would be known as Palestine. The name was derived from the Philistines....

Palestine has never existed—before or since—as an autonomous entity...

There is no language known as Palestinian. There is no distinct Palestinian culture. There has never been a land known as Palestine governed by Palestinians. Palestinians are Arabs..."¹⁵

Farah goes on to point out that the Muslims are trying to say that the Jews have no right to the Temple Mount historically because there never was a temple.

Concerning Arafat Farah says, "It's time to point out to those who do not yet know that the leader of this movement –Arafat—is not a "Palestinian" at all."¹⁶

Indeed, he was born in Egypt "...it was Arafat's uncle who served as a grand mufti of Jerusalem in the 1920's and 1930s. It was his uncle who concluded, for the first time, that Mohammed had ascended into heaven from the site known as the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount. And it was his uncle who, in an unholy alliance with Adolf Hitler, condemned the Jews and their designs on their eternal capital city."¹⁷ Another interesting thing is that Arafat was kicked out of Jordan after he tried to overthrow King Hussein.

B- Back to Muhammad:

After the death of both parents Muhammad lived with his rich grandparents and then a wealthy uncle who in turn passed him to a poor uncle to raise. While his early life was pretty much uneventful, or at least unrecorded, he did begin to have visions. Many think these were epileptic seizures. Morey says, "An entire generation of Islamic scholars have gone on record stating that we must consider the possibility that

Christianity: The Truth!

Muhammad was afflicted with epilepsy and that this manifested itself early on by the vision of Mohammed's belly being split open and then later by all of his 'prophetic' trances." ¹⁸

1- His Wives:

The Koran teaches that a man can have up to four wives. "...marry what seems good to you of women, by twos, or threes, or fours." (Sura 4:3 **THE KORAN** Translated by E.H. Palmer) ¹⁹ The Koran gives a number of prohibited marriages.

-16-

"At twenty-five, Muhammad married a wealthy forty-year-old widow, Khadijah, after she proposed to him. Muhammad remained with Khadijah for twenty-five years and had two sons, who died in infancy, and four daughters. After Khadijah died in 619 or 620, Muhammad married a widow of a disciple and a seven-year-old (who moved in with him when she was ten), Ayisha. His seventh wife was his ex-daughter-in-law; by the time of his death he had twelve wives and two concubines (including Maryam, an Egyptian Coptic slave).^{D-22} Interestingly, Sura 4:3 limits the number of wives to four, and in Sura 4:31 marriage to one's daughter-in-law was prohibited. But in Sura 33:36-40, Muhammad was conveniently given a new revelation from God that ordered Zaid, Mohammed's adopted son, to divorce his wife so Muhammad could marry her by God's command." ²⁰

While the Koran says a man can have up to four wives Muhammad had considerably more. "The question of the number of women with whom Muhammad was sexually involved either as wives, concubines, or devotees was made a point of contention by the Jews in Mohammed's day." ²¹

Many Moslems will argue against historic fact and say that Muhammad was sinless. Again to quote Morey:

"It also poses a logical problem for Muslims. Because the Quran in Sura 4:3 forbids the taking of more than four wives, to have taken any more would have been sinful for Muhammad.

One Muslim apologist with whom I was conversing argued as follow:

Muhammad was sinless. The Quran makes taking more than four wives a sin. Therefore Muhammad could not have taken more than four wives. Why? Because Muhammad was sinless."

“Wolves in **SHEEP S** Clothing”

I pointed out that the question of how many wives Muhammad or anyone else had should be answered on the basis of the historical and literary evidence and not blind faith.”²²

“Muslim scholar and statesman Ali Dsahti gives the following list of the women in Mohammed’s life:

1. Khadija
2. Sawdaa
3. Aesha
4. Omm Salama
5. Hafsa
6. Zaynab (of Jahsh)
7. Jowayriya
8. Omm Habiba
9. Safiya
10. Maymuna (of Hareth)
11. Fatema
12. Hend
13. Asma (of Saba)
14. Zaynab (of Khozayma)
15. Habla
16. Asma (of Moman)
17. Mary (the Christian)
18. Rayhana
19. Omm Sharik
20. Maymuna
21. Zaynab (a third one)
22. Khawla

Several observations need to be given about the above list:

The first 16 women were wives. Numbers 17 and 18 were slaves or concubines. The last four women were neither wives or slaves but devout Muslim women who “gave” themselves to satisfy Mohammed’s sexual desires...

Aesha was only eight or nine years old when Muhammad took her to his bed. This facet of Mohammed’s sexual appetite is particularly distressing to Westerners.”²³

We can see Mohammed’s attitude against women in the following quote from the Koran. “Men stand superior to women in that God hath preferred some of them over others...” (Koran Sura 4) This also gives us a greater understand of how women are treated as property and not as human in very strict Islamic countries.

Muhammad was forced to flee from his home in Mecca to a city called Medina where his message was received.

“He began to test his own power in making war by first sending out six followers who attacked a caravan, killed a man, enslaved others, and looted the caravan. This event is known as the Nakhla Raid...

Now that the taste of looting and bloodshed was in the mouths of his disciples, Muhammad led the second battle himself... This great success led to more followers who wanted to get in on the fighting, killing, and plundering.”²⁴

Muhammad was defeated by an army from Mecca but later on defeated and conquered the city. Islam was then spread by the sword. Islam had its roots and expansion on the back of a sword. If one would not submit he was to be killed. Notice the following:

“It’s not hard to find bloody Quran verses. For instance, Sura 8:39, “And fight with them until there is no more persecution and religion should be only for Allah.” Or 9:14 “fight them, Allah will punish them by your hands and bring them to disgrace.” Or 9:29, “fight those who do not believe in Allah...until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection...”

...two pairs of facts are unarguable. First, Jesus was a man of peace, Muhammad at times a man of war. Christians read the Old Testament’s bloody passages in light of the New; Muslims have nothing to take the edge off. Second, Christianity initially spread through non-aggressive means,

Christianity: The Truth!

especially the blood of martyrs, while Islam initially spread at least in part through military conflict, with the blood of its opponents often flowing. Christianity held up its peaceful dead for imitation, Islam its warlike victors." " 25

It is obvious to even the least biblical knowledgeable person that these two religions could not nor did spring from the same root regardless of the claims by Muslims that they did.

III- Is Allah and Jehovah the Same God?

-18-

We entitled these comments on Islam *"Allah Same God or Old Lies."* In this section I wish to explore this subject as we undertake to see just who this god, Allah, is in light of historic facts and not the spin of politically correct people. Today many well intended but woefully misinformed people says that the Muslim god Allah and the God of the Bible Jehovah are the same God. If this is true then Islam has a valid claim that Christianity and Judaism have been replaced with Islam. Lets explore this subject and see where the truth lies.

A- Allah the Moon-god:

Some defenders of Islam argue that Allah is the God of the Bible based on "allelujah" which they convert to "Allah-lujah." However, the divine name of the God of the Bible is formed from "jah" and the verb "to praise." In order to substantiate the claim of Muhammad that his was the next revelation of the God of the Bible the Muslims claim that Allah in pre-Islamic times was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as well as the prophets and then the apostles. I remind us all that Muhammad was not born until 570 A.D. This was almost 500 years after the New Testament was completed. If Islam is true then we again have 500 years of no prophet again. This would be much like the 400 years between the Old Testament and the New.

One of the problems we have is the willful distortion of the historic facts and the destruction of many sites and artifacts that are condemning to their argument by Muslims. Professor Charleton S. Coon in a work published by the Smithsonian institution in 1944 said, "Muslims are notoriously loath to preserve traditions of earlier paganism and like to garble what pre-Islamic history they permit to survive in anachronistic terms." 26

"The Muslim's claim of continuity is essential to their attempt to convert Jews and Christians for if "Allah" is part of the flow of divine revelation in Scripture, then it is the next step in biblical religion. Thus we should all become Muslims. But,

on the other hand, if Allah was a pre-Islamic pagan deity, then its core claim is refuted.”²⁷

From the beginning of time men have been especially prone to worship the creation instead of the Creator. Baal worship was a prominent religion in the days of Israel. Paul spoke concerning the worship of the heavenly bodies in **Rom 1:25** *“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.”*

I remind us that the symbol of Islam is a crescent moon. The crescent moon is found on the flags of most Islamic nations. We are about to discover this is no accident but only the carry over of the pre-Islamic god Allah, the Moon-god.

Morey said, “...the hard evidence demonstrates that the god Allah was a pagan deity. In fact, he was the Moon-god who was married to the sun goddess and the stars were his daughters.”²⁸

Archeologists have discovered temples to the Moon-god from Turkey to the Nile River.

“In the first literate civilization, the Sumerians have left us thousands of clay tablets in which they described their religious beliefs...the ancient Sumerians worshipped a Moon-god who was called by many different names...His symbol was the crescent moon...The cult of the Moon-god was the most popular religion throughout ancient Mesopotamia.”²⁹

We can look at the Old Testament and see just how opposed to the worship of the heavenly bodies God was. **Deuteronomy 17:2-5** *“If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant,³ And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;⁴ And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and inquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel:⁵ Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die.”* (My underline for emphasis) [also see **Deut 17:3; 2 Kings 21:3-5; 23:5**]

Christianity: The Truth!

So we can see that the God of the Bible clearly condemns the worship of the moon or a god of the moon. Look again at Dr. Morey's writings.

"Thousands of inscriptions from walls and rocks in Northern Arabia have also been collected. Relief's and votive bowls used in worship of the 'daughters of Allah' have also been discovered. The three daughters, al-Lat, al-Uzza and Manat are sometimes depicted together with Allah the Moon-god represented by a crescent moon above them.

-20-

The archeological evidence demonstrates that the dominant religion of Arabia was the cult of the Moon-god...

When the popularity of the Moon-god waned elsewhere, the Arabs remained true to their convictions that the Moon-god was the greatest of all gods. While they worshipped 360 gods at the Kabah in Mecca, the Moon-god was the chief deity. Mecca was in fact built as a shrine for the Moon-god. This is what made it the most sacred site of Arabian paganism." ³⁰

Of special interest to me is the fact that if Allah was not revealed until Muhammad then why is the name Allah used in the names of his father and uncle. "...both Muhammad's father and uncle had Allah as part of their names. The fact that they were given such names by their pagan parents proves that Allah was the title for the Moon-god even in Muhammad's day." ³¹ So we can conclude that Allah was not a revelation to Muhammad but was only a reworking of the pagan gods that existed in his day.

Again Morey says, "Muhammad was raised in the religion of the Moon-god Allah. But he went one step further than his fellow pagan Arabs. While they believed Allah, i.e. the Moon-god, was the *greatest* of all gods and the supreme deity in a pantheon of deities, Muhammad decided that Allah was not only the greatest god but the *only* god." ³²

I concede that most of my references concerning Allah being the Moon-god of pre-Islamic time have been from one source. However Dr. Morey is not the lone voice on this subject. Notice the following:

"The first recorded extrabiblical mention of Arabs was during the reign of Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (859–824 B.C.). Early Arabian kingdoms include Magan, Dilmun, Sa'ba, Ma'īn, Qatablān, and Hadramaut. Their deities included 'Athtar the male Venus star, Ilmuqah (also known as Hawbas,

‘Amm, Anbay, Wadd, Sin, or Mawl) the moon god, and a sungoddess, Dhāt Ba‘adān or Dhāt Himyan...

Their religion was polytheistic and was related to the paganism of the ancient Semites. The beings it adored were in origin the inhabitants and patrons of single places, living in trees, fountains, and especially in sacred stones. There were some gods in the true sense, transcending in their authority the boundaries of purely tribal cults. The three most important were Manāt, ‘Uzza, and Allāt. These three were themselves subordinate to a higher deity, usually called Allah.

-21-

The Koran mentions these pagan deities in Sura 53:19–20: “Have ye seen Lat, and ‘Uzzā, and another, the third (goddess), Manāt?” This is followed by an assertion (vss. 21–23) that these goddesses, the daughters of Allah the moon god according to pre-Islamic Arab theology, are mere human creations that divide God into parts. These deities were popular at Mecca at the time of Muhammad’s birth. Lat, or al-Lat (“the goddess”), was the sun god; (Uzza, or al-‘ (“the mighty one”), the planet Venus; and Manāt, the god of good fortune.

Some scholars believe that Allah, or al-Ilah (“the god”), can be traced to Ilāh, the South Arabian moon god. Henotheism, or the worship of only one god while not denying the existence of other gods, may have existed in pre-Islamic society. The Quran speaks of hanifs, pre-Islamic Arab monotheists who were neither Christian nor Jewish.”³³

Dr. Morey in his conclusion says, “The Muslim’s claim that Allah is the God of the Bible and that Islam arose from the religion of the prophets and apostles is refuted by solid, overwhelming archeological evidence.”³⁴

B- Jehovah and Allah Contrasted:

We will discuss the doctrines of Islam and the Bible later but for the sake of this point I wish to focus on only two things. First is the immutability (unchanging) of God and see if this is true of Allah as it is true of Jehovah.

One of the most reassuring things about our God is that we can always depend on Him to be the same. Notice what **Mal 3:6** says concerning Jehovah God, “**For I am the LORD, I change not...**” Then

Christianity: The Truth!

Heb 13:8 says, *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”* So we can deduct that if God is always the same and will never change and if Allah does not have the same attributes as God then he is no god at all. Hear also the words well that the Prophet Isaiah penned from God, *“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.”*¹¹ *I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.”* **Isa 43:10-11** (My underline for emphasis.)

-22-

So there can be no doubt that God is unchangeable according to the Scriptures.

Now lets simply look at a few places in the Koran and see if Allah is immutable as well. “The Quran is the eternal speech of God, the angel Gabriel to Muhammad.”³⁵ Based on this we can say that if the Quran changes then Allah does as well. We have mentioned the abrogations of the Koran in the past. Now notice the following quote.

“One of the prerogatives of the Quran is *abrogation*, a legal term referring to the “destruction or annulling of a former law by an act of the legislative power, by constitutional authority, or by usage.” This is something taught in three separate places in the Quran. Sura 2:100/106 says, *“And for whatever verse we abrogate or cast into oblivion, we bring one better or like it”*; Sura 13:39 has, *“Every term has a Book. God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever He will; and with Him is the Mother of all Books”*; and Sura 16:101 (A. J. Arberry’s translation) says, *“And when we exchange a verse in the place of another verse—and God knows very well what He is sending down—they say, ‘The art a mere forger!’ Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge. Say: ‘The Holy Spirit [in Islam the angel Gabriel is the Holy Spirit] sent it down from the Lord in truth, and to confirm those who believe, and to be a guidance and good tidings to those who surrender.”* [Fazlur Rahman, is the author of *Major Themes of the Qur’an*] On pages 89 and 90 Rahman argues that abrogation in the Quran does not have the legal meaning, but should be understood as “substitution” necessary for progressive revelation. Since substitution means replacing one thing for another for some purpose, why is it necessary if the Quran is the eternal speech of God? This seems to indicate that God can change his mind,

something vastly different from the biblical God who is unchangeable in His character and essence. If God is the All-knowing, on what basis is there a need to substitute? Jesus said He did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17) and that heaven and earth would pass away before even the smallest jot or tittle would pass away (5:18). Scripture is never abrogated, because God does not change (Malachi 3:6).”³⁶

So the God of the Bible is unchangeable while the god of Islam cannot seem to make up his mind. These facts are so opposite of each other that they cannot be true of the same God but must be true of two G(g)ods.

-23-

Second, Allah is said to be the, “merciful and compassionate God” by my count in EH Palmers translation 113 times. Is this true?

We certainly know that it is true of the God of the Bible. Remember when Jeremiah saw God allowing the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians he wrote the book of Lamentations. In this book he said, ***“It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” Lam 3:22-23***

We can also see the compassion and mercy of God in the fact that while we were yet sinners Christ came and died for us. Jehovah is an all compassionate God and full of mercy.

Walter Martin, known nationwide as “The Bible Answer Man,” and founder and director of the Christian Research Institute, and is the author of *The Kingdom of the Cults* oft quoted from in this work says, “...if the Quran is abrogated, we run into a multitude of theological problems....”³⁷ He goes on to give several problems one of which is:

“If God can abrogate his eternal speech, how can we trust him with our eternal soul? Shall we depend on his mercy and compassion? How do we know that he will continue to be as merciful in the future as he has been in the past? How do we even know that he has been merciful in the past since the mercy sections of the Quran may themselves actually be substitutions?”³⁸

Another concern that is raised concerning Allah being all compassionate is that only two places in the Koran is this stated, compared to a tremendous amount in the Bible, is he pictured as loving men. Again to quote from Martin's work:

Christianity: The Truth!

-24-

"To the Muslim, God is not only a harsh, wrathful God, even though he is those things too. The Muslim considers his God loving and merciful, as Sura 11:90 says, "Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then repent to Him; surely my Lord is All-compassionate, All-loving" and 85:14 says, "He is the All-forgiving, the All-loving." The Quran is clear that Allah is compassionate and merciful, but aside from the two above passages where God is called the "All-loving," there is not a single passage in the Quran that indicates that God loves any portion of mankind, nor is there a single verse that indicates that people can know God on a personal, relational level (although Muslims believe God to be a person). Unlike the Christian, the Muslim cannot have a *personal* relationship with God...

"All-loving" appears to be nothing more than a divine name that describes God's mercy on those who repent and practice Islam, as opposed to being a personal characteristic." ³⁹

So if he hardly expressed that he loves men and if in fact is said he cannot be known then how can he be held up as having compassion especially being all compassionate.

IV- The Sects of Islam:

"On June 8, 632, Muhammad died." ⁴⁰ As we have previously noted he did not make any preparation to rule his kingdom after his death. As true with most organization that do not have clear rules of succession there was a power struggle. Remember Mohammed's children had died in infancy. There was also a considerable empire at state as well as the religion. Who would succeed him? While Islam presents itself as a religion of unity there are some major divisions with Islam. The two main branches of Islam are the *Sunni* and the *Shi'ite*.

"A major disagreement occurred soon after the death of Muhammad from which several branches of Islamic communities emerged....The question of leadership arose after the prophet died. The Sunni branch claimed that the prophet left no heirs and no individual preferences, thus, they favored and election of a leader from the community. The Sunni established the calliphate with the *caliph* ruling in religious and political matters.

The Shi'ite branch claimed that the prophet named his successor. It was Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet, married to his daughter Fatimeh. The leaders of the Islamic community were to remain in the prophet's family. The Shi'ite established the imamate and named Ali as the first imam. His two sons became the second and third imams. Twelve imams ruled until the end of the ninth century when the twelfth imam disappeared. Many believe that the twelfth imam went into occultation. He is the hidden imam and will return one day. Until that time, it the duty of the *mujtahed* or the *ayatollah* to preside over the community as an agent of the hidden imam. In modern times Ayatollah Khomeini was the classic example of the Shi'ite tradition.”⁴¹

-25-

The Sunni means orthodox or traditional and Shi'ite means partisan. In 661 Ali was murdered and the Sunni-Shiite division began. This division does not prevent them from worship and prayer together however.

“The Sunnis make up 80 percent of all Muslims and predominate in such countries as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan...”

The Shi'ites predominate in countries like Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and parts of Africa.”⁴²

While unity is the desire many Muslim nations fight and war against each other. One of the worst wars of this type was between the two largely Shi'ite nations of Iran and Iraq. Speaking of this type of division Braswell says, “Although the ideal of Islam is unity, the reality is often diversity and conflict. However, Islam has strong symbols and practices of unity, especially as they unite around pray and pilgrimage.”⁴³

In addition to these two major groups there are some smaller groups as well. “The *Sufi* are the mystical wing of Islam led by their sheiks and formed by their brotherhoods, who view God in personal terms and stress more the love of God than the law.”⁴⁴

Another group that is primarily a black American group is now known as the Nation of Islam. Their leader today is Louis Farrakhan. Spike Lee's 1992 film *Malcolm X* and Farrakhan's energetic speeches have helped them become visible. They also were the ones who organized the 1,000,000-man march in Washington D.C. which failed to draw the number expected.

Christianity: The Truth!

Farrakhan is well known for his hatred for whites and Jews. Malcolm X's widow also accused him with being involved in his assassination. "In 1984 he denounced Judaism as "a gutter religion" and referred to Adolf Hitler as a "wickedly great man.""⁴⁵

He has tried to clean up his image and has met with many influential leaders. "Despite his attempts to reach out, he agreed with the "truth" spoken by his then spokesman, Khallid Abdul Muhammad, at Kern College, New Jersey, on November 29, 1993. In the speech, Muhammed called the pope a "cracker" and referred to Jews as "bloodsuckers" who are in conspiracy to control the finances of the world. Farrakhan followed up Muhammad's speech with rhetoric of his own condemning whites and Jews."⁴⁶

-26-

V- What Are the Strengths of Islam?

Today one of the big things that the world is crying about is the common ground of Islam and Christianity. In order to maintain integrity lets look at some things that are right with Islam. In order to do this I wish to give an extensive quote from *World* magazine. The author of this article is Marvin Olasky the editor of the magazine. The greater article I want to quote a part from is entitled, "*What's right with Islam.*"

"My goal here is not to do a detailed theological critique of Islam, but ... to look quickly at the cultural and political implications of the worldview that arises from Islam. I'll start by noting five positives concerning Islam, because it's good when approaching any religion to see its strengths as well as its weaknesses.

1- Islam moved Arabs and many other people from polytheism often accompanied by grotesque practices, to monotheism. Muslims believe in one god, all-powerful and ever-present, uncreated, without beginning or end, completely sufficient to himself and ordaining everything that occurs.

2-Islam is strongly creationist, arguing both from the Quran but also from intelligent design within nature...Muslims say that the beauty and order of the universe, as well as the integration and complexity of a single cell, show that there is an intelligence behind it. They say that such complexity could not be the product merely of time plus chance.

3- Muslims developed a civilization that made great advance in science, medicine, and mathematics.

4- Islam stands with Christianity on many social issues. Islam opposes homosexuality and (generally) abortion. Islam emphasized honesty in business. Muslims are not supposed to sell blemished produce, to cheat in weights and measures, to hoard, or to conceal a product's fault.

5- Islam has gained probably one billion adherents—only 15 percent of them Arabs—by welcoming adherents from every skin color and ethnicity.”⁴⁷

Islam is one of the three world religions that are monotheistic, meaning they believe in one God. The others are Christianity and Judaism. However while Christianity and Judaism both share faith in the same God the god of Islam as we have seen is a different god.

-27-

While many will tell us that the Koran holds these others in high regard, and there is a verse from which this is derived in the Koran, there are other verses that conflict with this one. Notice the following quote.

“Apparently when Muhammad started his new movement, he encouraged nonbelievers to freely consider Islam: Sura 2:256 says, “Let there be no compulsion in religion.” Later, however, he seemed to have developed a much harsher attitude: Sura 9:5 says, “Fight and slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and seize them, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them.” What may be considered crimes against the state and crimes against God are dealt with in Sura 5:33, “The punishment of those who wage war against God and His Apostle, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land.” Jews and Christians are “People of the Book” (Sura 5:5; 5:19), but that does not mean that Muhammad had the highest regard for them; in Sura 5:41 Jews are called people “who will listen to any lie” and Christians are enemies (Sura 5:14), and Muslims were not to have Christians and Jews as friends (Sura 5:51).”⁴⁸

VI- What's Wrong With Islam?

“Islam claims to be the final restoration of the original truth revealed to mankind, so it boasts to be superior to both Judaism and Christianity.”⁴⁹ If we use the common ground for cults and false religions that Larson gave that we quoted on page 6 we see this fits Islam to a tee. Remember Larson also said in *Larson's New Book of*

Christianity: The Truth!

Cults that it is particularly enticing if a religion claims to have restored truths that have been lost.

But is it a restoration and is it superior? We also need to address first what makes it so attractive to people. "One way Muslims attract Christians is by emphasizing their common heritage through Abraham and Adam, but they completely deny the deity of Christ, the Trinity, and Christ's death and resurrection." ⁵⁰

Let's lay the key doctrines from Islam along side the Bible and see if it is the restored faith.

-28-

VII- Exposing the Doctrine Error:

On Page 7 of this work we identified 5 areas of doctrine we would need to explore as we look at these cults and religions of this series. These were as follows:

- 1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to them?
- 2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to them?
- 3- God: What is their concept of what God/gods is like?
- 4- Man: What is their concept of man's origin, purpose, future hope?
- 5- Bible: According to them how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

1- The Doctrine of Jesus:

First we begin with their Doctrine of Jesus. Who do the Muslims claim Jesus was and do they hold the same doctrine as the Bible does concerning Him. The question is "Who was Jesus according to them?"

First, remember we are looking at how their doctrine lines up with the Bible. Let's quickly see what the Bible teaches about who Jesus is. Certainly in the scope of this work we will not have time to exhaust who Jesus is.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus was both man and God. ***Hebrews 1:8 "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."***

The Koran teaches He was man but not God. I wish to use Ron Rhodes Quick Reference Guide for reference during this section. He states Islam teaches:

"Jesus was one of the foremost prophets of God. He was a sinless man who was a messenger of God—bringing truth for his age. He was not the Son of God. He was not God in human

flesh. He is to be honored, but not more so than any other prophet of Allah. He is a *lesser* prophet than Muhammad.”⁵¹

Well now this is interesting and disturbing especially when supposed believers in Jesus claim Islam and Christianity serve the same God. Hear well beloved the words of John in **1 John 2:21-24** ***“I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.”***²² ***Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”***²³ ***Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”***²⁴ ***Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.”***

-29-

In addition to this notice again from Rhodes about what Islam teaches:

“Jesus did not die on the cross, but rather ascended directly into heaven. Judas was crucified in His place. It would have been unthinkable that Allah would have allowed one of his prophets to be crucified. There, the crucifixion of Christ is viewed as a disrespectful doctrine.”⁵²

Now this certainly is obviously in contrast to what the Bible teaches. Jesus, not Judas, was crucified for our sins. Beloved without this sacrifice for our sins of the perfect sinless Son of God we have no hope of ever satisfying the justice of God.

The Koran teaches and seems to contradict itself concerning Christ. Remember that Muhammad is considered a greater prophet than Jesus. However the Koran teaches “...that Jesus was sinless and all-righteous (Surah 3:45,49; 4:158; 82:22) whereas Muhammad was exhorted in the Quran to seek forgiveness for his faults (Surah 16:61; 40:55; 42:5,30; 47:119; 49:1-2)”⁵³

World magazine states the following:

Muslims respect the rejected and wounded Jesus Christ—sure they do, as one of perhaps 124,000 messengers or prophets Allah has sent, and one of 25 listed in the Quran. Jesus is right there in the list with Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Lot, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Aaron, Ezekiel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Zechariah, John, and three others not cited in the Bible, and

Christianity: The Truth!

Muhammad. But Muslims do not believe Jesus died when crucified. They do not believe He was resurrected. They do not see Him as God." ⁵⁴

It is obvious that the teachings of the Koran and the teachings of the Bible concerning who Jesus was and is and His work as our sacrifice is incompatible and therefore the Koran and Islam must be rejected as true.

2- The Doctrine of Salvation:

-30-

The question is "How are we made right with God according to Islam?" As we have pointed out there are basically two paths to God/god/gods that are taught if we take a look at all religions. First is a religion that says you must work and be good enough to be accepted by God. We would call this works and Islam is in this category. The second is one of grace through faith without works and Christianity is the only one in this category.

"Man has lost his way. So long as man continues to follow his own mistaken ways, or worship false gods, his present life is meaningless and his eternal destiny is imperiled. But if one repents and submits to Allah, one can be forgiven. This forgiveness does not require any kind of atonement (Surah 17:15; 35:18) ⁵⁵

One of the failures of Islam is to have an understanding of original sin. "The Quran states that in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve both sinned, then repented and were forgiven, with no consequences from their rebellion." ⁵⁶

The Bible plainly teaches that all men need saving because of the original sin. Because of this many Muslims believe that you can be sinless.

"Since Muslims think we can be sinless if we have strong character and follow all the rules, they have lots of rules, and very specific ones. Some of these are terrific, emphasizing humility: Don't boast about how you've contributed to build a mosque. Don't set up elaborate grave markers. Don't wear clothes just designed to attract attention. Some are common sense: Don't defecate near a place where people draw water. Some are incredibly precise: Do not eradicate insects by burning them, because fire is to be used only on rats, scorpions, crows, kites, and mad dogs. Do not read the Quran

in a house where there is a dog, unless the dog is used for hunting, farming, or herding livestock.”⁵⁷

As we have previously stated there are five pillars of Islam that are to be followed in hopes of being accepted by God. (See page 13) However prayer time is as strict and legalist as all the other rules.

“The nature of Islamic prayer period during the day is also rule-driven. Each time of prayer is made up of units containing set sequences of standing, bowing, kneeling, and prostrating while reciting verses from the Quran or other prayer formulas. The sequences are repeated twice at dawn prayer, three times at sunset prayer, and four times at noon, afternoon, and evening prayer. No deviation is allowed.”⁵⁸

-31-

So we can see that Islam is a works based religion where its followers are trying to do certain things just right to gain acceptance from God.

The Bible teaches us we are free from works religions in Christ. Notice **Gal 5:1** *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”*

Jesus said in **John 8:36**, *“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”*

Notice also where Paul is talking about the saved of Israel. **Rom 11:5-6** *“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. ⁶ And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”*

And again in **Eph 2:8-9** notice *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*

The contrast between Islam and its works and Christianity and grace is totally opposite ends of the spectrum. Man indeed needs a Savior to atone for his sins because he cannot do it for himself.

3- The Doctrine of God:

The question is “What is Islam’s concept of what God is like?” As we have previously understood Islam a monotheistic religions. They believe in one God, Allah. We have previously noticed some of the attributes of Allah and Jehovah contrasted. We need not labor this point again.

Christianity: The Truth!

However, I feel we need to point out an error in Islam in the fact that they reject the doctrine of the Trinity. While the word Trinity is not mentioned in scripture the teaching could not be any clearer. Notice ***Matthew 28:19*** ***“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”*** The Bible plainly teaches while there is only one God that He is manifest in three co-equal and co-eternal persons. The Holy Spirit according to Islam is the angel Gabriel.

-32-

“Muslims teach that Allah can have no son and no partner (Surah 19:34-35). Besides, Muslims say, the doctrine of the Trinity is contradictory (nothing can be three and one), and the doctrine amounts to worshiping three gods.”⁵⁹

As we have previously stated the god of Islam and the God of the Bible cannot be the same God. As a matter of fact the Trinity that Muhammad rejected is not in fact the Biblical Trinity at all. “Muhammad mistakenly thought that Christians worshiped three gods: the Father, the Mother (Mary), and the Son (Jesus), (Sura 5:73-75,116)”⁶⁰

So there can be no doubt that Allah and Jehovah are not the same God. There is no doubt that the Koran teachings are in direct opposition to the teaching of the Bible.

4- The Doctrine of Man:

What is their concept of man's origin, purpose, and future hope? We know that God created man in His image and after His likeness and was a special creation of God. There is but one account of the creation of man in the Bible. ***Gen 1:26-27*** ***“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:”***²⁷ ***So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*** Man was created with a purpose of having fellowship with God.

As I personally searched the Koran I found Mohammed not being able to make up his mind about how their god created man. I had heard the statement that God created man from a blood clot. I found this teaching in at least 5 places in the Koran. For instance Sura 97 says, “Who created man from congealed blood!” and also Sura 75 says, “Wasn't he a clot of emitted seed? Then he was congealed blood, and (God) created him, and fashioned him, and made of him pairs, male and female.” (also see Sura 22,23,40,)

In another place in the Koran I find, “And He it is who has created man from water” Sura 25. So while the Koran may teach that

Allah created man by creation it seems to me to not give a clear teaching on this. The Bible however teaches us it was from the dust of the ground.

The purpose of life in the Korah seems simply to be to submit to Allah. This submission is suppose to give hope for the future.

Just what does Islam teach about the future of men. “Depending on how one fares at the judgment, one will end up either in heaven (a place of pleasure and many physical delights) or in hell (a place of torment) (Surah 7:8-9; 21:47)” ⁶¹

-33-

While we agree there is a heaven and a hell and not meaning to belabor the point, the future of man is based upon only one thing, his relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Islam Teaches “Man has lost his way. So long as man continues to follow his own mistaken ways, or worship false gods, his present life is meaningless and his eternal destiny is imperiled.” ⁶²

The Koran teaches that all men face death and will die. The Bible teaches us **“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” Heb 9:27** The judgment of God will not weigh our deeds to see if we can go to heaven.

The Koran says, “Only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense” (Surah 3:185) Then it says “Those who balance (of good deeds) is heavy—they will attain salvation: but those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls; in hell will they abide.” (Surah 23:102-103).

Muslims have no assurance of salvation since it is based on works and deeds. On the other hand hear the words of John when he gives us assurance of our salvation. **1 John 5:13 “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”** While the future may be uncertain to a Muslim we have assurance of our hope if we are in Christ Jesus.

5- The Doctrine of the Bible:

The way God was/is made known according to them was by a long line of prophets beginning with Adam and ending with Muhammad. We have discussed their claimed revelation, the Koran, in the past. Now let us look at the claim of Islam concerning the Bible.

Ray Rhodes says Islam teaches, “The Bible is viewed as being corrupted. The New Testament does not contain the actual words of

Christianity: The Truth!

Jesus, but rather other peoples' words about Jesus. Jesus' original words were this corrupted. (Surah 2:75; 278-79)" ⁶³

The Bible's claim for itself is, "***All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.***" 2 Tim 3:16

Muslims will say the Koran is always right even when it disagrees with the Bible. They reason that if the Koran and Bible disagree it is because the Bible is corrupted and cannot be trusted. Dr. Morey said, "If you were to contrast the 66 books of the Bible written over a period of several thousand years by at least 40 different authors with the Quran which came through one man, Muhammad, during his lifetime, there would be no contest as to which was the superior literature." ⁶⁴

Muslims try to say that the Bible was the beginning revelation and Muhammad received his revelation that completed it. However there are many contradictions between the Koran and the Bible.

A few years ago there was either a mini-series or a movie that was about Noah's Ark and the flood. It was a very unholy work and had the characters in the movie living in different timeframes then the Bible teaches. For instance they had Lot, Abraham's nephew, which clearly lived many years after the flood involved in the flood of Noah. I wondered how they could make such gross errors and still claim it was based on the Bible.

I now have discovered that this movie was not the first to do so. Notice what Dr. Morey says in the following:

"The seventh-century Arab, and Muhammad in particular, did not think in terms of linear time, this is historical chronology.

In the West, people think of history in terms of a straight line with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

In the East, people think of time in terms of never-ending cycles....

Arab stories and legends put together places, people, and events in one present vision as if they were all living at the same time!

This is why throughout the Quran, Nimrod and Abraham, Haman and Moses, Mary and Aaron, etc. were all pictured as living and working together.

This is why the Quran can put together the flood and Moses, the tower of Babel and Pharaoh, etc. as if all those things happened at the same time.

This is a very serious challenge to the integrity of the Quran because it violates the historical chronology of the Bible and secular history at the same time.”⁶⁵

Therefore I submit to you when a Muslim would criticize the Bible they have no ground upon which to stand. Again Dr. Morey says, “Many Muslims feel that any criticism of the Quran is blasphemous and should not be allowed. This insight explains why Muslim apologist will not agree to debate the errors and the contradiction in the Quran. They want to debate Christianity, the Bible, etc. but never to defend the Quran itself.”⁶⁶

-35-

IX- Conclusions:

While we have attempted to be faithful to the truth we have failed to cover this subject in the depth that it needs. I trust anyone who looks at the material I have presented concerning Islam will arrive at the following conclusions.

1- Islam's god Allah and the Biblical God Jehovah are not one in the same.

2- The Koran, while claiming to be another holy book equal with and even superior to the Bible is not.

3- There is no salvation to be found in the works religion of Islam, only death.

4- That the need of a passionate loving witness to Muslims by Christians is great.

Chapter Two Notes:

¹ *Church Planting and Evangelism Today*, © 2001 North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Alpharetta, Georgia. Winter 2002 p 4-5

² *Ibid.* p. 5

³ Braswell, George *Understanding World Religions* revised, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1994, p. 114-115

⁴ Morey, Robert, *Islamic Invasion*, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon, 1992, p 87.

⁵ Martin, Walter, *The Kingdom of the Cults (Revised)* Copyright © 1965, 1977, 1985, 1997 The Estate of Walter Martin. Electronic

Christianity: The Truth!

Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa. (no page numbers given)

⁶ Morey, p. 79

⁷ Rhodes, Ron, *Islam, What You Need to Know* © 2000 Harvest House Publishers, Eugene Oregon. (no page numbers, tract)

⁸ Martin.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Morey, Robert, *Who Owns the Land of Israel*. (FD Tract) Faith Defenders, Orange CA.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ungers, Merrill, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Moody Press, Chicago Ill. 1998 (electronic edition)

¹⁵ Farah, Joseph www.worldnetdaily.com 30 Oct 2000

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Morey, *Islamic Invasion*, p 75. [NOTE: for a more exhaustive treatment of this subject please see this source.]

¹⁹ THE KORAN, Translated by E.H. Palmer 550 AD (many of the quotes of the Koran in this work are from this translation)

²⁰ Martin.

²¹ Morey, *Islamic Invasion*, p 85.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid. p 85-86

²⁴ Ibid. p 82

²⁵ *World* magazine, Oct 27, 2001 Vol 16 Number 41, p 22

²⁶ Coon, Charleston S., Smithsonian Inst. 1944 as quoted by Dr. Robert Morey in *The Moon-God Allah*, 1994. P 7,19

²⁷ Morey, Robert, *The Moon God Allah*, Research and Education Foundation, Orange CA, 1994, p 1

²⁸ Ibid. p 1-2

²⁹ Ibid. p 2-3

³⁰ Ibid. p 7-8

³¹ Ibid. p 11

³² Ibid. p 11-12

³³ Martin

³⁴ Morey, *Moon God*, p 15

³⁵ Martin

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Braswell, George *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America*, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1973, p. 279-280

⁴² Rhodes

⁴³ Braswell, George *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America*, p 281

⁴⁴ Ibid. p 280

⁴⁵ Martin

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ *World*, p 12.

⁴⁸ Martin

⁴⁹ *Church Planting and Evangelism Today*, p 5

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Rhodes

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *World*, p 16

⁵⁵ Rhodes

⁵⁶ *World*, p 14

⁵⁷ Ibid. p 16

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Rhodes

⁶⁰ Morey, *Islamic Invasion*, p 152

⁶¹ Rhodes

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Morey, p 114-115

⁶⁵ Ibid. p 139-140

⁶⁶ Ibid. p 132

Mormonism: Restoration of the Truth or Another Lie?

Gal 1:6-9

-38-



It is not uncommon on any day of the week to see those well dressed young men in their black pants, white shirt with a tie on their bicycles in any neighborhood in America. They call themselves "Elder Smith" or "Elder Jones", etc. are polite and courteous. They are also called missionaries. For the most part they are young men who have given up family, home and all to be on mission to spread what is their gospel. With the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah Mormonism was brought to center stage of sorts to the world.

With their commercials about the family and its value they seem to be a group that no one would have a problem with. After all who wants to stand against the family. The Mormons have succeeded in blurring the lines between them and the so-called main line denominations in America. If you were to ask most people they would tell you that Mormons are a group like Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterians, etc. But are they just another denomination?

We will discover they are in fact not anything like us in their faith and practices. The claim of Mormonism is that they are the true church restored. They call themselves Christian but the terminology they use has totally different meanings than say a Baptist, or other

Chapter Three

Christians would use. They may carry a King James Version of the Bible but their doctrines are not formed from this precious book.

The Word of God in **Gal 1:6-9** warns us about other gospels. The Apostle Paul writing to the churches of Galatia said ***“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: ⁷ Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ 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. ⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Gal 1:6-9*** (My underline for emphasis) These are strong words but plain words. The Gospel needs neither completion nor restoration by any group.

-39-

I- Who are the Mormons:

Mormons are our neighbors; many times our friends, the man or woman down the street. In many ways they are just like us. The Mormon churches are found in many neighborhoods through the US and in fact the world. Their official name is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Mormonism did not begin until the 1830. This makes it on the religion scene a new movement. It is a religion that is indigenous to America. “Since its beginnings in 1830, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has grown from six original members to more than 10 million in 1997 (4.9 million in the U.S.)” ¹ Mormons are the 5th or 6th largest denomination in the US.

From a small beginning we see they have grown drastically. We can attribute this to a very aggressive program of witnessing and perseverance. Note the following quote from the official web site of the Mormons, www.LDS.org in 2002.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is actively involved in teaching the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. More than 60,000 volunteer missionaries throughout the world share the joy they have found in the gospel. Most of them are young, single people serving full time for 18 to 24 months at their own expense.”²

This should be a challenge to us as believers to be aggressive in evangelism with the gospel.

Christianity: The Truth!

Mormons are also the largest single sponsors of Boy Scouts in America. John Ankerberg gives this number as 17,000 troops. ³

A disturbing fact is the amount of conversion to the Mormon faith by mainline churches. Notice the following:

"...there are apparently more converts to Mormonism from Christian churches than there are official defections from Mormonism. According to the *Mormon Church Almanac*, seventy-five percent of newly baptized Mormons each year are converts from Protestant churches."⁴

-40-

II- Mormon Claims:

Did you notice the words restored gospel in the quote from the official website? Mormons claim to be the restored church as we have stated. Notice what Ankerberg said.

"Mormonism claims to represent true Christianity and to believe in the biblical God. It teaches that it trusts in the true Jesus Christ and that He alone is the atoning savior who died for the sins of the world. Mormonism emphasizes that it depends on salvation by grace and that it places full confidence in the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, including its teachings concerning heaven and hell. But none of these claims are true..."⁵

Ankerberg when he introduced his study on Mormonism in the word just quoted said an interesting thing.

"It should be stressed that any claims by Mormon leaders and writers concerning official Mormon history, early doctrine, apologetics and so on are generally not to be trusted. The Mormon church has engaged in a protracted whitewashing of its early history and doctrines. As a result, most Mormons are unaware that previous divinely inspired teaching may contradict official Mormon doctrine today."⁶

So we need to ask the question, is Mormonism restored truth or is it another lie.

III- The Mormon Literature:

If the Mormon doctrines are true and they are the restored church what is the documentation upon which they substantiate this claim.

The Mormon doctrine is formed basically out of four books of supposed scriptures or authoritative writings. These are the *King James*

Bible, (we would agree with this one) *The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants* and *The Pearl of Great Price*.

We will not comment on the Bible that they draw their foundation from except to say that they agree with it in as much as it is translated correctly. We agree that it is infallible, inerrant, and the inspired Word of God without any errors.

The Book of Mormon was published first in 1830. We will discuss the way it originally came to be in a moment when we discuss Joseph Smith. It claims to be the official history of the early inhabitants of North and South America. There are 14 books of some 500 pages.

-41-

“Its main story concerns the two sons of Lehi, who are Laman and Nehi. Laman leads the Lamanites, who are sinful and rebellious, while Nephi leads the Nephites, who are the righteous. These people have migrated from the place and times of the Tower of Babel and the destruction of Jerusalem to the New World.”⁷

Again according to the Mormons Jesus appeared to these people in the Americas between His resurrection and ascension. They claim when He said He had sheep of another fold that it was these people in America. Notice again Ankerberg’s comments.

“If the *Book of Mormon* were truly an historical record of ancient peoples inhabiting a vast civilization, it is probable that at least some archaeological data would confirm the civilization, just as it has confirmed, in varying degrees biblical and other ancient histories....

But not a shred of archaeological evidence exists to support that any of this is history, despite many vigorous archaeological excavations financed by the Mormon church. This has forced any number of non-Mormon researchers to conclude that the *Book of Mormon* is primarily myth and historical invention.”⁸

The next book is the *Doctrine and Covenants* which contains 138 sections and two documents. This book contains the theology of Joseph Smith and the structure of the church. *The Pearl of Great Price* is some 61 pages and contains a portion of the gospel of Matthew.

“The Mormon church stands on four written authoritative sources for its faith and practice. However, no one source appears final and absolute in and of itself. Prophet/presidents

Christianity: The Truth!

who have succeeded Joseph Smith have received revelations that have altered past faith and practice in the church.⁹

So the book of Mormons altered the teaching of the Bible and then the other two books have altered *The Book of Mormon* so is there any truth to be had from these. I say no and others agree.

Ankerberg said, "...Mormon teachings are not principally derived from the *Book of Mormon*. Mormon doctrine is derived primarily from another Mormon scripture, *Doctrine and Covenants*. Thus, "...doctrinally the *Book of Mormon* is a dead book for most Mormons...The *Book of Mormon* teachings have little bearing upon current Mormon doctrines."¹⁰

-42-

I remind us the Word of God says, **Rev 22:18-19** ***"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: ¹⁹ And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."***

IV- Joseph Smith, Founder:

Lets explore briefly the man who said he was given the truth from God. The life and teachings of Joseph Smith are the very core of Mormonism and we cannot separate the two. The life of Joseph Smith cannot be done justice here because there are so many things that we need to see that because of the scope of this study we do not have time for. I wish however to state that it is not our intent to attack Joseph Smith personally but to expose the error of his, howbeit from his point of view, well intended teachings.

Joseph Smith was born in 1805 in the state of Vermont. He moved with his family to New York early in life. They settled in a city called Palmyra. Revivalism filled the air of this time. Notice the account of Smith in *Pearl of Great Price*.

"...there was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion. It commenced with the Methodists, but soon became general among all the sects in that region of country. Indeed, the whole district of country seemed affected by it, and great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties, which created no small stir and division amongst the people, some saying, "Lo, here!" and

others, “Lo, there!” Some were contending for the Methodist faith, some for the Presbyterian, and some for the Baptist.”¹¹

There seems to be no doubt that Smith came under conviction of the Holy Spirit. He talks about the 15th year of his life and says, “during this time of great excitement my mind was called up to serious reflection and great uneasiness...”¹²

He supposable was in the woods near his home praying when he had a vision. He said again:

“My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personage, who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right—and which I should join.

I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong.”¹³

So all of the religions of the world were corrupt and God was instructing him that he should not join them but wait.

He was again, according to him, given a revelation of gold plates buried in the ground from which he was suppose to translate the book of Mormon. No one, even those who transcribed his words, ever saw these plates. He worked behind a curtain. Many times he gazed into a crystal ball.

While we cannot go into anymore details about his life let me give us a lengthy quote of summary concerning Smith and the *Book of Mormon*.

“Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints always have regarded Joseph Smith, Jr. as one of the greatest religious leaders of all history. They regard him as an inspired prophet. However, on examination of the historical evidence about the life of Smith, one is led to a different sort of person than is usually presented in the official LDS literature. In recent decades, vast amount of documentation concerning the events of Smith’s life and early Mormon movement have come to light. Documented evidence conclusively ties Smith to occult practices, bank fraud, polygamy, and other biblically condemned acts.

Also, Scholars have demonstrated Smith’s utilization of other works upon which he may have based *The Book of*

Christianity: The Truth!

Mormon story. For example, Smith likely had access to several books written in the early 1800s containing fictionally scenarios similar to that in *The Book of Mormon*.

Other theories have been put forth as to how Smith wrote *The Book of Mormon*. Probably the best explanation is that he borrowed the ideas of several previous authors, combined them with story lines and passages taken from the King James Version of the Bible, and then wrote *The Book of Mormon* himself." ¹⁴

-44-

V- Some Practices We Find Foreign to the Bible:

Mormons have many doctrines that we do not find a basis for from the Word of God, the Bible. We will look at the Mormon doctrines in the future but for now let's look at some practices that are not found in the scripture. In many cases they even run contrary to the Word of God.

1- Baptism for the Dead: It is not uncommon to find Mormon missionaries at courthouses across the land doing research into marriage records and genealogy work. The reason they are doing this is so they can identify people from the past that someone can be baptized for these dead ancestors that the departed soul can attain heaven. There was a statement made by someone concerning being baptized for the dead that in fact some lady who had been baptized thousands of times for different people had saved more people than Jesus Christ himself.

Larson says, "All those born prior to Mormonism's founding in 1830 cannot enter the celestial state without a little help from present-day adherents...Once departed kin have been identified, posthumous proxy baptisms are preformed...Some go through the three-hour ceremony on behalf of a nonrelative they have never known. Mormons are universalists and believe that everyone will eventually have immortality with only baptized Mormons attaining godhead." ¹⁵

Some may say that baptizing for the dead is found in the Bible.

1 Corinthians 15:29 "*Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?*" I confess this is a hard passage. Notice what one commentary says:

"Baptized for the dead is a difficult expression, which has been given many interpretations, some bizarre and heretical. For example, it is claimed by some that Paul refers to the practice of vicarious baptism, such as is observed by the

Mormons, although he did not approve of it (cf. Morris, op. cit., pp. 218-219). The practice, however, is known only as early as the second century, and then among heretics. Others feel that the apostle refers to those who were baptized on the basis of the testimony of some who had died... Still others feel that Paul refers to the baptism of young converts who took the place in the church of older brethren who had died... The Greek expositors explained the expression as "baptized with an interest in (the resurrection of) the dead," but this is unnatural for several reasons.... The second and third suggestions are more in line with Pauline theology, but the interpretation remains difficult." ¹⁶

-45-

While it may appear on the surface that there is a biblical example of this practice, in no way can it be interpreted this way. That is not if we lay in along side other scriptures. There is not teaching that we can be baptized for someone who is dead and thereby they get to go to heaven. There can be no baptism by proxy because there is no salvation by proxy.

2- God Makers: One of the sayings of Mormonism is the statement, "As man now is, God once was; as God now is, man may become." This statement is a summation of the doctrines that Mormons teach that we can become Gods.

This flies in the face of the teaching of Scripture, which clearly teaches we will never be gods, and nowhere is it taught in the Bible that God was once a man.

3- Polygamy: While the Bible records men who were involved in polygamy such as David and others it is not sanctioned by God as being what He wanted. You do not find anywhere God telling men to take more than one wife.

Again we quote from Larson, "Mormons were a combative lot, challenging all other sects, and flaunting their polygamous ways. (Smith it was said, had 27 wives, though one authority estimates Smith may have had 60 or more.)" ¹⁷

Brigham Young who succeeded Joseph Smith led the group to the site that is now Salt Lake City, Utah and declared, "This is the place." Larson says, "Brigham Young encouraged polygamy, took 25 wives...." ¹⁸

4- Eternal Marriages: Jesus taught in *Matt 22:29-30* "...Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." ³⁰ For in

Christianity: The Truth!

the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

However in stark contrast to this clear teaching of Jesus is the practice of marriages for eternity practiced by Mormons. "Mormons teach, believe and practice that if one is to attain the highest levels of heaven, one must be married and that marriage must be preformed and sealed in a Mormon temple." ¹⁹

-46-

Braswell also says, "The sealing of a marriage in the temple enables a man and woman, as well as the children, to be bound for eternity, to continue to procreate spirit children, to attain the highest exaltation, and to become gods." ²⁰

"Keeping with this is the belief by some Mormons 'that Jesus was married to both Mary and Martha and that he bore children on earth.'" ²¹

5- Temple Ceremonies: One of the things that Mormons practice is the temple rituals and ceremonies.

"A Mormon must be 'worthy' to attend the temple and to participate in the ceremonies. One must appear before the bishop and be examined as to doctrine and practice before one can receive a temple "recommend" or "pass." Not only the bishop but also the president of the stake must pass on the qualifications of the applicant. A Mormon must be morally clean, must support the General Authorities of the church, and must obey the church's rules. One must be a full tithe payer."²²

So what goes on in these Mormon temple secret rituals. Notice again a quote from Braswell.

"...Men and women are segregated for special bathing and cleansing rituals. They are anointed with oil, beginning at the head and including all important organs. The procreative organs are anointed and blessed to serve their functions. An undergarment is provided each worshipper that is to be worn forever, and a secret name is given to each one..." ²³

While these practices seem unusual and even bizarre to us they are performed day after day by Mormons. We next will look at a comparison of doctrine between Mormonism and Biblically Christianity. May I say now however we have seen enough to know that Mormon teachings cannot be classified as the gospel message of the Bible. Mormonism is another gospel and thus must be rejected and resisted.

Remember *Gal 1:9* says, ***“If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”***

VI- Mormon Doctrinal Exposed in Light of the Bible:

As we have discovered thus far the gospel of Mormonism and the Gospel of Biblical Christianity stand in stark contrast. Our purpose in this study is not to simply disagree with Mormonism or any of the world's false religions but to understand how we are right according to the Bible. The Mormon religion deviated in many of its doctrines from traditional Christianity. In fact they differ in most of their doctrines. We have already explored various ones before but let us now take a look at some additional ones.

-47-

1- Teachings on the Beginning of Creation:

Let us begin at the beginning with creation. The Bible teaches us that God created the heavens and the earth in what is known as creation week. The Bible tells us that God created all things and they remain in existence by His power. *Gen 1:1* says, ***“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”*** Then in *Genesis 2:1-2* ***“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.”***

It has been said that the Mormon teaching is that, “There really was no beginning because God and matter are eternal.” ²⁴

2- Teachings on the Church:

Another great truth in the scripture is the church and its endurance because of its head, Jesus Christ. In *Matthew 16:18* Jesus said, ***“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”***

However the teaching of Mormons seems to be quite the opposite of Jesus teaching. Notice the following two quoted from John Ankerberg.

“The gates of hell have prevailed and will continue to prevail over the Catholic Mother of Harlots, and over *all* her Protestant Daughters (*Pamphlets* by Orson Pratt, 112, cited by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *changing World*, 27)

The Kingdoms of this world made war against the kingdom of God...and they prevailed against it.

Christianity: The Truth!

...[It has been] overcome and nothing is left (Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 13:125). ²⁵

I remind us that Joseph Smith was supposable told by the angel to not join any church because all were wrong. Beloved eternity will tell that the church of Jesus did not need restoration by Smith because we already had redemption by Jesus.

3- The Priesthood:

-48-

The Bible teaches that initially from the time of Adam there were priests of the families. We find this also when Job acted as a priest for his family. God intended for all of Israel to be priest but because of their failures He chose the tribe of Levi to be the priestly tribe. The New Testament teaches us again the priesthood of believers. Walter Martin said the following:

"The Christian does not need temples, secret services, rituals, and mysteries. His priesthood knows no special offices or power to communicate with the dead—things that the Mormon priesthood most definitely claims. The Christian priesthood embraces all those who have been loosed from their sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and who enjoy the perpetual love of the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." ²⁶

The Bible instructs us in various places about the priesthood of believers. Notice as John writes to the seven churches he says, ***Revelation 1:5-6 "...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶ And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."***

Then in ***1 Peter 2:9*** the Bible says, ***"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."***

"The Mormon church almost from its inception has claimed what no other church today claims to possess: the priesthoods of Aaron and Melchizedek.

The Mormons maintain that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the Aaronic priesthood from the hand of John the Baptist on May 15, 1829, and that "the Melchizedek Priesthood was conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery through the ministration of Peter, James, and John, shortly after the conferring of the Aaronic order."...

The Mormon concept of the priesthood holds that God has placed in that church presidents, apostles, high priests, seventies, elders; and that the various offices all share specific authorities. " 27

VII- Five Major Errors in Doctrine:

As we stated we hope to expose the truth of the Bible and the error of the cults in five major doctrine areas. I remind us again that these five are as follows.

- 1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to them?
- 2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to them?
- 3- God: What is their concept of what God/gods is like?
- 4- Man: What is their concept of man's origin, purpose, future hope?
- 5- Bible: According to them how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

-49-

Please note again that terms that Mormons use have different meanings than traditional Christianity. So even though their talk may sound right if the meaning of words are altered then nothing is the same.

1- Who do Mormons say Jesus Christ is?

We know that Jesus was God incarnate in the flesh. He is from eternity past and has always been God. John said in **John 1:1** "***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***"

Hear again God's Word tells us if we do not get the doctrine of Christ right we do not have any doctrine right. Remember the words of John in **1 John 5:12** "***He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.***"

The Mormon doctrine of Christ begins its corruption early. In their doctrine they begin with denying the virgin birth of Christ. Remember Isaiah said, "***Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.***" **Isa 7:14**

"Relative to the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ, Brigham Young has unequivocally stated, "When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was *not* begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who was the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle [body], it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain,

Christianity: The Truth!

Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father, and so on in succession. ... Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven" (*Journal of Discourses*, 1:50–51)." ²⁸

-50-

So we can see that the teaching of the Mormons does not line up with the Bible here. Lets look and see if they deny or affirm the teaching of the Bible that Jesus was God. I remind us that the Jews crucified Jesus because He claimed to be equal with God, He claimed to be God in the flesh.

Ankerberg quotes a Mormon source that says, "Jesus *became a God*...through consistent effort." ²⁹

A little known teaching of Mormonism is that Jesus and Lucifer were brothers on another planet before they came to earth. The Bible clearly teaches us that Jesus is the Creator and that Lucifer was only a created being.

2- How are you saved according to Mormonism?

Much like all the other cults of darkness Mormonism ties salvation to their church and being a faithful follower of their church. "There is no salvation outside the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" ³⁰

The Bible gives us a very clear teaching in both Romans and the Book of Acts what we must do for salvation. In answering the question of the Philippian jailer what must I do to be saved the response was "***And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.***" *Acts 16:31*

Rom 10:9 says, "***That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.***"

The Bible plainly teaches us that if we reject the provision that God has made for our forgiveness we will NOT be saved. Mormons however believe they will experience salvation in some way. This is the reason they practice baptism for the dead.

There are as many as 12 different things that Mormons hold to that MUST be done to have hope of attaining fullest salvation. Let me give a quote from a publication of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Conclusion: The plan of salvation according to the “gospel” of Mormonism is not just a gospel of works—it is a gospel of obedience and obligation to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In *Gospel Principles*, an official publication of that church, a parable describing the Mormon plan of salvation is told. A debtor begs his creditor for mercy as his debts are large and long overdue. Just as the cruel creditor is about to cast the man in prison a friend intervenes and pays the debt. He then says to the debtor, “You will pay the debt to me and I will set the terms. It will not be easy, but it will be possible” [*Doctrine of the Gospel, Student Manual*, (Salt Lake City; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1986) p. 91 and *Doctrine and Covenants* 76:31-48.] The friend who intervened, not with a free gift, but with a loan to be repaid, is symbolic of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Each devout Saint therefore is now working hard to pay off his or her debt to the church. The Mormon gospel (good news) is no gospel. It is not the gospel of freedom through Christ, it is a gospel of servitude and obligation to a religious organization.”³¹

-51-

So there is no salvation by grace, there is no free gift that the Bible teaches the Christ gave us. Remember *Eph 2:8-9* says, “**For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.**”

3- The God of Mormonism:

One of the greatest deviations from Bible doctrine that Mormonism contains is the teaching that God once was a man and now is God and that we can become God.

Notice the following verses of the Word of God that clearly teach this cannot be. *Isa 46:9* “**for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,**”

Then *Isa 43:10-11* “**Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. ¹¹ I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.**”

“...it is safe to say the LDS church currently teaches that God is, in effect, (1) a contingent being, who was at one time not God (not necessary not eternally God; (2) limited in knowledge (not truly omniscient), power (not omnipotent), and

Christianity: The Truth!

being (not omnipresent or immutable); (3) one of many gods: 4) a corporeal (bodily) being, who physically dwells at a particular spatiotemporal location and is therefore not omnipresent like the biblical God ... (5) a being who is subject to the laws and principles of a universe He did not create.”³²

Joseph Smith said, “In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it”³³

-52-

The doctrine of Mormonism and the doctrine of the Bible stand in total contrast with each other. The Bible teaches us that God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and immutable, is a personal God and many other things. The Mormon god is not the Bible God.

4- Adam, God or Man?

The Bible teaches us that God created Adam from the dust of the ground. Notice the following scriptures. ***Gen 1:26 “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..”*** Then ***Gen 1:27*** says, ***“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”*** And also notice, ***Gen 2:7 “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”***

Walter Martin gives a list of things about the Mormon god. While it is possible to clearly separate the God of the Bible and the man He created it is not possible to do so in the Mormon doctrine. Notice the following:

“When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organized this world. He is MICHAEL, the Archangel, the ANCIENT OF DAYS! about whom holy men have written and spoken—HE is our FATHER and our GOD, and the only God with whom we have to do” (Brigham Young, in the *Journal of Discourses*, 1:50).

Historically this doctrine of Adam-God was hard for even faithful Mormons to believe. As a result, on June 8, 1873, Brigham Young stated: “How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me—namely that Adam is our father and God.

“Well,” says one, “Why was Adam called Adam?” He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He with the help of his brethren brought it into existence. Then he said, ‘I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, in a mortal state. I was faithful, I received my crown and exaltation’”³⁴

See what I mean the doctrines of God and man are all jumbled up.

-53-

5- The Bible is not all we need, according to Mormons:

We have clearly understood that the Mormons while they carry and even give away the KJV of the Bible they clearly do not hold to it for their doctrines. One of the things about the book of Mormon is that it is clear that it is plagiarism’s of the KJV.

“A careful examination of the *Book of Mormon* reveals that it contains thousands of words from the King James Bible. In fact, verbatim quotations, some of considerable length, have caused the Mormons no end of embarrassment for many years.

The comparisons of Moroni 10 with 1 Corinthians 12:1–11; 2 Nephi 14 with Isaiah 4; and 2 Nephi 12 with Isaiah 2 reveal that Joseph Smith made free use of his Bible to supplement the alleged revelation of the golden plates. The book of Mosiah, chapter 14, in the *Book of Mormon*, is a reproduction of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah the prophet, and 3 Nephi 13 copies Matthew 6 almost word-for-word.”³⁵

To summarize and conclude the teaching of Mormonism on the Bible we need to only look at the teaching of Joseph Smith known as *The Article of Faith*. There are 13 of these articles and number 8 speaks to the Bible. “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly...”³⁶

VIII- Conclusion:

It has not been our intent to attack Mormon believer personally but to show that the doctrine they have been taught is not the doctrine of the Bible. It has also been our intent to not teach Mormonism as even a possibility for anyone to convert to. It is our prayer and hope that those friends and family member that many of us have that are

Christianity: The Truth!

Mormons will see the truth and accept the Bible Jesus for the hope of their souls.

It has been clearly demonstrated that Mormonism and Biblical Christianity are not the same but in fact the Mormon doctrine is another gospel. We end with the verses we began our study on Mormonism with.

-54-

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: ⁷ Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ 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. ⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal 1:6-9

Chapter Three Notes

¹ *A Closer Look At The Book of Mormon*, North American Mission Board, SBC, Alpharetta, GA, , © 1993

² www.LDS.org

³ Ankerberg, John & John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest Hours Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 279.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid. p 277

⁶ Ibid. p 275

⁷ Braswell, George *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America*, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1973, p. 17

⁸ Ankerberg, p 284

⁹ Braswell, p 21

¹⁰ Ankerberg, p 285

¹¹ Smith, Joseph, *The Pearl of Great Price*, Published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City UT. 1978, p 47

¹² Ibid. p 48

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *A Closer Look At the Book of Mormon*, North American Mission Board, SBC, Aphraretta, GA, © 1993

¹⁵ Larson, Bob, *Larson's New Book of Cults*, Tyndale House, Wheaton, IL. 1989, p 314

¹⁶ From *They Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, Electronic Database.
Copyright 1962 Moody Press

¹⁷ Larson, p 312

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Braswell, p 30

²⁰ Ibid. p 37

²¹ Larson, p 313

²² Braswell, p 38

²³ Ibid. p 35

²⁴ Wallace, *Can Mormonism Be Proved Experimentally?* 163
as quoted by ohn Ankerberg & John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and
New Religions*, Harvest Hours Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 291

²⁵ Ankerberg, p 289

²⁶ Martin, Walter, *The Kingdom of the Cults (Revised)*
Copyright © 1965, 1977, 1985, 1997 The Estate of Walter Martin.
Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology,
Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa. (no page numbers given)

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ M.R. Hunter, *Gospel Through the Ages*, Salt Lake City:
Deseret, 1945, 51, in McElveen, 154. as quoted by John Ankerberg &
John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest Hours
Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 290

³⁰ McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 670 as quoted by John
Ankerberg & John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*,
Harvest Hours Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 291.

³¹ Francis J. Beckwith, *A Closer Look at the Mormon Concept
of God*, © 1997, North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist
Convention, Atlanta Georgia.

³² Ibid.

³³ Smith, Joseph, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p
349.

³⁴ Martin

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ *Gospel Principles*, Published by The Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. © 1978, 1979, 1981, 1986,
1988, 1992; p 307)

Christianity: The Truth!

Jehovah's Witnesses:
Witness to the Truth or
Lies?
John 8:41-44

Chapter Four

-57-



I remind us all that Jesus said in *Matthew 7:15* "**Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.**" It is this verse of Scripture that gives rise to this study of False Religions.

Our focus this chapter is on the religion commonly known as *Jehovah's Witnesses*. They are known according John Ankerberg & John Weldon as "Jehovah's Witnesses and the New World Society. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. International Bible Students." ¹

I purposely entitled this study "Jehovah's Witnesses: Witness to the Truth or Lies." In the first part of our study we will discuss their founder and his successors and find they were indeed *Wolves in Sheep's Clothing*. In the second part we will again see why we can assert that we hold the truths revealed by God to mankind in the Bible as we lay our doctrines along side the doctrines taught by Jehovah's Witnesses.

For our text for Jehovah's Witnesses I have chosen to use *John 8:41-44* because I feel that the Jehovah's Witnesses organization is just the sort of thing that Jesus was talking about in this text. I realize that Jesus was not talking to Jehovah's Witnesses in this scripture nor

Christianity: The Truth!

-58-

do I wish to imply this. I wish only to apply it to them as not following the truth. Jesus said to the Pharisees, *"Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. ⁴² Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. ⁴⁴ Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."*

I guess I have let the cat out of the bag, so to speak, concerning Jehovah's Witnesses and the question of do they witness to the truth or to lies. It is obvious to all except the most bias observer that they indeed do not, nor have they from their inception ever been, witnesses of the truths contained in the Bible.

**Jehovah's
Witnesses is
an American
born religion.**

I- Founder and Historic Roots:

Jehovah's Witnesses is an American born religion. It is indigoes to America. It along with Mormonism could be considered the greatest religious movements to come from America. "In many respects, The Watchtower Society (WS), begun by C.T. Russell, it today just as influential as the LDS church begun by Joseph Smith." ²

February 16, 1852 was the birthday of Charles Taze Russell the founder of the group now knows as Jehovah's Witnesses. He was the son of Joseph L. and Anna Eliza Russell. Notice the following about Russell.

"C. T. Russell...spent most of his early years in Pittsburgh and Allegheny, Pennsylvania... At an early age he rejected the doctrine of eternal torment, probably because of the severe indoctrination he had received as a Congregationalist, and as a result of this act entered upon a long and varied career of denunciation aimed at "Organized Religions." In 1870, at the age of eighteen, Russell organized a Bible class in Pittsburgh, which in 1876 elected him "Pastor" of the group. ...

Russell founded *The Herald of the Morning* (1879), which developed into today's *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom.*"³

So we might say that Russell started a religion that left hell out so that he would not have to contend with it. We will study doctrines later in this study but I feel that we need to see this important truth now. Russell had been scared of hell as a child so when he started the movement that he could mold to his liking it is not surprising that hell was left out. Not only was it left out it was ridiculed and denounce in the strongest of all language.

-59-

Ankerberg explaining the doctrine of hell according to Jehovah's Witnesses says:

"The teaching about a fiery hell...can rightly be designated as a 'teaching of demons.'...Has not this doctrine...grossly misrepresented God?...Those teaching the hellfire doctrine are therefore saying blasphemous things against God...That being the case, would you want to continue

***The Bible
clearly teaches
that Hell is a
place of eternal
torments.***

supporting any religious system that teaches a fiery hell?"⁴

As you can see this is clearly what he accused others of, blasphemy. The Bible clearly teaches that Hell is a place of eternal torments. In **Mark 9:43-48** Jesus made the statement, "***Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched..***" Just in case some would try to claim that He was not talking about hell look at **Mark 9:43** "***And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched.***" By the way the phrase I have underlined here appears two times in these verses as well. So no matter who may try to remove Hell from existence it will still remain a place that awaits those who have not been born again.

Russell continues to preach, teach and write until his death on October 31, 1916 in Texas. However during his life he created quite a stir on the religious landscape. His teachings were in such opposition to the views held by Christians that they wanted to silence him, and rightfully so.

When the climate at home was not good for his false teachings he embarked on a world-wide preaching tour, well at least sort of one.

Christianity: The Truth!

His sermons were printed that he supposable delivered in various places. Notice the following:

"The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* led the fight to expose the hypocrisy of "Pastor" Russell, and nothing could be more appropriate than their on-the-spot testimony as to his many fraudulent claims. The following documentary evidence is taken from *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 19, 1912, page 18, and is titled "Pastor Russell's Imaginary Sermons—Printed Reports of Addresses in Foreign Lands That He Never Made—One at Hawaii, a Sample." These excerpts concern the Pastor's "World Tour" and are very enlightening with respect to his reliability and truthfulness.

"Pastor" Russell, who has found the atmosphere of Brooklyn uncongenial ever since the *Eagle* published the facts concerning his methods and morals, is making some new records in the far parts of the world. He is delivering sermons to imaginary audiences on tropical islands and completing "searching investigations" into the missions of China and Japan by spending a few hours in each country." ⁵

It doesn't get any better for Russell. Notice the following:

"In June, 1912, the Reverend J. J. Ross, pastor of the James Street Baptist Church, Hamilton, Ontario, published a pamphlet entitled "Some Facts About the Self-Styled 'Pastor' Charles T. Russell," which minced no words in its denunciation of Russell, his qualifications as a minister, or his moral example as a "pastor." Russell promptly sued Ross for "defamatory libel" in an effort to silence the courageous minister before the pamphlet could gain wide circulation and expose his true character and the errors of his theology. Rev. Ross, however, was unimpressed by Russell's action and eagerly seized upon the opportunity as a means of exposing Russell for the fraud he was. In his pamphlet, Ross assailed Russell's teachings as revealed in *Studies in the Scriptures* as "the destructive doctrines of one man who is neither a scholar nor a theologian". Rev. Ross scathingly denounced Russell's whole system as "anti-rational, anti-scientific, anti-biblical, anti-Christian, and a deplorable perversion of the gospel of God's dear Son".

Continuing his charges in the pamphlet, Ross exposed Russell as a pseudo-scholar and philosopher who “never attended the higher schools of learning, knows comparatively nothing of philosophy, systematic or historical theology, and is totally ignorant of the dead languages” (3–4). It must be clearly understood at this point by the reader that in a libel suit of the type pursued by Russell, the plaintiff (Russell) had to prove that the charges lodged against him by the defendant (Ross) were not true. It is significant to note that Russell lost his suit against Ross when the High Court of Ontario, in session March, 1913, ruled that there were no grounds for libel; and “the case was thrown out of Court by the evidence furnished by ‘Pastor’ Russell himself” ⁶

-61-

Is it any wonder that Jehovah's Witnesses today want to distance themselves from this man? He was guilty of perjury among other things. Notice a couple of more quotes:

“The “pastor” was also deported from Canada because he hindered mobilization (see *The Daily Standard Union*, November 1, 1916), and in the early stages of World War I he was a prominent conscientious objector, as all of his followers (Jehovah's Witnesses) still are today....

Though most Witnesses today have little awareness of their founder or his dubious past, those who are confronted with this evidence generally respond in one of two ways. Either they protest that the organization today should not be judged by any alleged inadequacies of its founder, or they charge the critic with overstating the case and making much more harsh judgments against Russell than the evidence warrants ...A typical Jehovah's Witness response is that Russell was never charged nor convicted of perjury, which is true. However, that Russell *committed* perjury, or lied under oath, whether ever charged, tried, or convicted of it, is obvious to anyone who reads the evidence.” ⁷

Russell controlled all of the money that came into the organization. It is documented that he controlled 990 out of 1000 shares with the other 10 controlled by others. He encourages his followers to buy what is called “Miracle Wheat” that was supposed to yield an abundant harvest but turned out to be ordinary wheat. His tour of the

Christianity: The Truth!

world was labeled with the headline in, "*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 11, 1913: *Tour of Orient Branded Huge Advertising Scheme*"⁸

He was called "Pastor" by his followers but it was a title that he claimed only by his own authority. He was never ordained in the ministry.

We have spent a great deal of time on the founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses because the root of the plant or religion is very vital in understanding the organism it produces. Perhaps his most dangerous project was his writings. Notice one last quote before we leave this section.

-62-

"Psychologically, the man was an egotist whose imagination knew no bounds and who is classed (by his followers) along with the apostle Paul, Wycliffe, and Luther as a great expositor of the gospel. These are trite words for a man who proffered his writings as necessary for a clear understanding of the Scriptures and who once declared that it would be better to leave the Scriptures unread and read his books, rather than to read the Scriptures and neglect his books.

For the benefit of those so naïve as to believe that the "pastor" did not make such a claim, we document the above assertion from *The Watchtower*, September 15, 1910, page 298, where the "pastor" makes the following statement concerning his *Studies in the Scriptures* and their "indispensable" value when examining the Bible.

If the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are practically the Bible, topically arranged with Bible proof texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes THE BIBLE IN AN ARRANGED FORM. That is to say, they are not mere comments on the Bible, *but they are practically the Bible itself.* ...

Furthermore, not only do we find that *people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself*, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SCRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years *he goes*

into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, and had *not read a page of the Bible, as such,* he would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.

Nowhere is Russell's egotism or boldness better revealed than in that statement. Think of it: According to the "pastor," it is impossible to understand God's plan of salvation independent of Russellite theology. Also, if one's study is of the Bible alone, void of Russell's interpretations, that one will walk in darkness at the end of two years. But there is a ray of hope for all those foolish enough to study God's Word alone. If all will adopt Russellism as a guide in biblical interpretation, mankind will enter into a "new" Kingdom Age; for then, by virtue of the "pastor's" expositions, true understanding of the Bible's basic doctrines will have been arrived at. To quote the Rev. J. J. Ross: "This inspiration has its origin in the pit." ⁹

-63-

II- Successors of the "Pastor":

After the death of Russell he was succeeded by a man who was known as the Judge, Judge Joseph F. Rutherford. He would lead the religion until his death in 1942. He had been legal advisor and served as defense counsel for Russell in one of his trials. He too was a conscientious objector. He was jailed for refusing to serve in the armed forces. He ratcheted up the anti-government rhetoric. Rutherford was a former Baptist from Missouri.

One of the most embarrassing things for Jehovah's Witnesses today even, thought they have attempted to explain it away, is that he predicted Armageddon; forecasting it for 1919, then 1920, then 1925. I remind you all that the Word of God teaches for someone to be a voice from God the prophet must never get anything wrong. He never got one time right. Under the leadership of Rutherford the organization became known as Jehovah's Witnesses.

One of the most embarrassing things for Jehovah's Witnesses today even, thought they have attempted to explain it away, is that he predicted Armageddon

After Rutherford's death the vice-president, Nathan H. Knorr (1905-1977) became the new president. He lead the organization to become a body governed by a board and not an individual. As a matter

Christianity: The Truth!

to fact since 1942 no Watchtower publication has carried the name of any author. The Jehovah's Witnesses bible (notice I did not capitalize bible) *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* was completed in 1961 during his tenure. "International missions were emphasized under his leadership: and from 1942 until 1977, membership increased from 113,000 to 2,000,000 and countries increased from 54 to 210." ¹⁰

-64-

Fredrick William Franz followed Knorr as president from 1977 until 1992 when Milton G. Herschel became president. Franz again set another date of 1975 for Armageddon which came and went as we all know. Today the "Kingdom" is governed by a governing board known as, "the Society." They are viewed today as the voice of Jehovah. They refer to themselves as, "the faithful and discreet slave." The organization is one that demand 100% loyalty and is very diligently organized. Notice the following:

"Appointments are made by the board for national and local posts. A branch overseer may supervise the work in a nation or an aggregate of several lands. Regional servants are appointed by the board to oversee the work in various countries. There are six regional servants in the United States. Zone servants oversee a number of circuits. There are zone servants in the United States. A circuit servant has supervision for some fifteen congregations or Kingdom Halls. Kingdom Hall is where the company meets and is usually limited to some two hundred publishers.

Kingdom Hall is the preparation center for each Witness to worship, to study materials, to train for door-to-door visitation, and to receive literature." ¹¹

In most communities across America and even the world we are familiar with the building that carry the name "Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses." But just how many are they of these people?

III- Global Extent of Witnesses:

“Wolves in **SHEEP S** Clothing”

While the Jehovah's Witnesses certainly are an American born religion, as we have previously seen, they have become a global religion. I wish to offer a couple of charts to help us understand just how global they are. I offer these from an Internet site www.jwic.com/stat.htm. The site is titled, “*Statistics of Jehovah's Witnesses- Graphic Presentation of Jehovah's Witnesses Activities in the World 1988 through 2001*”

In the introduction to the web site it states, “The following charts are created based on the statistics published each year in the January 1st issue of *The Watchtower*. Data published from 1988 through 2001 were used.”¹¹ While this site is not necessarily one that is an official site it is based none the less on official publications.

Please Consult **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** on the pages 67 and 68 and allow me to make a few comments about these statistics.

You will notice on **Figures 1** that the largest number of Jehovah's Witnesses are in the United States with Mexico and Brazil second and third. There are 1,000,000 in the US but 6 countries have over 200,000 and 19 countries have over 100,000. Very few countries if any in the world do not have a Jehovah's Witnesses contingent. It stands to reason that according to **Figure 2** that the places where people are converting should be the place where the largest number of Jehovah's Witnesses are.

*the largest number
of Jehovah's
Witnesses are in
the United States
with Mexico and
Brazil second and
third.*

On this same web site you will find some additional statistics. For instance, Jehovah's Witnesses participated in almost 5 million Bible studies in 2001; this is almost one per witness. A disturbing statistic is that in Hawaii 1 in every 157 people is a Jehovah's Witnesses. In Mexico 1 in 185 are and in Belize 1 in 191 are. In Puerto Rico, which is a US territory, 1 in 147 is the number. This should alarm us and make us have a renewed fervor for evangelism and missions.

Another challenge to us is also found in the statistics as we look further at the Jehovah's Witnesses. It takes 8325 hours of preaching in Hawaii to convert one person to their way of thinking. Many of us will visit some one or two times and then give up. Another challenge to us is the number of hours each Jehovah's Witness spends each year out witnessing. The world wide average is 200 hours per year. In Albania each publisher (witness) spends 420 hours a year. This

Christianity: The Truth!

averages out to almost 4 hours a week for each one worldwide and 8 hours in Albania. One cannot say anything about their dedication. This should challenge us as believers to be about the business of telling others about Jesus with a new challenge.

The good news is that it is taking more hours each year for one person to believe the lie of Jehovah's Witnesses. Notice the following quote from the aforementioned web site.

-66-

The good news is that it is taking more hours each year for one person to believe the lie of Jehovah's Witnesses.

"What is common among those countries with zero growth or negative growth (most European, North

American countries and Japan) compared to those countries with steady and rapid growth (former Soviet Union, most African and South and Central American countries)? This has been my question for the past several years since I started this statistics site. Economical, political and social instability of the countries seems to be related to the growth of the Watchtower religion. It prospers where the society is poor and unstable. It also prospers where public information sources are limited or restricted. In this regard, "epidemiology" of the Watchtower religion is very similar to that of contagious infectious diseases. Where public awareness of the disease propagation is limited, the disease spread rapidly. Is it totally a coincidence that the countries of rapid growth of JW population are also the countries of rapid growth in AIDS population?"¹²

"Wolves in **SHEEP'S** Clothing"

Left blank intentionally for **Figure 1**
Created in CorelDraw

Christianity: The Truth!

Left Blank intentionally for **Figure 2**
Created in CorelDraw

IV- Roll the Presses:

We have previously mentioned the bias translation of the scriptures of the Jehovah's Witnesses called the *New World Translation*. However this is only the tip of the proverbial iceberg when it comes to printing. You may find in many Doctor or Dentist office today a copy of a magazine called *The Watchtower* or perhaps *Awake* and not know what false doctrine is contained within their covers.

To show us just how important and far reaching the printing presses of Jehovah's Witnesses are and how much damnable doctrine is being circulated allow me to quote John Ankerberg again.

“Since 1928 the Watchtower printing plant has sent out *billions* of pieces of literature. In 1975, the Watchtower yearbook (p. 32) listed for 1974 a print run of 51,663,097 bound books and 18,239,169 booklets and almost a half billion *Watchtower* and *Awake* magazines. The ten billionth piece of literature was reached sometime in 1988 or 1989; the twenty billionth about the time of this encyclopedia was published. [1999] Today the WS sponsor some 5 million Bible studies each month, and followers spend almost 2 billion hours witnessing. There are over 75,000 congregations in some 250 countries.

The circulation of the two Watchtower magazines rival TV Guide and Readers' Digest and outsells Time, Newsweek and US News and World Report combined.

The two key periodicals, *The Watchtower* and *Awake*, have a combined yearly circulation of over 600,000,000 in some 150 languages. Watchtower literature as a whole is published in some 250 languages. The circulation of the two Watchtower magazines rival *TV Guide* and *Readers' Digest* and outsells *Time*, *Newsweek* and *US News and World Report* combined. Also, possibly one-hundred million copies of the Watchtower Society's *New World Translation* (NWT) of the Bible are now in some 30 languages, in whole or part. Perhaps no other single religious organization uses the printed page so extensively, dwarfing by comparison the majority of other religious bodies, even, it is claimed, the U.S. Catholic Church.”¹³

Christianity: The Truth!

So it is easy to see that the Jehovah's Witnesses are a very formidable religious machine. We may run into them on the street or perhaps they will knock at our door as they are out "publishing." We may perhaps encounter them in some foreign land as we serve on a mission project to Brazil or some other place. One thing is certain they are a group that cannot be ignored in the hopes they will go away.

-70- We will discuss the doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses in a moment. However, notice a few verses from God's Word now. **Jude 3-4** *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Jehovah's Witnesses are a very formidable group on the landscape of world religion if by nothing more than their sheer volume of literature they spew forth like a volcano. In a moment we will study the doctrines of the Bible as we lay them along side of the false doctrine of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Thus far we have seen that the cult or false religion of Jehovah's Witnesses is based on the teaching of men who intentionally misinterpreted the Word of God. As we introduce this second section of **Jehovah's Witnesses: Witness to Truth or Lies** allow me to begin with their most obvious, and perhaps the most grievous, misinterpretation of the Scriptures.

John 1:1 in the KJV says, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

However the *New World Translation* (or the New World MisTranslation) says, "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." Notice it says "a god" but NOT GOD. We will explore the doctrine of Jesus Christ in a few moments and see the obvious error of this wording.

VI- How Can They Be So Deceived?

Before we explore the doctrine errors of the Witnesses let's seek to understand how they can be so deceived and not see the truths we feel are so obvious.

Most cults may initially offer freedom to explore and search for the truth when in fact once inside the adherent to the cult become locked in and isolated for the rest of the world. Some cults make these barriers as obvious as barbed wire fences. Jehovah's Witnesses barriers are not barbed wire but are no less real. Lets look at some of their own publications as we see their captivity and isolation.

“So Jehovah's visible organization under Christ is a channel for bringing the divine interpretation of his word to his devoted people.” ¹⁴

“If we are to walk in the light of truth we must recognize not only Jehovah God as our father but his organization as our ‘mother.’” ¹⁵

We see from these two quotes that the people are tied to the organization. Remember a lie cannot tolerate even another lie but the truth is never threatened by a lie.

Not to labor the point but to help us understand the gravity of someone coming out of the witnesses notice what pressure they are under if they withdraw. Again to quote from their own publications as quoted in *The Kingdom of the Cults Revised*.

“Dissent is not permitted and, if discovered, is punished swiftly and completely. Jehovah's Witnesses are excluded from membership or disfellowshipped not merely for gross, unrepentant immorality or heresy but also for *questioning* the teachings and authority of the Society. Should a Witness be disfellowshipped, he learns firsthand what it means to be shunned by the very people he once considered his friends, family, and brothers and sisters in Christ. Witnesses are taught,

“A disfellowshipped person is cut off from the congregation, and the congregation has nothing to do with him. Those in the congregation will not extend the hand of fellowship to this one, nor will they so much as say “hello” or “good-bye” to him. ... [The congregation members] will not converse with such a one or show him recognition in any way. If the disfellowshipped person attempts to talk to others in the congregation, they should walk away from him. In this way he will feel the full power of his sin.” ¹⁶

Christianity: The Truth!

Those who convert and are saved out of the cult of Jehovah's Witnesses are ostracized by their family and friends who must do so to remain right with the organization. To further illustrate this point notice another quote from *The Kingdom of the Cults* with a source of Jehovah's Witnesses publication cited within.

Martin said, "No Witness is allowed to read dissenting material, whether it is written by a disgruntled Jehovah's Witness, a disfellowshipped or disassociated Witness, or someone who has never been a Witness:

-72-

Have no dealings with apostates. ... For example, what will you do if you receive a letter or some literature,

Those who convert and are saved out of the cult of Jehovah's Witnesses are ostracized by their family and friends who must do so to remain right with the organization.

open it, and see right away that it is from an apostate? Will curiosity cause you to read it, just to see what he has to say? You may even reason: "It won't affect me; I'm too strong in the truth. And besides, if we have the truth, we have nothing to

fear. The truth will stand the test." In thinking this way, some have fed their minds upon apostate reasoning and have fallen prey to serious questioning and doubt."¹⁷

So they are by force of the organization forbidden to talk with even a brother, sister, wife or any other if they are not good Jehovah's Witnesses and are not allowed to read any material given to them by those converted from the darkness.

I remind us that the Word of God says in **1 John 2:11** "***But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.***"

And again in **Col 1:12-13** "***Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.***" Thank God for His deliverance from darkness.

VII- Doctrines Foreign to Biblical Teaching:

Prior to looking at the five key doctrines we identified previously let's look at some doctrine they adhere to that are totally

foreign to the Bible. Lets look at two that perhaps many people are familiar with.

In many headlines of newspapers or in new reports on TV or radio perhaps you have heard of someone's child dying because that they were against blood transfusions that would have saved their life. In the Watchtower book *Reasoning From the Scripture* they say, "A blood transfusion is the same as eating blood because it is so similar to intravenous feeding. References to 'eating blood' in the bible (Genesis 9:4, for example) thus prohibit blood transfusions." ¹⁸

-73-

Anyone with any understand at all concerning medical care knows that blood transfusions are not in any way similar to IV feeding. The blood, which carries life throughout the body, is only replenished.

The second thing is that *Reasoning From the Scripture* forbids them from celebrating birthdays. "Birthday should not be celebrated because in two birthday mentioned in Scripture (Genesis 40:20-22; Matthew 14:6-10), someone was put to death. Birthdays are therefore evil." ¹⁹

These birthdays mentioned concern Pharaoh killing the baker by hanging him and letting the butler go free and Herod killing John the Baptist. This only proves how evil these men were not that birthday celebrations are bad.

VII- Exposing Their Lies in the Key Doctrines:

Again we look at the five major doctrine areas. I remind us again that these five are as follows.

- 1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to them?
- 2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to them?
- 3- God: What is their concept of what God/gods is like?
- 4- Man: What is their concept of man's origin, purpose, future hope?
- 5- Bible: According to them how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

1- Who do Jehovah's Witnesses say Jesus Christ is?

Remember if this doctrine if wrong then all others are wrong as well. This is because God has declared that to have a right relationship with God the Father then we MUST have a right relationship with God the Son.

1 John 5:12 says, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Christianity: The Truth!

1 John 2:22-24 *"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. ²³ Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. ²⁴ Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father."*

-74-

So just who was Jesus? The doctrine of the Deity (or Godness) of Christ is the key cornerstone of the gospel and because of this it has been attacked more than any other doctrine in history.

The Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Jesus was not God. The Jehovah's Witness says he was a created being, and angel, a lesser god. Notice again quotes from their work *Reasoning From the Scripture* several quotes of who they teach Jesus is. (My underline for emphasis.)

"Christ was created as the Archangel Michael." ²⁰

"It was through this created angel (Christ) that all other things in the universe were created." ²¹

"Jesus is a lesser God than the Father, for "the head of Christ is God." (1 Corinthians 11:3). ²²

So what does the Bible teach concerning who Jesus is in relationship to these teachings? First it is impossible for Jesus to be a created being like Michael the Archangel because He was the creator of the angels. *Col 1:16 "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:"*

We also know that no angel ever accepted worship from men and Jesus accepted worship from men nor will angels ever rule the world like Christ. *Heb 1:5 "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?"*

Heb 2:5 "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak."

Next concerning Jesus being a lesser God it is clear that Jesus is equal with God the Father in nature but chose to become a servant and took on human form and likeness therefore making God the Father greater only positionally.

In **John 10:30-31** Jesus claimed to be equal with God. Notice the reaction of the Jews when He made the claim. ***“I and my Father are one.”***³¹ ***Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.”***

Phil 2:6-7 says, ***“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”***

So it is obvious that the teaching of who Jesus is by Jehovah's Witnesses does not stand up under investigation of the Scriptures.

-75-

The resurrection of Jesus is another key doctrine in the Bible.

We are told that Jesus is ***“And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”***

Rom 1:4 I also remind us that Jesus rose again with a physical body as evidenced in the dialog of

Thomas. In **John 20:25** (Thomas said) ***“Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.”*** Thomas said I have to see the physical resurrected body to believe.

John 20:26-28 ***“And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. ²⁷ Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. ²⁸ And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”***

In direct opposition to this clear teaching that Jesus resurrection was a bodily resurrection Jehovah's Witnesses teach the following:

“Jesus did not appear to his disciples in the same body in which He died, but rather “materialized” to the disciples in various bodies to prove He had ‘resurrected.’”²³

Following His crucifixion, Jesus was raised from the dead as an invisible spirit creature (with no physical body).²⁴

...it is obvious that the teaching of who Jesus is by Jehovah's Witnesses does not stand up under investigation of the Scriptures.

Christianity: The Truth!

So we can say the doctrine of Jehovah's Witnesses is in grievous error and conflict with clear teaching of the scriptures concerning Jesus.

2-What is their doctrine of salvation or how is a man made right with God?

Again to quote from *Reasoning From the Scripture* lets look at what they teach for salvation.

-76-

"Salvation depends on works, 'Grace' is more or less the opportunity for human beings to earn their salvation by total obedience to the Watchtower Society. Grace does not involve a free gift of salvation." ²⁵

"'Faith' is necessary for salvation—but works must be added to it" ²⁶

This is clearly not correct according to many Bible verses as refutation evidence. Notice the following:

Eph 2:8-9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast." Almost 200 times in the New Testament salvation is said to be by faith alone and not works. This teaching of Jehovah's

Witnesses is the reason so many spend so many hours "publishing" door to door as they try to work their way into heaven.

The Bible clearly teaches that God is only one God that has manifest Himself in three personages.

3- What is God like according to Jehovah's Witnesses?

Ankerberg said, "Jehovah's Witnesses deviate from the biblical view of God in two important areas. First, God is only one person, not three persons or triune. Second, God is limited to a specific locale and is not omnipresent." ²⁷

The Bible clearly teaches that God is only one God that has manifest Himself in three personages. This is known as the Trinity. Jehovah's Witnesses reject the Trinity with statements such as "the doctrine of the Trinity is a false doctrine and is promulgated by Satan for the purpose of defaming Jehovah's name." ²⁸

Charles T. Russell even went as far as to state, "The clergy's God is plainly not Jehovah but he ancient deity, hoary with the iniquity of the ages—Baal, The Devil Himself." ²⁹

The teaching of the Witnesses concerning the Holy Spirit is also at great odd from Biblical teaching. Again to return to quoting *Reasoning From the Scripture* lets see what they teach.

“The Holy Spirit is not a person.”³⁰

“The Holy Spirit is not God, but is God’s impersonal ‘active force’ for accomplishing His will in the world.”³¹

So they teach that God is not omnipresent and is not a trinity and the Holy Spirit is not God but only God’s force. How does this stack up against the Bible teaching. Not very well as you might know already.

The Bible teaches plainly while not using the word “Trinity” that God indeed is a Trinity. **Gen 1:26** “**And God said, Let us make man in our image...**” This shows the Trinity at creation.

The Trinity is clearly seen at the baptism of Jesus. Notice **Matt**

3:16-17 “**And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were**

The Bible teaches plainly while not using the word “Trinity” that God indeed is a Trinity.

opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, [the Father] saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

The Holy Spirit is clearly spoken of in **Acts 5:3-4** as God. **Acts 5:3-4** “**But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? ⁴ Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.”**

4- Where did man come from, where is he going, what is his hope according to Jehovah’s Witnesses?

While it seems almost like the teaching of Jehovah’s Witnesses is correct concerning the creation of man as a special creation of God it is only a surface agreement at best. Anyone only needs to look at what they teach about what man was when he was created to see any agreement is short lived.

George Braswell said, “The Witnesses’ understanding of man is based on creation of man in the image of Jehovah, on man as a soul, and on the fall of mankind under Adam...Witnesses believe that ‘God did not create man with a soul. Man is a soul.”³²

Christianity: The Truth!

Since this teaching is that man is a soul lest see the implications of this at death. They teach what is often referred to as "soul sleep." Notice some more from *Reasoning From the Scripture*.

"Man does not have a soul distinct from the physical body that can survive death." ³³

Since man has no immaterial nature that survives at death, he is obviously not conscious of anything following death." ³⁴

"Unbelievers are annihilated at death." ³⁵

-78-

It is clear that the reason for these teaching is the fact they have done away with hell. If there is a hell there would not be annihilation.

We only need to look at the story of the rich man and Lazarus to see that soul sleep is not a Bible teaching. **Luke 16:23** says concerning the rich man, ***"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments..."***

We only need to look at the story of the rich man and Lazarus to see that soul sleep is not a Bible teaching.

Jehovah's Witnesses also teach there are two classes of the saved. One is the "anointed Class" which are only 144,000 and they alone get to

go to heaven. The other saved according to them will live in paradise on earth. This again is the big thumb of the organization trying to get even those who are working hard try to do more so they can be saved. By the way only the 144,000 are said to be "born again." I remind us all that the Bible teaches, ***"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God..." 1 John 5:1***

5- How has God reveled Himself in the past and how is he revealing Himself now?

As we have discussed previously the teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses is that the so-called "Society" today speaks for God to men. They evolved into this after the times of Russell, Rutherford and others held this trust according to them.

Today the claim of Jehovah's Witnesses is that the organization if the mouthpiece of God. When we understand all the mistakes they have made over the years in their prophetic utterances we find this difficult to believe. There is a quote from Ankerberg that sums us the way they claim God is revealing Himself now.

“One former 20-year member noted that member commonly believe the idea that the *Watchtower* and *Awake* magazines are inspired publications... One JW stated to a Christian, ‘Your Bible was finished 2,000 years ago, but our Bible has 32 pages added to it every week.’” In other words, the divine authority of the Watchtower was equated with divine authority of the Bible...”³⁶

This is clearly blasphemy and does not stand up to the teaching of the Bible. Notice **Rev 22:18-19** **“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: ¹⁹ And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”**

-79-

Heb 1:1-2 **“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”** While men were used by God to write the Scriptures not one of these men claimed exclusiveness as Russell and his descending organization have and do. Also please notice that God spoke to us ultimately and with the final word by Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God the Son.

Chapter Four Notes:

¹ Ankerberg, John & John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest Hours Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 127.

² Ibid. p. 129

³ *The Kingdom of the Cults (Revised)* Copyright © 1965, 1977, 1985, 1997 The Estate of Walter Martin. Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa.

⁴ *Is This Life All There Is* pp 96-97, 119. As quoted by John Ankerberg & John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest Hours Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 157.

⁵ Martin

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Christianity: The Truth!

¹⁰Braswell, George *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America*, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1973, p. 61

¹¹ Ibid. p. 65-66

¹² www.jwic.com/stat.htm.

¹³ Ankerberg p 129.

¹⁴ *The Watchtower* (June 1, 1938): 169.

¹⁵ *The Watchtower* (May 1957): 274.)

¹⁶ Martin

¹⁷ *The Watchtower* (March 15, 1986): 12.

¹⁸ *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, p 70-76

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 68-70

²⁰ Ibid. p. 218

²¹ Ibid. p. 408-409

²² Ibid. p. 410

²³ Ibid. p. 335

²⁴ Ibid. p. 334-335

²⁵ Ibid. p. 356-359

²⁶ Ibid. p. 132

²⁷ quoted in *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, p 141

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, p 380-382.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Braswell, p 72

³³ *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, p 375, 379

³⁴ Ibid. p. 169-170

³⁵ Ibid. p. 172-174

³⁶ Ankerberg p. 134

Hinduism: One God Or Many? *Is 44:6*



Chapter Five

-81-

Are there many gods or only one? Is everything god or does all of creation live and move and have its being in only one true god? The false world religion we study this session claims there are literally thousands and thousands of gods. Notice what the Bible says, ***"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."*** *Is 44:6* With these definitive and excluding words from the prophet Isaiah we see according to the Bible there is but one God and not many.

...according to the Bible there is but one God and not many.

The importance of this study of Hinduism is highlighted by a quote from *Larson's New Book of Cults*. "...thirty percent of the devotes have spend at least a year in college, and **70 percent formerly attended church with regularity.**"¹ (emphasis added)

Christianity: The Truth!

I- Hinduism Origin:

While to this point we have studied world religions and cults that can be traced back to a founding father, so to speak, the religion of Hinduism does not have a founder. Hinduism is indigenous to India and along with Judaism is probably one of the oldest religions on the planet.

The writings that Hindus claim reveal the truth concerning spiritual matters date back to around 1500 B.C. Martin said in *Kingdom of the Cults*:

-82-

"The Hindu scriptures were collected over hundreds of years, beginning with the writing of the oral traditions around the last half of the second millennium B.C. These scriptures are known as the *Vedas* ("wisdom" or "knowledge"). The concluding portion of the Vedas are called the *Upanishads*, which are a synthesis of Vedic teachings. The general assumptions of the Upanishads include a belief in pantheism, karmic retribution, and reincarnation. Perhaps the most well-known section of the Vedas is the Hindu epic called the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which tells the story of the warrior-prince Arjuna, and his charioteer, Krishna, who is actually the disguised incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. The Gita was written down and subsequently modified between 200 B.C. and A.D. 200." ²

So as we previously stated the religion had no founder but is in essence the collection of what is the wisdom and knowledge from men. It is based therefore on philosophy of the Indian sub-continent as much as religion.

One of the problems we have attempting to identify just what the Hindi faith consists of is that it can be almost anything. Again Martin said, "Hinduism seeks to be a synthesis of the various religious ideas and influences from throughout the Indian subcontinent, representing hundreds of separate cultural, social, and tribal groups. The term "Hindu" itself is not indigenous to India. It comes from the Persian designation of the Indus River." ³

To conclude this point notice what a world religion expert said concerning Hinduism.

"It might be asked, by way of conclusion, What is the essence of Hinduism? A hard question. There are orthodox Hindus who deny the existence of God. There are others who while not denying God, relegate him to a second place, as a

secondary or illusory phase of the Absolute. Amid such a variety of theological views, what remains as necessary to Hindu belief? Certainly the doctrines of rebirth and that of an eternal soul. The picture of the world as a place where the immortal spirit within man is virtually endlessly implicated in the round of reincarnation has dominated the Indian imagination for about three millennia. In addition, a complex social system has given shape to the actual religion of the subcontinent over a long period.--⁴

II- Hinduism Effects:

Why would we spend time studying this religion when it is basically a religion that is found in India? Beloved it is simply amazing how much this religion and its subsequent exportation to America and the world has infiltrated our culture. Lets look at some terms that we hear in our language on any given day to see this. Hinduism found fertile ground in America during the 1960's when everything was questioned.

*it is simply
amazing how
much this religion
and its
subsequent
exportation to
America and the
world has
infiltrated our
culture.*

A- Reincarnation: Probably one of the most widely heard words that has at least its modern concept in Hinduism is the word reincarnation. We will discuss the theology of it in a moment but allow me to only define it now from *Webster Dictionary*.

“1. the belief that the soul, upon death of the body, comes back to earth in another body or form. 2. Rebirth of the soul in a new body. 3. A new incarnation or embodiment, as of a person.”⁵

B- Karma: Many times you will hear someone refer to theirs or someone else's Karma. This word has its origins in Hinduism. *Webster Dictionary* defines it as:

“1. (in Hinduism and Buddhism) action seen as bringing upon oneself inevitable results, either in this life or in a reincarnation. 2. (in Theosophy) the cosmic principle of rewards and punishment for the acts performed in a previous incarnation. 3. The good or

Christianity: The Truth!

bad emanations felt to be generated by someone or something." ⁶

C- Guru: Who has not heard someone referred to as the "Guru" on a particular subject. This word too has a Hinduism root. To show the influence of it let me ask a question before we define this word. How many times have you heard some say, "He is the preacher on this or that subject?" Not many if any I will guess. Look at *Webster's* meaning of the word we use all the time.

-84-

"1. A preceptor giving personal religious or spiritual instructions, esp. in Hinduism. 2. Any person who counsels or advises; mentor. 3. A leader of a particular field." ⁷

D- Swami: On ESPN there is a man, Chris Berman, who goes by the name of the Swami. He theatrically makes predictions on outcomes of game. This is all done in pun and jest but it also illustrates that Swami has become a word in our culture. *Webster* defines it as follows:

"1. An honorific title given a Hindu religious teacher.
2. A person resembling a swami, esp. in authority or judgment." ⁸

E- Yoga: We often hear about this practice. If you would allow me to simply define this and move to the next word. Again from *Webster*.

"1. A system of physical and mental disciplines practiced to attain control of body and mind, tranquillity, etc., esp. a series of postures and breathings exercises. 2. A school of Hindu philosophy using such a system to unify the self with Supreme Being or ultimate principle." ⁹

F- Transcendental Meditation: TM and Yoga are the same discipline or practice. *Webster* define TM as "a technique, based on Hindu practices, for seeking serenity through regular meditation centered upon the repetition of a mantra." ¹⁰

We need to understand what a mantra is to reveal this practice for what it is. A mantra is according to *Webster*: "(in Hinduism...a sacred word or formula repeated as an incantation." ¹¹

The practice of Transcendental Meditation has been a hot topic in America for some times. For those of you who think it is not I remind us that in a lot of cartoon and movies made for our children you find this practiced. The sit cross legged, arms resting on their knees with their fingers formed in a circle as they relax and chant many times the word, “Om.” This is an attempt to contact a Hindu god and channel it. If you have seen the Disney movie “the Lion King” you may remember the monkey doing Yoga or Transcendental Meditation. Many in Hollywood have embraced the teachings. We will explore this more when we talk about the New Age movement in a couple of sessions.

-85-

Martin in *Kingdom of the Cults* said the following concerning this subject. It gives us insight into its dangerous illusions and deceptions.

“TM is a spiritual practice, or yoga, which was first introduced to the Western world by its founder, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, as a religious exercise or philosophy. Encountering skepticism from nonreligious Westerners, Maharishi revamped his TM program. In the 1970s, he promoted the movement as a scientifically sound, nonreligious psychological exercise designed to relieve stress, to bring peace to the inner man, thereby having a positive effect on society, and to enable the advanced practitioner to participate in astral projection (his soul leaving his body) and levitation.

TM still wears its secular label in its own promotions today, and most Westerners are unaware of its religious presuppositions and nature.

TM leaders persistently neglect to inform the public of TM’s religious nature, and also of the fact that the motivational, health, or political program they are promoting at the moment is actually a TM front project. One of their earliest confrontations with evangelical Christians was in the early 1980s, when Christians in the state of New Jersey successfully used the courts to have TM declared religious. This effectively eliminated the previous public support, adoption, and implementation of its programs, which had been deeply entrenched in the New Jersey public school system, prisons, etc.”¹²

These classes are offered in many corporate settings and yogi has even made its way into some so called Christian circles.

Christianity: The Truth!

G- Natural Law Party: Hinduism affects the political landscape of America. One of the small parties on the political playing field is founded on the teachings of Hinduism.

“One of the most popular recent TM projects is a new political party, the Natural Law Party, which “stands for prevention-oriented government, conflict-free politics, and proven solutions to America’s problems designed to bring the life of the nation into harmony with natural law”—all through the practice of TM, of course!”¹³

-86-

H- Hare Krishna: One of the most popular forms of Hinduism in America is known as Hare Krishna. The official name is International Society of Krishna Consciousness or ISKCON.

Braswell said, “One of the most popular of all deities is Krishna. Stories found of him are found in the Bhagavad Gita, the most popular sacred writing in India. The Gita has been called the ‘New Testament of India’ and the ‘Gospel of Krishna.’”¹⁴

Allow me to quote from this work earlier in the introduction session. “In 1968 the Beatles proclaimed Transcendental Meditation was the answer to all mankind’s distress.”¹⁵ After the Beatles broke up George Harrison, the Beatle that died in the last few weeks, deceived the nation with the song “*My Sweet Lord*” in which he started out with Hallelujah and then switched to Hare Krishna.” (p 1)

Before we leave this section allow me to introduce two more words that we will need as we enter the doctrine section.

Hinduism teaches that there are two types of souls, the Atman and the Brahman.

I- Atman: According to Hinduism Atman is the individual soul of men. *Webster* says, “the individual self, known after enlightenment to be identical with Brahman.”¹⁶

J- Brahman: The Brahman is the world soul that is the goal of Hindus to be released into.

III- Comparing Doctrines:

Comparing the teachings of Hinduism to the teachings of Scripture is difficult at best. It is like comparing the darkness and the

light. The problem is that Hinduism is like trying to hit a moving target that keep morphing itself into something else. To illustrate this notice what Braswell said.

“Hinduism is one of the most inclusive religions. The sophisticated intellectual may find a comfortable niche in philosophical atheism or agnosticism and remain a good Hindu. A Hindu family man may divide his devotion between the gods of his family and those of his wife.”¹⁷

So while we will attempt to look at their teachings on the five key doctrines we cannot in the scope of this study, nor I submit in many volumes of work, ever begin to understand Hinduism.

I remind us the key doctrines we have explored during each study are as follows:

- 1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to Hinduism?
- 2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to the Hindu philosophy?
- 3- God: What is the Hindu concept of what God/gods is like?
- 4- Man: What is their concept of man's origin, purpose, future hope?
- 5- Bible: According to Hinduism how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

“Hinduism is one of the most inclusive religions.”
--Braswell

-87-

1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to Hinduism?

Let us first see who Jesus is by Biblical revelation. **Rom 1:3-4** says, ***“Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; ⁴ And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”***

Jesus purpose in coming to this earth was not to show us a new religion or new philosophy but to be the Savior of mankind.

Hinduism teaches many things about Jesus depending on which sect or belief someone follows. Lets look at a couple of quotes to see there is no truth in their teachings concerning who Jesus the Son of God is.

Hare Krishna teach the following according to *Kingdom of the Cults*. “To ISKCON, Jesus Christ is Krishna's Son, but in a position no more unique to God than any other man could strive to attain. To the

Christianity: The Truth!

Hare Krishna, then, Jesus Christ is not the unique Son of God, God manifest in the flesh. He is not an incarnation of Krishna." ¹⁸

And concerning the TM sect of Hinduism we discussed previously they believe again according to *Kingdom of the Cults*.

"TM ignores Jesus Christ almost entirely, although Maharishi teaches that anyone can become as enlightened as Jesus Christ through the application of TM techniques. It is clear from his neglect of Jesus Christ and from his worldview that he does not consider Jesus Christ to be the unique Son of God, God manifest in the flesh." ¹⁹

-88-

So the doctrine of the Son is grossly wrong and therefore I submit all of their others doctrines and teachings are in error as well.

2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to the Hindu philosophy?

Here is a place that one can get bogged down in his mind trying to understand what their teachings are concerning how a man is saved. Hinduism rejects origin sin and therefore there is not anything except self to be redeemed from.

Again to quote from *Kingdom of the Cults* as he quotes Hindu writers.

"Salvation in TM is accomplished by realizing that one is in union with the Creative Intelligence: "The answer to every problem is that there is no problem. Let a man perceive this truth and then he is without problems."

This realization comes through practicing the meditations of TM: "A huge mountain of sins extending for miles is destroyed by Union brought about through transcendental meditation, without which there is no way out." Salvation is almost a misnomer, since one is not truly a sinner, but rather forgetful of his oneness with the divine." ²⁰

However their doctrine of salvation is not as simple as this because remember they embrace everything and anything. The Hare Krishna group has another opinion.

"Salvation in ISKCON is obtained by removing one's karmic debt through devotion to Krishna and right actions through multiple incarnations." ²¹

I remind us all not that the Bible teaches there is only one way of salvation. Jesus said, **"...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."** *John 14:6*

We have already seen there are supposable many paths in Hinduism. Martin said:

“The three major paths to Hindu “salvation” include *karma marga* (method), the way of disinterested action; *bhakti marga*, the way of devotion; and *jnana marga*, the path of knowledge or mystical insight. Jnana marga achieves self-realization through intuitive awareness and mystical insight. Bhakti marga achieves self-realization through ritualistic sacrifice and discipline.”²²

-89-

When we talk about salvation in Hinduism we are really talking about escaping the endless cycle of birth death and reincarnation to do it all over again. Braswell says, “One goal within Hinduism is for the individual soul to unite with the world soul. Until this unity occurs, the individual is born time after time.”²³

When we talk about salvation in Hinduism we are really talking about escaping the endless cycle of birth death and reincarnation to do it all over again.

To escape this cycle one must produce good works.

This can be done in one of three ways. Braswell again said, “Hinduism offers *three classi ways* or margas. These are the way of activity... the way of knowledge...and the way of devotion.”²⁴

When one chooses to go the route of activity it consists of offerings and sacrifices to gods, goddesses and spirits in the home and temple. This consists of waking the god up, bathing the god and giving them food. I wonder if the god ever eats it, certainly not.

The way of Knowledge is broken into four stages of life; student, householder, forest dweller, and ascetic. A Hindu who practice this may study as a youth, raise a family, give up everything and go into the forest to live then learn enough to practice yoga on their own. The end of this is usually self-torture of the body to develop concentration. What a contrast to the God of the Bible who gives us salvation as a free gift apart from works of any kind. ***Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.”***

The way of Devotion is a deity who is personal and offers some form of grace and a personal relationship to those who follow after him.

Christianity: The Truth!

I want to state this clearly beloved. We are not saved by simply deciding to become a follower of Jesus. I remind you and I that Judas followed Him. We are saved by accepting what He did for us on the cross not by simply pledging allegiance to Him. We are saved by placing our faith in Him not by works we would do to show Him we love Him.

Braswell shared the following also concerning Hinduism beliefs concerning salvation.

-90-

"Pilgrimages are taken to various places, including temples, cities, and rivers. Benares, India is one of the holiest cities of Hinduism. It is located on the Ganges River and is estimated to contain some 1,500 temples and ghats (bathing places), as well as some one half million images of deities. Hindus believe that bathing in the Ganges River purifies one of all sin and cures diseases. When one's bones and ashes are placed in the Ganges, it is believed that one's place in eternity is achieved." ²⁵

We are not saved by simply deciding to become a follower of Jesus.

3- God: What is the Hindu concept of what God/gods is like?

Noting one thing in the previous quote that "one half million images of deities." I remind us the Bible forbids making of idols. **Lev 26:1** says, ***"Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God."***

I will not spend but just a moment here the teaching of Hinduism is so inconsistent within itself and because the conflict with the Bible is obvious. I give just one quote.

"There is no single Hindu idea of God. Hindu concepts of deity can include any of the following: monism (all existence is one substance); pantheism (all existence is divine); panentheism (God is in creation as a soul is in a body); animism (God or gods live in nonhuman objects such as trees, rocks, animals, etc.); polytheism (there are many gods); henotheism (there is one god we worship among the many that exist); and monotheism (there is only one God)." ²⁶

“Wolves in **SHEEP S** Clothing”

Remember *Is 44:6* “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”

4- Man: What is their concept of man’s origin, purpose, future hope?

In Hinduism man is seen as being in an endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth until he eventually escapes into the world soul.

Man in the Hindu belief is little more than an animal. In fact if one is not good in this life he may even come back as an animal. Larson says, “women, who are said to have inferior brains and be worthy of only serving men, must adorn themselves in plain Indian *saris*.”²⁷ This is according to the Hare Krishna group.

The religion of Hinduism affects the social structure as well. Men are born into Hinduism in a caste system and must simply be content for the most part in their lot in life until they can escape it and move up in the next spin cycle.

5- Bible: According to Hinduism how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

Hinduism obvious rejects the Bible as authoritative. They have their own supposed sacred writing that we have mentioned previously. I will not labor the obvious point here and close with a simple quote from *Kingdom of the Cults*.

“In conclusion, Hinduism, for all of its diversity and contradictions, is not compatible with Christianity. In all its forms, Hinduism denies the biblical Trinity, the deity of Christ, and the doctrines of the Atonement, sin, and salvation by grace through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It replaces resurrection with reincarnation, and both grace and faith with human works. One cannot, then, achieve peace with God through Hinduism or any of its sects. C. S. Lewis wisely observed that at the end of all religious quests one must choose between Hinduism and Christianity; the former absorbs all others and the latter excludes them. Peace with God is not achieved by looking inside oneself but by looking up to Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write—Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ and Son of God.”²⁹

Christianity: The Truth!

Chapter Five Notes:

¹ Larson, Bob, *Larson's New Book of Cults*, Tyndale House, Wheaton, Ill. 1989, p. 259.

² *The Kingdom of the Cults (Revised)* Copyright © 1965, 1977, 1985, 1997 The Estate of Walter Martin. Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa.

³ Ibid.

-92-

⁴ Ninan H. Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), 155–156.

⁵ *Webster's Universal College Dictionary*, Random House, New York, NY. © 2001.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Martin

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Braswell, George *Understanding World Religions* revised, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1994, p. 24

¹⁵ Larson, p. 10

¹⁶ Webster

¹⁷ Braswell, p 22

¹⁸ Martin

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Braswell, p 31

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Martin

²⁷ Larson, p. 263

²⁸ Martin

Buddhism: Children of Light or Darkness? *John 1:1-9*



Chapter Six

-93-

With headlines such as "Jackson: Now and Zen"¹ In USA Today, the coach of the Los Angeles Lakers of the NBA Phil Jackson is described. In the ensuing article it says, "He meditates regularly and, on occasion, had his players do it with him...He has been called a Zen master, philosopher..."² This is just one of the examples of the way Buddhism is portrayed in our media. Many so called "stars" practice Buddhism of which Zen is only one school.

The text I have chosen for our study of Buddhism is found in John's Gospel. **John 1:1-9** tells us about Jesus being the light of the world. Six times in verses 4-9 the word light is used. You will notice that four of the six times in the KJV it is capitalized meaning it is a name for Christ. Allow me to give us some other verses that make it plain that Jesus claimed to be and is the Light. It will be apparent why I emphasize this point so strongly in a moment.

John 8:12 "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

John 9:5 "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Christianity: The Truth!

John 12:35-36 "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. ³⁶ While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them." (My underline for emphasis)

-94-

The question we must ask concerning Buddhism is, does it teach the way of light (called enlightened in Buddhism) or the way of darkness. It is obvious that Jesus said that He alone was the light of the world and thusly we must conclude that all others who claim to be light are not light but are in fact darkness.

Worldwide there are in excess of 325,000,000 who adhere to the religion of Buddhism. There are between 750,000 and 1,000,000 in the US. Winfried Corduan says, "There are as many schools of Buddhism as there are Christian Protestant denominations, but the teachings of many of these schools appear to be irreconcilable beyond a very general core."³

So who are these people who call themselves Buddhist? Where did the religion come from and what does it teach?

I- The Buddha:

To attempt a study of Buddhism we must begin with its founder. The two cannot be separated. Today with literally hundreds of forms of Buddhism they all can be traced back to the teachings of the man called "The Buddha." Who was this man and what influenced his life?

Siddhartha Gautama, as he was named, was born in India along about 560 BC. This made him a contemporary of Confucius of China and also Ezekiel of the Bible. "The accounts of his life are filled with facts and fables that are impossible to verify historically."⁴

Siddhartha was born into a family of wealth and was raised in a shielded environment by his father. A Hindu sage supposable told his father that he would be a great king or a Buddha. Buddha means, "enlightened one." Siddhartha grew to manhood, married and had a child. However he was restless and one day was exposed to four things that changed his life. He was about 29 years of age.

"He saw an old man, a dying man, a dead man, and a holy man. The sight of age and death alarmed him, and the Hindu sage

intrigued him, and he left his family to begin a life of spiritual pilgrimage in the forest. He became a student of Hindu Gurus. He meditated on Hindu philosophy. He followed the strict discipline of an ascetic life, often in self flagellation, but there was not satisfaction in his quest for the Hindu holy life.”⁵

After this we are told that Siddhartha meditated under a tree for seven days and there received enlightenment. From this enlightenment he formed his teachings. It is said, “When he arose from the foot of the *Bodhi* (“wisdom”) tree, Siddhartha had become Buddha.”⁶

-95-

II- The Teachings of Buddha:

While the teaching of Buddha maintained many of the teachings of Hinduism such as reincarnation, meditation and others they differ greatly as well. The teachings of Buddha are called the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. Notice a quote from Larson attributed to the Buddha after he arose from the foot of the tree.

“Life’s problems were no longer an enigma to him. In a sermon at the nearby deer park he revealed his ‘truth’ to five disciples. ‘Birth is sorrow, age is sorrow, and death is sorrow,’ he told them. Suffering, he explained, is the result of man’s desire to seek pleasure in the existence of this life. Grief can only be excluded when a man ends all his cravings. Buddha’s discovery may be summarized in these three premises: (1) existence is suffering; (2) desire causes suffering; and (3) ridding all desire ends suffering. These precepts led to a fourth conclusion: desire can be eradicated by following what Buddha called the Eightfold Path. Buddha’s spiritual insights became known as the Four Noble Truths, a so-called Middle Way between asceticism and hedonism.”⁷

He had experience the extravagant living of a life of luxury and had tried to find truth in self mutilation and then taught it was to be found somewhere in the middle.

Let’s explore these four supposed truths and the eight fold path with a quote of some length. I feel this is a good summary of these teachings.

“Gautama distilled these ideas in to the “four noble truths.” First, *to live is to suffer...* This idea is not unique to Buddhism. It is at the heart of almost all Indian philosophy...Second, *suffering is caused by desire...* Humans suffer because we

Christianity: The Truth!

allow ourselves to get attached to the illusory world...Third, *one can eliminate suffering by eliminating desire....* Simply put, we suffer due to poverty, poor health or the death of a loved one only as long as we cling to desiring material goods, good health or the loved one's presence. Fourth, *desire is eliminated by means of the noble eightfold path.*

The goal of ridding oneself of attachment can be attained only through a rigorous life of concentrated effort. This undertaking is summarized as the 'noble eightfold path,'...(1) the right view—understanding the truths of existence; (2) the right intention—being willing to achieve enlightenment; (3) the right speech—saying all that is, and only what is, required; (4) the right action—doing all that is, and only what is required; (5) the right livelihood—being a monk; (6) the right effort—directing one's energy properly; (7) the right mindfulness—meditating properly; (8) the right concentration—maintaining continuous focus." ⁸

-96-

Today across the world these teachings of Buddha are interpreted in a great number of ways that at times seem to share no more in common than a very base origin. We next will look at a few of these schools of Buddhism.

III- The Schools of Buddhism:

As we have previously seen there are many different sects or schools of Buddhism. Braswell said, "Buddhism developed into two major traditions. The *Theravada tradition* emphasized the Buddha as a great teacher and a saint...the *Mahayan tradition* perceived the Buddha as transcendent and divine. He became more than teacher or saint. He became savior." ⁹

In *Kingdom of the Cults* Martin says there are three basic groups.

"The three main schools of Buddhist doctrine...represent the majority of Buddhist movements' essential features. These three schools, which have developed over the centuries following the Buddha, include Theravada ("more monastic and conservative"), Mahayana ("more liberal and lay-oriented"), and Vajrayana, or Tibetan ("the most esoteric"). ¹⁰

Within these two traditions we will focus on their teachings and also include two others known as Zen, which we have previously mentioned, and Tibetan Buddhism.

A- Theravada Teachings:

The followers of the Theravada tradition comprise one school of Buddhist. Theravada means “*tradition of the elders.*” This school, is a religion of and for monks. The monks...are the only ones who can attain nirvana. They are the focal point of religious practice and the laity's primary job is to support the monks. They can thereby earn merit that will improve their own future incarnations.

This teaching of Buddhism is found primarily in India, Burma and Thailand. However in India the nation that gave birth to this religion Buddhism today is a minor religion compared to Hinduism.

B- Mahayana Teachings:

The Mahayana sect of Buddhism is the largest of the groups and is found in many lands.

“As Buddhism migrated to China, Korea and Japan, it encountered other religious traditions, and adaptations occurred. A new and major Buddhist tradition developed known as Mahayana.” ¹¹

Braswell in another work *Understanding World Religions* says the following about the changing of the teachings of the elders as Buddhism spread.

“...as Buddhism migrated from India to lands where it had to compete with other religions, it was willing to adapt to the religious consciousness of people. Consequently, it emphasized different beliefs and practices from its native India and from earlier Buddhism...”

What are the Mahayanas like? Perhaps three words may characterize the Mahayana: accommodation, universalism, and transcendent. In their historical development these Buddhist were willing to change or to accommodate their beliefs and practices to the religious expectations and ideas of people.” ¹²

Please notice what Paul told the Colossian church about adapting to the world. **“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Col 2:8** We need to

Christianity: The Truth!

constantly guard against compromising the gospel to accommodate the teachings of the world.

One of the other teachings of this group is that more people have and others still will become Buddhas. Martin said, "...Mahayanists, unlike Theravadins, recognize numerous other Buddhas and *bodhisattvas* (those who help others toward enlightenment and *nirvana*). These personalities are said to be manifestations of the Absolute and, along with the Buddha, are regularly prayed to for assistance. Some are worshiped as gods." ¹³

-98-

C- This Thing Called Zen:

Zen is the form of Buddhism that is the most prominent in America. In our introduction we noted the coach of the LA Lakers who practices Zen. By the way he is the former coach of the Chicago Bulls during the Jordan era. So what does Zen teach? It has been describes as like a joke. You either get it or you don't. Zen is also very hard to define and describe. Notice the following quotes that illustrates this from John Ankerberg.

"Millions of people today are fascinated by Zen, even though Zen teaches them to believe in "nothing" and that they are only illusions." ¹⁴

"Defining Zen depends on one's perspective. For some, Zen is a philosophy of life. For others it is religion not philosophy....Defining Zen is difficult then, since, in an ultimate sense, Zen has no required definition or allegedly, even beliefs." ¹⁵

So Zen while it teaches that we are all really an illusion and there is no such thing as reality has a great impact. Again Ankerberg said, "Today, Zen has a wide influence in Japan. The martial arts of judo, Karate, and Kendo (fencing)....all more or less reflect Zen influence." ¹⁶

So what about a Christian can they practice Zen. Notice, "Despite the fundamentally antiChristan nature of Zen, philosophically, theologically and experientially, even some who claim to be Christians endorse Zen. *Zen Meditation for Christians* and *Christian Zen*, written by Roman Catholics, are two of many examples." ¹⁷

"So how do we define Zen? Perhaps most simply as an unusual sect of Buddhism that stresses enlightenment attained by mystical techniques, contradiction and intuition." ¹⁸

D- Tibet in the News:

One of the most visual presences on the American scene that represents Buddhism is the Dalai Lama. Many on the American scene are crying about the plight of the people of Tibet who are under rule of China and their spiritual leader is exiled in America.

A look at the following lengthy quote from *The Kingdom of the Cults* will show the vast differences between Tibetan Buddhism and the others sects.

“Vajrayana Buddhism—also known as Tibetan Buddhism, Tantric Buddhism, and Lamaism—is called the “diamond way,” which by implication means it is the precious, changeless, pure, and clear way. It developed during the fifth to sixth centuries A.D. as Buddhism spread through northern India, Nepal, and finally Tibet.

At that time, the prevailing belief of Tibet was the Bon religion, a mixture of shamanism [a form of witchcraft], magic, and primitive nature worship.” Vajrayana was born when these practices, along with magical formulae designed to obtain magical powers, were incorporated into Buddhism (A.D. 600–1200). Included in the Vajrayana tradition are a number of advanced meditative techniques: yoga, special hand gestures (*mudras*), spells, and chants. It also derives many of its doctrines from Vedantic and Tantric influences. Vedanta is an Indian school of philosophy, which teaches that god (*Brahman*) and the soul (*Atman*) are one. In other words, there is only one ultimate reality—*Brahman*—and the individuality we see is nothing but an illusion. The maker (*maya*) of illusion is ignorance (*avidya*). Enlightenment occurs when one realizes that “the world is not real: only the Absolute, Brahman, is real.”

The Tantras are a series of A.D. sixth century scriptures associated with the worship of Shakti, Mother of the Universe...Study of these texts “is said to reveal clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, psychometry, the power of sound, vocal expression, and the composition of music.” ...

Many of the occult aspects of Tibetan Buddhism also come from Tantricism. The Tantric tradition maintains a close relationship to magic and includes “secret teachings, scriptures in code, the practice of drawing symbols on the ground, and

Christianity: The Truth!

uttering spells to call up deities, supernatural powers that can be used for good or evil."

According to Walt Anderson, author of *Open Secrets: A Western Guide to Tibetan Buddhism*, the Tantric Buddhist ideal is to yield: "Go ahead and do it, whatever it is, if you think you must and it doesn't harm somebody else. But pay attention; be fully aware of what goes on in your mind and body, of how it really feels."¹⁹

·100-

So this sect is based on some things that the Word of God especially forbids. Many of these teachings are addressed in *Deut 18:10-12* "***There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, ¹¹ Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. ¹² For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.***"

IV- Contrast of Doctrines:

Briefly let us explore the contrast between the teaching of the Bible and Christianity and Buddhism. We will look at the five key doctrines we identified earlier and have looked at in relation to the other religions. Many of these have been touched on thus far in our study but let's look briefly at these now. This task is a formidable one when, as we have seen, Buddhism teaches a multitude of things.

1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to Buddhism?

2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to the Buddhism philosophy?

3- God: What is the Buddhism concept of what God/gods is like?

4- Man: What is their concept of man's origin, purpose, future hope?

5- Bible: According to Buddhism how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

1- Christ: Who was Jesus according to Buddhism?

I wish to state again this is the critical doctrine of being right with God. *John 12:45-46* "***And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. ⁴⁶ I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.***"

Buddhists either ignore Jesus or relegate Him to only a man. Again Ankerberg said:

“As a whole, Buddhism has little directly to say about Jesus Christ. It does acknowledge what most men do; that He was a great person. For the most part, however, His Gospel teachings are largely ignored and more convenient Jesus is accepted: one who, along with the Buddha, smiles serenely. On the other hand, there is a sense in which Buddhism explicitly rejects Jesus Christ. After all, if no “person” exists, then no “personal saviour” exists either.”²⁰

-101

Jesus when He walked upon this early clearly taught us that we all have need of a Savior and He alone is the one provided by God.

2- Salvation: How are we made right with God/gods according to the Buddhism philosophy?

The concept of salvation in Buddhism is the idea much like Hinduism that we are absorbed into the one. Buddhism teaches this as being a state called Nirvana. The root of this teaching is that there is no such thing as sin in Buddhism. Sin is merely ignorance. Satan does not exist and evil is explained away as suffering.

3- God: What is the Buddhism concept of what God/gods is like?

To a Buddhist there is no such concept that the Bible teaches about God. They reject the idea of a creator.

“As D.T. Suzuki pointed out, in Zen ‘the story of creations, the Fall from the Garden of Eden, God’s sending Christ to compensate for ancestral sins, his Crucifixion and Resurrection—they are all symbolic.’ Western Zenist Alan Watts, who called the idea of God the Father, ‘ridiculous,’ said that Jesus Christ was a false idol.”²¹

So God is understood in Buddhism as being a void or non-existence. While they would teach that God did not create anything we know the Word of God teaches us, **Gen 1:1** *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”*

4- Man: What is their concept of man’s origin, purpose, future hope?

When you deny that man really exists then you do not have to explain how he happened to get here. They see the purpose of man as

Christianity: The Truth!

living, dying and reincarnating until he finally is annihilated from consciousness.

While they may teach personal extinction we know the Word of God teaches us that all men are eternal beings. **John 3:16** clearly teaches us this. Man is also created in the image of God and is capable of fellowship with God.

5- Bible: According to Buddhism how do we know God/gods or how is He/they revealed.

-102-

The words of the Buddha were not put into written form until many years after his death. There are many forms of writings that Buddhists hold to be informative. They obviously reject the Bible as the revelation of God to mankind. They really hold no writings as sacred and place experience above all.

Let me conclude this study of Buddhism with a quote from *Larson's New Book of Cults*.

"Archaeologist recently recovered a huge sandstone casket in the ruins of an ancient city near Kapilvastu, India. The inscription on the coffin indicates that the contents are the mortal remains of Buddha. 'Be a lamp unto yourself.' The sage declared before his death. This instruction sharply contrasts with the biblical claim to such guidance (Ps. 119:105). Buddha's wisdom, backed by the evidence of his own decayed body, seems far less credible than the Word of God, which bears the authority of Christ's empty tomb. Whether the good News of Jesus will prevail over the introspective appeal of Buddha is a fundamental choice that may well determine the spiritual direction of Western culture."²¹

Chapter 6 Notes:

¹ *USA Today*, June 5, 2002, Sports Section C.

² *Ibid*, p 2C

³ Corduan, Winfred, *Neighboring Faiths* © 1998 InterVarsity Downers Grove, Ill. P 220

⁴ Larson, Bob, *Larson's New Book of Cults*, Tyndale House, Wheaton, Ill. 1989, p. 72.

⁵ Braswell, George *Understanding World Religions* revised, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1994, p. 46

⁶ Larson, p 73

⁷ *Ibid*.

⁸ Corduan, p 224

⁹ Braswell, George *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America*, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1973, p. 244

¹⁰ *The Kingdom of the Cults (Revised)* Copyright © 1965, 1977, 1985, 1997 The Estate of Walter Martin. Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa.

¹¹ Braswell, *Understand Sectarian Groups in America*, p 245

¹² Braswell, *Understand World Religions*, p 56

¹³ Martin

¹⁴ Ankerberg, John & John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest Hours Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 629.

¹⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁶ *Ibid*. p 627

¹⁷ *Ibid*. p 637

¹⁸ *Ibid*. p 630

¹⁹ Martin

²⁰ Ankerberg, p 57

²¹ *Ibid*. p 638

²² Larson, p 77

Christianity: The Truth!

~~104~~

Do Not Print this Page

New Age: New Truth or Same Old Lies? *Eccl 1:9-10*



Chapter Seven

-105

In the Star War movies there is a line, "May the force be with you" that is spoken many times. This is an example of a New Age thought. Today invading our culture unlike any other religious fad ever in history is a concept that is referred to as the "New Age Movement." Many of us will recall a song from years ago that said, "this is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius." Most of us didn't have a clue what it was about. It was about a new consciousness or a new way of perceiving reality. The New Age Movement is a subtle change that has taken place, at times almost unnoticed by most.

The main question that needs ask is, "is it new or the same old lies?" Notice what the Word of God says in *Eccl 1:9-10* "***The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. ¹⁰ Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.***" I submit to you that there is really nothing new in the so-called New Age Movement but it is a repackaging of an old lie.

I- New Age Defined: Well Sort of:

CS Lewis, as we have stated, said that all religions come down to basically two choices, Hinduism and Christianity. While this was true

Christianity: The Truth!

in Lewis' day beloved, if I may say that if this is true of Hinduism, and it is, then it is truer of the New Age Movement. The reason being that New Age embraces all thoughts including the Occult. All except for Christ being the only way.

The problem we have with defining the New Age is that it defies definition by its nature of being almost anything and everything. In his introduction to what he called "The New Age Cults" Walter Martin said, "Although the New Age movement has features that distinguish it from more traditional cults, most noteworthy is the fact that it is not a monolithic, autocratic organization but, instead, a loose coalition of individuals and organizations united in core beliefs and practices."¹

.106-

The problem we have with defining the New Age is that it defies definition by its nature of being almost anything and everything.

He went on to say, "The New Age movement is not easily defined. It has no specific founder, primary leader,

central headquarters, organizational structure, or definitive statement of beliefs. Nor does it meet in any one place or at any one particular time. It is not even limited to a single group. As a result, the New Age movement is described in a variety of different ways."²

Braswell in *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America* said the New Age, "is an umbrella term ... It is 'a hybrid mix of spiritual, social, and political forces and encompasses sociology, theology, physical science, medicine, anthropology, history, the human potential movements, sports, and science fiction.'"³

From these quotes alone we see the difficulty in defining it and that it has potential to touch our lives, many times without us even knowing it. An example of this is found along the back roads and streets of our city where the sign is found that shows a tree without a top and the words "Tree topping hurts."

Again Martin said, "The New Age movement is much more than just an isolated system of religious beliefs and practices. The New Age movement is literally a *movement* of spirituality, health, politics, education, and business that encompasses countless groups seeking to direct the path of society. These groups, while sharing many beliefs in common, often hold numerous distinctive doctrines and at times even disagree with each other on significant issues. Consequently, the New Age movement does not fit the standard theological definition of a cult. It is, to be more precise, a *collection* of cults."⁴

Braswell quoted Constance Cumbey, the author of a book *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow* as saying the New Age is, “a movement which includes many thousands of organizations networking throughout every corner of our globe with the intent of bringing about a New World Order—an order that writes God out of the picture and deifies Lucifer.”⁵

Martin said, “those involved in it (commonly called New Agers) believe that humanity is currently on the brink of something very significant—an evolutionary leap of man’s spiritual nature—which eventually will bring about the “emergence of a new cycle of human consciousness and experience.”⁶

Time magazine described the New Age Movement: “All in all, the New Age does express a cloudy sort of religion, claiming vague connections with both Christianity and the major faiths of the East...plus an occasional dab of pantheism and sorcery....The underlying faith is a lack of faith in the orthodoxies of rationalism, high technology, spiritual law and order. Somehow the New Agers believe, there must be some secret and mysterious shortcut or alternative path to happiness and health. And nobody ever really dies.”⁷

Two important parts of the New Age movement are, as the Time article stated, nobody really dies and we are all gods.

-107

II- Common Ground of New Agers:

We need to go to the Garden of Eden to the parents of the human race, Adam and Eve. The Serpent is talking with Eve as we enter the Scripture. There are two lies told by Satan to Eve here that is relevant in understand the New Age Movement. Notice the following Scripture that I have underline the lies in.

Gen 3:4-5 “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:⁵ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

Two important parts of the New Age movement are, as the *Time* article stated, nobody really dies and we are all gods. It can be said that Hinduism and Buddhism and then ultimately the New Age movement is Satan’s attempt to make this lie again believable and to deceive mankind into thinking he told the truth. One of the cornerstones of the New Age is reincarnation. Reincarnation teaches that we do not really die but are simply recycled into another life. We have explored this previously.

Christianity: The Truth!

Another New Age thought is that we are all gods. A bumper sticker I saw years ago that only recently I understood sums up this. It said, "we will get along better when you realize that I am god." The reason I did not catch it was I was framing the picture in the frame of Christian thought.

So, is there common beliefs in the New Age Movement and if so what? First we need to see the roots of the movement. This will be a lengthy quote but Braswell stated it so well.

·108-

"Whether New Age is considered in religious, philosophical, or cultural terms, it is influenced by the ancient and near past. Literature associated with New Agers draws from several world view traditions, the teachings of the founders of religions, and philosophers. Indian spiritual and philosophical paths of the subcontinent of India, known as Hinduism and Buddhism, are its roots. Taoism of China; spiritism and shamanism of Africa, Asia, and Latin America; and Zen Buddhism out of China and Japan lend their influences.

The mother goddesses of the ancient Mediterranean and the astrology of Egypt and Babylonian make their impacts. Early Gnosticism of Greece, Rome, and Palestine contribute to the New Age. The mysticism of Judaism and Christianity, as well as master teachers and 'messiah types,' have been influential in the seminal thought of New Age.

New Age draws much from traditional Hinduism...New Age particularly likes the concept of Brahman and Atman—a world soul, higher self, higher consciousness, force (energy), or 'God' which is generally known as Brahman." ⁸

Today New Agers would tell us it is all about loving everybody, everything and being in peace. They would say that the problem we have is that we are so bound by the teachings of our past that we are judgmental of others. Martin said, "Unlike previous ages, the coming *new age* will be marked by global peace, mass enlightenment, and unparalleled spiritual advancement. Even now the earth allegedly is being made ready for a final "transformation from outmoded habits, negative energies, and thought forms. "' ⁹

I remind us there is nothing new under the sun and certainly nothing new under the Son. Let us now explore some common ground of New Agers.

The difficulty of the tasks of finding common ground with New Age is that the individual is suppose to find their own path. What ever works for you is good for you but maybe not for me. New Agers usually incorporate many items from the Indian (India) religions of Hinduism and Buddhism such as karma, reincarnation, soul travel and that everything is really only a part of the one force or energy. We will explore some of the different beliefs and practice that some participate in a little while later.

The difficulty of the tasks of finding common ground with New Age is that the individual is suppose to find their own path.

-109

A work by a man named Douglas R. Groothuis entitled *Unmasking the New Age* was sourced by Braswell when he said:

“He notes that the movement is eclectic and diverse. Since it emphasized change and evolution, there are often shifts in perspectives among its adherents and writers which make them difficult to pin down. Groothuis’ six distinctives are All is One, All is God, Humanity is God, A Change in Consciousness, All Religions are One, and Cosmic Evolutionary Optimism.”¹⁰

“Groothuis concludes that if All if One, then it follows that All is God... ‘the idea of a personal God is abandoned in favor of an impersonal energy, force or consciousness.”¹¹

That humanity is God Groothuis claims is “one of the most seductive premises of New Age. Humanity is god in disguise.”¹² That is why people like Shirley MaClaine declares that they are gods. Larson in his book on the cults said the following:

“The New Age is an old adage. Like medieval metaphysicans and ancient Eastern mystics, the cult of the New Age hails man and his paramount powers as the center of the spiritual universe. For centuries, people have endeavored to deify themselves and evoke the mysteries of spirituality. The oracles of Greece, the *Vedas* of Hindus, the mysteries of the Pharaohs supposed that a secret of existence lay beneath reality. In secluded woods, musty caverns, and passageways of pyramids, these cryptic truths were sought through ritual and

Christianity: The Truth!

ceremony. Today New Age cults pursue these mysteries of religion more diversely and ingeniously." ¹³

The *Interfaith Witness Belief Bulletin New Age Movement* published by the Home Mission Board (now known as the North American Mission Board) of the Southern Baptist Convention gives a total of seven characteristics or "foundational ideas or presuppositions that characterize a New Age Movement." Some of these overlap but I quote these to give additional insight into the teaching.

·110-

"(1) All is one: all of reality is a unitary whole; (2) Everything is God (god) and God (god) is everything; (3) You (as an individual) are god. You are divine; God is within you; (4) You will never die: You have lived before and you will live again (reincarnation); (5) You can create your own reality or transform your own consciousness; (6) All religions are true and, therefore, one; (7) A new world is coming: A New Age is dawning." ¹⁴

Concerning changing of consciousness the problem as seen by New Agers is ignorance. Man is simply ignorant of the fact that he is god or divine.

III- Multiply Isms:

In a previous quote we saw that many of the religious isms of the world have influenced the New Age thinking. The point I wish to make here does not relate to these isms such as Hinduism or Buddhism but to the concepts of who God is in the New Age.

The teaching of the New Agers that all in one is called Monoism. This sounds similar to the teaching we hold to of Monotheism, which means there is only one God. Monoism teaches that all that is, is one. Everything is related to and dependent upon the other. There is no difference between God, man, rocks or apples.

Following closely on the heels of Monoism is the idea of pantheism, which teaches that everything then is God. There is no such thing as a personal God but only a force or energy.

The Bible declares that there is only one God, always has been and always will be. The Bible also teaches that men have worshipped many things that are not God and called them god.

IV- Beliefs and Practices:

There are a lot of practices and beliefs that would be classified as new age that we hear about on nearly a daily basis. Look at the teachings of the Word of God on many of these practices before we

discuss them. **Lev 19:31** “Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.”

Lev 20:6 “And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.”

Lev 20:27 “A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.”

Deut 18:10-12 “There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, ¹¹ Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. ¹²

For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.”

1- Channeling:

Contact with those who have departed from this life has been pursued by many through out human history. It is back with a fervor in the New Age movement. Contact with the dead or Trance-channeling where the dead speak through the channel (medium) is mankind attempting to contact the dead.

This is not totally foreign even to the Bible. Remember King Saul approached a woman known as the witch of Endor who attempt to contact Samuel who was dead. Today seances with attempts to contact dead loved ones are performed all the time. Someone enters an altered state of consciousness and allows their body to be taken over by someone or something else who speaks through them. Many people claim to channel various people from the past such as king of ancient empires or others from the ancient past.

2- Astrology:

Today we have many who consult their horoscope (I know it is horoscope) to find out about love and life. During the White House

There are a lot of practices and beliefs that would be classified as new age that we hear about on nearly a daily basis.

Christianity: The Truth!

days of President Reagan his wife Nancy consulted her personal astrology before allowing "Ronnie" as she called him to make plans.

Astrology is not new beloved. The tower that was built known as the tower of Babel was in fact covered with signs of the zodiac. Many wait for the stars to line up just right for perfect times to do certain things.

I remind us all that our faith is not in the stars but in the one who made, controls and holds the stars in His hands.

3- UFOlogy:

·112-

Mankind has spent a great deal of money searching for life in outer space. Movies such as ET and Close Encounters, Star Wars and Star Trek has portrayed aliens for years. New movies such as Independence Day are being made all the time.

Today many claim to have been abducted by aliens from another planet and taken into a spacecraft and probed and prodded. Many people today profess a belief that there is life just waiting to be found out in space. John Ankerberg said, "Whatever the public may thing they know about UFOs, what the public generally *doesn't* know is that these cases have much in common with the world of the occult." ¹⁵

I wish to make a statement that may take your breath away. I believe there is life in space. Now that I have said it let me explain. I believe that the UFO and such can be attributed to either angels (see Ezek 1) or demons. Most are demonic and I believe that demons live in the outreaches of space. Remember Satan is a liar and a deceiver and would like nothing more than to have men believe that they are not alone in the creation of God.

One verse that teaches that human life only exist here is **Gen 3:20 "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."** Is it such a far-fetched idea that God only created life on this perfect planet designed for men to life upon. While it is true God could have created many planets with many different forms of life our faith does not require it while evolution and New Age thinking requires it.

4- Crystals:

Years ago there was a fad that swept our nation when literally millions of people had a "pet rock." Beloved, there are many today that believe in supernatural powers of crystals to ward off evil and bring good omens into their life. This is not just a pet rock fad. Crystals and gemstones, such as amethyst and others, are being touted as having

“Wolves in **SHEEP S** Clothing”

healing powers and to change the “energy” in ones surroundings. Braswell said:

“The use of crystals is believed to have paranormal healing effects and restorative powers. Combined with Eastern metaphysics, mysticism, and mediation together with occultic esotericism, reliance on the presence and power of crystals has also become associated with New Age...Crystals in the New Age have become a fad, a fashion and a phenomenon.”¹⁶

V- Doctrine Comparisons:

The problem with doing a doctrine comparison with the New Age and the truths of the Bible is that anything seems to be OK with the New Agers, except of course declaring that Jesus is the only way to salvation. We will deviate from our normal doctrine comparisons.

I wish to use the seven foundation ideas or presuppositions from the *Interfaith Witness Belief Bulletin, New Age Movement* ¹⁷ to do our doctrine comparison. I have included a copy of this for our use in this study.

Christianity: The Truth!

.114-

“Wolves in **SHEEP S** Clothing”

-115

Christianity: The Truth!

VI- Dangers Ahead:

The new age thinking is influencing every aspect of our life in America. From the birth of babies using the Lamaze method to the craze of wellness and exercise programs that abound. From the education system to the campaigns that include saving the snail darter fish to the spotted owl.

The new age thinking is influencing every aspect of our life in America.

116- Everywhere we see the New Age concepts of everything being equal and man not being above all everywhere.

We must realize that the force behind the New Age movement is none other than the force of darkness himself, Satan. Notice what Martin said:

"The word *occult* (derived from the Latin *occultus*) basically means "hidden/secret" things. The term is used to describe practices such as astrology, numerology, witchcraft, crystal gazing, necromancy (communication with the dead), magic, and palm reading, which according to the Bible are forbidden to man and cursed by God (Leviticus 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:9-11; Acts 19:19).

These satanically energized methods of obtaining otherwise unobtainable knowledge comprise the very heart and soul of the New Age movement because they are the primary means through which New Age teachings are proclaimed. They may have modern sounding names (e.g., astral projection, psychometry, radiance therapy, channeling), but they are the same practices the church of Jesus Christ has been standing against for more than nineteen centuries." ¹⁸

The tide of New Age thinking seems, if anything, to be rising. So what can we do? In the *Belief Bulletin* I have used so much in this part there is a section on how to be a witness to those who are involved in the New Age. Let me give us one of these that I think will help us to evaluate the contacts we have with things that are different in our work places, schools etc.

"Carefully access the world view of people and groups you encounter. Be particularly attentive if a workshop, seminar, therapy, program or technique (1) is explained in terms of harmonizing, manipulating, integrated or balancing energies or

"Wolves in **SHEEP'S** Clothing"

polarities; (2) emphasizes experience over belief; (3) involves changing your consciousness (how you perceive reality); or (4) teaches that you are essentially divine and you can find the solutions to your problems within yourself." ¹⁹

I leave this lecture on the New Age realizing that so little has been said when compared to the volume that can and maybe should be said. I wish to leave us with some verses of Scripture. **John 8:31-32; 36** *"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ³² And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free...³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."*

-117

Beloved, may we be made free with the truth of Jesus Christ and may we have compassion on those who walk in darkness.

Chapter 7 Notes:

¹*The Kingdom of the Cults (Revised)* Copyright © 1965, 1977, 1985, 1997 The Estate of Walter Martin. Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc., PO Box 100, Hiawatha, Iowa.

² Ibid.

.118- ³Braswell, George *Understanding Sectarian Groups in America*, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1973, p. 310

⁴ Martin.

⁵ Braswell, p 311

⁶ Martin.

⁷ Braswell, p 319

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Martin.

¹⁰ Braswell, p 314 (Quoted Douglas R. Grouthuis, *Unmasking the New Age*)

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid. p 315

¹³ Larson, Bob, *Larson's New Book of Cults*, Tyndale House, Wheaton, Ill. 1989, p. 72.

¹⁴ *Interfaith Witness Belief Bulletin- New Age Movement*, © Maurice Smith, 1988; Home Mission Board, Atlanta, GA.

¹⁵ Ankerberg, John & John Weldon *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest Hours Publishers, Eugene, OR., 1999, p 448.

¹⁶ Braswell, p 549

¹⁷ *Interfaith Witness Belief Bulletin*

¹⁸ Martin.

¹⁹ *Interfaith Witness Belief Bulletin*

Christianity: The Truth!

1 John 4:6



"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." 1 John 4:6

When we began our study we identified five key doctrines that we explored to attempt to see if there was any truth to the cults and religions of the world. We explored Islam and its claim of completion of Christianity, Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses and their claim of restoration. We looked at the belief systems of the philosophy-based religions of Hinduism, Buddhism and the New Age. In each we found that when stacked up to the truth of the Bible they are all found to be lies from the liar himself, Satan.

We will finish this series with a study I have called Christianity: the Truth. The religions we have explored, along with literally thousand we have not, are not safe harbors for the soul of man but illusions of the truth. Let us return to the five key doctrines and study them afresh and anew now that we know

Chapter Eight

Christianity: The Truth!

beyond a doubt that Christianity is the truth. I have taken the liberty of changing the question to apply to the truth.

I- Christ: Who was Jesus?

A- Who Does the Bible Say Jesus Is?

Is He a Liar or God? This might sound strong to state that if He is not God than He is a liar. The Old Testament prophet Isaiah said in ***Isaiah 9:6 "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a***
120-Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulders. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
NJKV

Jesus Himself claimed to be God on many occasions. ***John 10:25-30 "my father...I and my father are one..."*** The Jews understood that Jesus claimed to be deity. This was the ultimate reason He was crucified by them. The Baptist Faith and Message states "Christ is the eternal Son of God" ¹

We know that Jesus is God incarnate in the flesh! One of the names for Jesus was Immanuel. ***Isaiah 7:14 "...a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."*** Immanuel means "*God with us.*" We also know that the scripture teaches that He was born of a virgin.

The Bible teaches that Jesus was the instrument of Creation! ***Col 1:16 "for by him were all things created...all things were created by him, and for him."*** Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, was also the one who created everything that exists.

B- Why Did He Die?

Allow me to answer this question with a tale of two gardens. Adam was placed in a perfect garden called Eden. He sinned when he disobeyed God and partook of the forbidden fruit. Death passed upon all mankind as a result of his sin. ***Rom 5:12*** says, ***"...by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** The right to eternal life was forfeited. All the offspring of Adam has his fallen nature because Adam was fallen and corrupt and he

could not have an incorrupt child. Christ however is know as the second Adam because He undone what Adam messed up. **Romans 5:17-19** *"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)¹⁸ Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."*

-121

Go with me now to the second Garden, Gethsemane. (see Matt 26:36-39) We pass along the dark streets of Jerusalem and go out into the dark night. We come to the garden and find Peter, James and John asleep. But where is Jesus. Oh, there He is over by the big rock. We hear Him saying, **"Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."** **Matt 26:39** We step back into the shadows as He comes to the three disciples who are sleeping. He speaks to them and then returns a short distance again to pray. We hear him cry out in the night **"O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, they will be done."** **Matt 26:42** We look closer and can see that Jesus sweat has turned into blood. The agony of this garden is very intense. As we tarry a few moments we hear the sound of soldier's feet and see Judas and the soldiers coming to arrest Jesus.

These verses make it plain that there was no other way for salvation to come to mankind. If Jesus had not gone to the cross and died we would be helplessly and hopelessly lost. This in fact had been the plan of God from eternity past. **Rev 13:8** states the **"Lamb"** (meaning Jesus Christ) was **"slain from the foundation of the world."**

C: So Who is He?

As you will recall the angel that came to Mary he told her **"thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus."** **Luke 1:26** We go to the account of

Christianity: The Truth!

the Angel reassuring Joseph about Mary to find what this name means. **"...thou shalt call his name JESUS : for he shall save his people from their sins."** *Matt 1:21*. Jesus means "*Jehovah is salvation.*" This is His personal, human name.

We also previously stated that He was the **"Lamb of God."** This speaks of Him being the perfect sin sacrifice for mankind. He paid the debt of the law for our sins. He took our place.

·122-

Jesus is also the Judge of all humanity. *John 5:22* states, **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."** Jesus Christ is in a position to judge mankind because He came and walked among us and did not sin.

D- What are you going to do with Jesus?

Are you going to totally reject Him? This is your right to do so. However, you are responsible for this decision.

Will you simply put Him off until a convenient time? Felix when he heard the Apostle Paul preach said, **"Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."** *Acts 24:25*

The most reasonable response if for you to accept Him as Savior and Lord! He alone is God and Savior. The only hope of mankind.

II- Salvation: How are we made right with God?

The next doctrine we need to explore is Salvation. What is the truth concerning salvation? The scripture plainly teaches that man and God were separated by the fall of man. Lets define salvation as we see the source, and the work of the trinity in salvation as well as security of our salvation.

A- The Meaning of Salvation:

The Baptist Faith and Message states, "The word salvation has various meanings in the Scriptures. For instance, in the New Testament this word and its verb form are sometimes used in the sense of rescuing from danger or destruction (*Matt 8:25; Acts 27:20*) and of healing from disease (*Matt 9:22*), or even

solving a problem (Phil. 2:12). But its greatest use is with regard to spiritual salvation through Christ (Matt. 19:25; John 3:17)." ²

Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia states, "salvation is the total work of God in bringing men from the state of sin to the state of glory through Jesus Christ the god-man." ³ It goes on to say, "salvation is the total present and future enjoyment by true believers in Christ..." ⁴

Salvation means to effect successfully the full delivery of someone or something from impending danger. Salvation is more than religion. It is not found in the person of a priest, preacher, or church membership.

Salvation carries with it a twofold implication.

1- Someone or something need saved. **Gen 2:17** teaches us it is man that needs saved. We are like a criminal on death row awaiting the electric chair and having terminal cancer. Doomed if we do, doomed if we don't. Man is dead spiritually and is dying physically. Man needs to be saved.

2- Someone is able and willing to save. The second implied fact about salvation is someone can and will be the Savior. Physicians stand at the foot of dying patients' beds and want to give life with all their heart but cannot save. They are willing but are not able. The second part is critical because even if you are willing you must have the power to save. In 1978 a man was dying of a rare blood disease. He died because his near-kin would not donate blood for a transfusion and thus save his life. He was able to save but was unwilling. It takes someone both willing and able to effect salvation.

B- Source of Salvation:

Acts 4:12 says, "*Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*" We know that our Savior was not only willing but He alone was able to bring salvation to mankind. He alone meets this criteria for a Savior. **Heb 7:25** tells us Christ is "*...able to save them to the uttermost.*" **2 Tim 1:12** says He is, "*Able to keep.*"

Christianity: The Truth!

We can also see that according to the scriptures He is willing to save. **1 Tim 2:3-4** states He *"will have all men to be saved."* **2 Pet 3:9** says He is *"not willing that any should perish."*

We know the reason that Jesus Christ alone, the God-man can save is that He lived a perfect life to make a perfect sacrifice for our sins. *"...he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin..."* **2 Cor 5:21.**

·124-

The perfect life of Christ shows that God is just in requiring that man be righteous.

C- Threefold Method of Salvation:

a- Salvation is always by blood. **Heb 9:22** states the biblical truth, *"without shedding of blood is no remission."* The blood must be innocent, shed and applied.

b- Salvation is through a person. **Acts 4:12** shows us it is through the person Christ it is also through a person who witnesses.

c- Salvation is always by grace. **Eph 2:8-9** *"...by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."* Grace is *"God's unmerited favor."* Salvation is God giving us what we don't deserve.

D- Work of the Trinity in Salvation:

We know that the Trinity has been and is very active in the salvation of man. The Father planned salvation and is now active in drawing mankind to Christ. **John 6:44** says, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him..."* The plan of the Father was laid before the foundation of the world.

The Son was the sacrifice for our sin. He is called many names in the Scriptures that speak of His part in our salvation. He certainly is called Savior (**Luke 1:47; Luke 2:11; John 4:42**). He is also called our Advocate (**1 John 2:1**), Author and Finisher of our faith (**Heb 12:2**). He is also called the Deliverer (**Rom 11:26**) and the Friend of Sinners (**Mt. 11:19**) as well as Ramson (**1 Tim 2:6**). He is our salvation my friends. The greatest name that Christ

is known as in relation to our Salvation is the Lamb of God. (**John 1:29, 36.**)

The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince mankind they need a Savior. **John 16:8-11.** Our birth into the family of God is a spiritual birth by the Holy Spirit.

E- Security of Our Salvation:

We must remember that our salvation is not by our power and therefore we can state that our security is not in our hands as well.

-125

Heb 7:25 states that Christ, after He had died to save man, **"...ever liveth to make intercession for them."** He is the one who keeps us saved. **Eph 4:30** teaches us that we as believers are **"sealed unto the day of redemption"** by the Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:33-39 shows our security from condemnation and from separation. Please turn with me to this passage.

As we leave this doctrine we need to see there is a question in the scriptures that there is no answer too. **Heb 2:3** asks, **"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation..."** Beloved there is no answer. We cannot escape if we neglect Christ regardless of how sincere or how earnest we content for the religion we embrace.

III- God: What is God like?

1500 years before the birth of Christ, Pharaoh said to Moses on the occasion Moses said that God wanted Pharaoh to let his people go, **"Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?" Ex 5:2.** The king of Babylon, Nebuchanezzar said to the three Hebrew children, **"Who is that God, that shall deliver you out of my hands?" Dan 3:15** Man has continually ask the question about who God is.

In the midst of all these voices of the cults and false religions we turn to the Bible to hear the clear voice of the revelation of God. So what does the Bible say and teach us about God?

Christianity: The Truth!

The Hebrews understood that God spoke to Moses and that He was the only God. Many times the Old Testament declares, *"O Lord, there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee..."*

The Baptist Faith and Message states, "There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections.

126- To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience." ⁵

A- The existence of God:

The Bible does not attempt to prove to mankind that God exist. The Bible simply makes the statement that He is and man can accept it or reject it. *Gen 1:1* says, *"In the beginning God..."* We also know that the very existence of creation declares there is a God of creation. *Ps 19:1* states *"The heavens declares the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handwork."*

The reason that mankind is trying to say there is no God is because they know they are accountable to Him if they acknowledge Him. My friends we are accountable to Him whether we acknowledge Him or not.

B- The Names of God:

The names that God has revealed to mankind that He is know by reveal many things about Him. There are four primary names in the Old Testament that tell us who God is. Elohim, El, Adonai, and Jehovah.

Elohim is a general name for god(s) and simply identifies God as God. Adonai "Master, Lord." Jehovah "the Self-existent One, the God of the covenant." Jehovah was the name that God used to identify Himself to Israel. He told Moses to tell the Hebrews that "I Am, that I Am" sent him.

C- The Attributes of God:

There are many attributes that tell us of God's nature and give insight into who He is. The Baptist Faith and Message list 11 attributes and some lists 14. Others list as many as 21. Lets look at a few.

Self- Existent- This simply says that God does not need man or any other thing to exist. He exists by His own might and power. We do not by the way.

Immutable- *Mal 3:6 "...For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* He does not change. He is the same in nature and purpose day after day.

Omnipresent- *Ps 139:7-12* He is present everywhere at all times in all places.

Omnipotent- *Matt 19:26 "...With God all things are possible."* He is all powerful. He is only limited by self imposed limits.

-127

Omniscience- *Heb 4:13 "...Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the yes of him whom we have to do."* He is all seeing.

Holy- *Isaiah 6:3 "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts..."*

Truth- *John 14:6 "Jesus said, I am the sway, the truth, and the life."* God is the source of all truth.

Love- *I John 4:7-9 "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him."* The best know attribute of God today is probably His love.

IV- Man: What is man's origin, purpose, future hope?

Genesis 1:26-27 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Christianity: The Truth!

Genesis 2:7 "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

10 centuries before Christ was born in Bethlehem, a shepherd lay on the hills of Israel and exclaimed as he looked toward the sky, **"When I Consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Ps 8:3-4.**

A- Where Did Man Come From?

As we have seen from the Scriptures we just read man was created by God. He was created in the image of God. Lets explore more about the creation of man by seeking to understand what it means when it says we were created, **"in the image of God." Gen 1:26.**

a- **Gen 2:7 "Man became a living soul."** One of the ways that man is created in the image of God is that man's soul is eternal and will never cease to exist.

We know that the scripture is plain about where Adam got his soul. The Spirit of God breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils and he "became a living soul." The word soul is found 428 times in the Old Testament and is the hebrew word nephesh. (neh'-fesh) Strongs Concordance defines it as, *"properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental):"*⁶ In addition to being translated soul it is also translated "beast" 9 times and also "creature."

b "Created in holiness" By this I wish us simply to understand that when God created man he was created holy and without sin. Man's original environment did not contain sin, it was perfect.

c. Self conscious, and God conscious, and a sense of morality. Another way that man is created in the image of God is that man lives in a state of self-awareness, awareness of our Creator and has an ingrained sense of right and wrong. Also we

understand that with the Body man is world conscious, with the soul man is self conscious and with the spirit he is God conscious.

d. Higher than the animals. One of the ways that I have come to understand that man is the crown jewel of God creation is that God only created one man.

B- The implications of the Image of God?

We are created in the image of God and therefore life is sacred. The fact that we are in the image of God should guide us in our thinking out the social issues of our day. So just why Is Man Here? He was created to work for God. Lets look at man's original purposes.

a. To assume head ship of nature and care for Eden.

Gen 1:26, 2:15

b. To provide names for the animals. **Gen 2:19-20**

c. To love and protect his wife **Gen 2:24** and reproduce and populate the earth. **Gen 1:28**

d. To enjoy the fruit of the trees except one. **Gen 2:16-17**

C- The Fall:

Man was created perfect and in a perfect environment. What happen? To find the answer we go to the record of the fall of man found in **Genesis 3**. There are many theories and attitudes concerning the fall of man. The liberal view is that it is a legend, a general picture of religion and moral in light the later period. Some see it as myth or true myth that has truth without facts. There are some that would tell us that it only affected Adam and that he was simply a bad example. The thought that man was weakened by the fall but still has potential to be sinless is known as the Armenian Position. The Augustinian Position is that it imputed sin to the whole human race. Simply put this says that when Adam fell the whole human race that was to come from after Adam fell with him. Notice **Rom 5:12, 18, 19**.

So we see that the root of man's problem is sin. This is known as the depravity of man. The fall of the human race was by one man Adam. **Romans 5:8** says, **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died**

Christianity: The Truth!

for us." He deals with our sin while we are still in it. We do not have to clean up our life for God to save us.

D- What happens after this life?

130- *Heb 9:27* says, "...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The scripture teaches us that all men will be raised from the dead. Remember that man is immortal and all men will live forever. *John 5:28-29* states, "...the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." We know Christ mentioned two distinct resurrections. John the Revelator spoke of this in *Rev 20:4-5* We know there are also two different judgments taught in the scriptures. One is the Judgment Seat of Christ where all believers will stand. *2 Cor 5:10* The judgment of the lost at the Great White Throne Judgment found recorded in *Rev 20:11ff*.

V- Bible: How do we know God or how is He revealed?

How did we get the Bible? The theory that is the most accurate and in keeping with the revelation of the Word of God is know as the Plenary-Verbal Theory. This, simply put, says every word of the entire Bible is inspired by God as recorded by the original writers. A couple of notes need to be stated about this theory. One, it does not permit any historical, scientific, or prophetic errors. The only lies in the scripture are when God recorded the lies that men tell. Second this theory does not require uniformity in all details no more than eyewitness could tell the same story from different views of the wreck or crime.

A- Biblical Proofs of Inspiration:

a- The Bible claims to be Gods Word. *2 Timothy 3:16-17* "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*"

b- Prophecy is another proof of inspiration. *2 Peter 1:20-21* "*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of*

any private interpretation. ²¹ For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." How could man know unless God tells them.

B- Illumination:

Still man kind need to understand what is revealed by God in His word. This is done by illumination. One definition of Illumination is found in The Baptist Faith and Message where it states, "Illumination is the Holy Spirit's work as he enlightens the human mind with spiritual understanding in order that man might grasp the revealed truth." ⁷ Herschel H. Hobbs in Getting Acquainted With the Bible says, "Illumination is the work of the Holy Spirit whereby he enables us to recall and to understand the Scriptures."⁸ Still the best definition of Illumination may simply be found in **Ephesians 1:18** where Paul prays, "***The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling...***"

Why do we need illumination? First the lost heart of man is naturally blind The Human heart does not naturally receive the things of God. **1 Corinthians 2:14** "***But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***"

Satan has also blinded man. God must illuminate for us to see. **2 Corinthians 4:3-4** "***But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.***"

Illumination is also necessary because of the carnality of man. **Hebrews 5:12-14** "***For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. ¹³ For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But strong meat belongeth***

Christianity: The Truth!

to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

So we can say that God gave mankind the Bible to reveal Himself to us who by the sin of Adam are a fallen race. Salvation comes from and through Jesus Christ alone as revealed by the Bible.

Chapter 8 Notes:

·132-

¹ Hobbs, Herschel H., *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Nashville: Convention Press, 1971.

² Hobbs, Herschel; *The Baptist Faith and Message*, Revised 1996; Convention Press, Nashville, p.48-49.

³ Pfeiffer, Charles; Howard F. Vos; Joh Rea; editors, *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1975 p.1506.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Hobbs, Herschel H., *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Nashville: Convention Press, 1971. pp. 150. Page 31.

⁶ Strong, James, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, Riverside Book and Bible House, Iowa Falls, Iowa

⁷ Hobbs, Herschel H., *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Nashville: Convention Press, 1971. pp. 150. p. 21

⁸ Hobbs, Herschel H., *Getting Acquainted With the Bible*. Nashville: Convention Press, 1991. pp. 174. Page 22.