

Focus on the Kingdom

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The Two Witnesses and the Gospel Angel

by Terry Anderson, Minnesota

Jesus commissioned the Church to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and to do so until he returned (Matt. 24:14 and 28:19). If the Gospel is about the promises to Abraham of land, progeny and salvation, then we must ask: has this been done? And if it has been done, and is being done now, then by whom and when? Who comprises the Church? Are they not those who believe, as did Abraham, in the promises? And even as God promised Abraham, so too did Jesus promise his disciples the Kingdom of God. Since the death and resurrection of Jesus, how has the Gospel been preached? Where has it been preached and how many have heard the true Gospel of the Kingdom?

If the Gospel of the Kingdom is indeed more than Jesus' death and resurrection, then how many people who have ever lived and died since Jesus' death have heard the true Gospel? The commission was given to the Church to preach the Gospel to all nations. Has the Church been successful in delivering the message? For approximately 2000 years bits and pieces of the message have been delivered but, as we all should know, a small percentage of the billions who have lived since Messiah's death have heard the lifesaving words of the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Consider Revelation 3:8 and the message to the church of Philadelphia. This church was told that it had "limited strength," but would be kept from the hour of trial coming upon the earth. It was promised "an open door" for evangelizing the world. How many people will respond to the Gospel remains to be seen. The Church is commissioned to do all in its power to promote and support the preaching of the Gospel.

Scripture shows that the work of preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom will be greatly assisted in the very final days by the work of the two witnesses, and the angel. Converts will grasp the essential doctrines of one God, sleep of the dead, and life in the Kingdom on earth during the preaching of the two witnesses in the last days. And let's not diminish the importance of the angel in

Revelation 14:6 who has the "Gospel to preach to the whole earth."

The two witnesses are first mentioned in Zechariah 4. They are referred to as "olive trees," the anointed ones who stand before the Lord of the whole earth. Nothing more is said about them until they come front and center in the end times to prophesy (preach) to the people on earth for 1,260 days. They are anointed, chosen for the specific purpose of witnessing to all those on earth at that time just before the return of Messiah. And to what do you suppose they are witnessing? Millions upon millions of nominal Christians are certainly aware of the book of Revelation, and I would think they would be at least marginally acquainted with the reference to the two witnesses. If so, then how could they deny or reject what these men will be preaching? And what will they be preaching? Might they be witnessing about who God is and who His Messiah is and the message (Gospel) that Messiah Jesus preached? There should be no doubt left. Approximately 40,000 Christian denominations have been teaching various forms of "the gospel" and doctrine for 2000 years. This will all be challenged by the witnesses, as the true Church currently issues the same challenge.

Try to imagine what Christians, and for that matter, Muslims, Jews and even Hindus, atheists and agnostics will think when the two witnesses are revealed. Revelation certainly indicates that the whole world will be aware of them. In Revelation 11:10 it says that after the death of the two witnesses, "those who dwell on the earth will rejoice and send gifts to one another" — and this all happens within 3 ½ days! How would this even be possible without modern communication and travel? The witnesses will have the eyes and ears of all the nations and peoples. So how will the nations respond to these two men? I suspect that many will deny their message and hate them. Matthew 7:13-14 tells us that few find the straight and narrow way that leads to the Kingdom. I'm assuming this is a relative phrase since Revelation 7 speaks of an uncountable mass of people who come out of the great tribulation. If .1% of all the people on earth make it into the first resurrection, that is about 7.5 million souls. That is not just a "few" people, but it is in relative terms.

Here are some hypothetical conversations that might take place for those who would try to keep an "open mind" — Christians, Muslims, Jews and atheists, plus an address by a minister to his congregation:

JEWISH COUPLE: "David, did you hear and understand what Rabbi said in services this morning? He

almost acknowledged that these ‘witnesses’ in Jerusalem are the olive trees of Zechariah. I know, he is a bit confused. He even admitted so. Because, if that is true, then what do we do with the Christian book of Revelation that links the olive trees to these two witnesses?” “Susan, I don’t know what to think, but can we just ignore the obvious? Maybe this Jesus of the Christians’ Bible is really the Messiah, and if that be true, then we had better try to change and follow what these witnesses are telling us to do to be saved. The times in which we live are obviously following the prophecies laid out in our writings from Isaiah to Malachi, but also the prophecies of the Christian Bible.”

CHRISTIAN COUPLE: “Honey, have you been paying attention to what is happening in Jerusalem? These two men who call themselves God’s witnesses are preaching what seems to be heresy.” “Yes, dear, I have been watching and wondering what our pastor is thinking. These ‘witnesses’ are saying that there is only one God and that Jesus is not God but the Son of God, the Messiah and High Priest. They are also saying that when we die we don’t go to heaven but remain asleep in the grave until a resurrection. And also, that God’s Kingdom will be on earth with Jesus and the saints ruling. Wow, do you believe that? Why weren’t we ever taught that in our church? If these witnesses are the genuine articles then we better study this thoroughly and make a decision, because there isn’t much time left according to the book of Revelation.”

ATHEIST COUPLE: “Jack, let’s sit down and discuss what is going on in the world now.” “OK, Mary, but don’t try to tell me you are worried that we may be wrong about our belief that there is no God.” “But Jack, honey, remember we have read all the books of the major religions and none of them except the Hebrew/Christian Bible comes close to predicting and describing events that we now see unfolding.” “Yes, Mary, but it could be just coincidence.” “Coincidence, Jack? Are you crazy? Look at what is happening in Jerusalem. These witnesses not only preach according to the Bible; they have extraordinary powers that no ordinary man should possess. We really need to study this carefully and make some decisions, and then tell our children.”

MUSLIM COUPLE: “Ariana, we should talk about what is happening in Jerusalem. What does it say about Islam, Mohammed and the Koran?” “Kareem, be careful what you say concerning this matter.” “Yes, but if Mohammed is the last prophet and Allah is God, then who are these witnesses and what about their message? They do support the doctrine of one God (our Allah) which we also believe. But they say that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. And they mention nothing about Mohammed our Prophet. Ariana, my dear wife, remember, the Koran

says that Abraham and Jesus were prophets as well. We do need to approach our Imam carefully and prayerfully about these issues, but we cannot just ignore them. We have read both the Koran and the Christian New Testament and there are similarities. And there are striking differences as well.”

CHRISTIAN EVANGELICAL MINISTER: “It is good to see 1,000 plus of you filling the seats of our auditorium this Sunday morning. I know you all have many questions, and since we are living in such trying times I am prepared to address your concerns about the world and our church doctrines and beliefs. Let me begin by acknowledging the fact that the two men in Jerusalem, whom we are observing daily being covered by all networks, must be the fulfillment of Revelation 11. The challenge we all have before us and the questions you must have are concerning their theology, their doctrine.

“For centuries just about all Christian denominations have held to certain orthodox beliefs. Some of these are the immortality of the soul (going to heaven when we die); the Trinity (God is three and one, and Jesus is God); the Gospel is only about Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. Well, my flock, the two witnesses (if that is who they are) have just turned the Christian world upside down and destroyed these doctrines which billions of Christians have believed for centuries and millennia. Sure, there have been small churches that have preached these ‘heresies’ from time to time but they have never captured even a small percentage of the minds of Christians around the world.

“Are we to discard our traditions and beliefs and follow these heretics who are now preaching in Israel? A better question is, do we have a choice? If these men, who absolutely fit the prophecy of Revelation 11, are truly the two witnesses, we had better examine the Scriptures, thoroughly and quickly, to see if what they are preaching is true. And if it is, we’d all better repent and believe and preach what they are preaching or suffer the consequences.”

Possible scenarios? Definitely. And remember that this will be occurring all over the world, in every continent and country. The two witnesses will be reaching all the nations with true doctrines and warnings to repent or suffer the consequences. Those who accept these last warnings may very well make the first resurrection, and there may be millions. But one thing is for certain: the Gospel of the Kingdom will be heard by all nations in these days just prior to the return of Messiah.

This kind of power and worldwide distribution capability is just not available to the Church prior to the witnesses coming on the scene — that is, with the exception of the internet. But even with the internet we still have to contend with spiritual resistance to true doctrine. Certainly, if God intends it to be, the Church

could be granted the power of miracles to command the attention of the world. Remember, the Philadelphian church has only “little strength,” but it is given an “open door” for evangelism. The witnesses will be **the Church (as the world perceives)** and the congregation of the saints will be sequestered and kept from the “hour of trial coming on the whole earth” (Rev. 3:10 and Isa. 26:20-21).

Now, what about the angel who comes down from heaven with the Gospel to preach to the whole world in Revelation 14:1-6? “Then I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven. He had the Gospel about the Coming Age to announce to those who live on the earth, to every nation, tribe language and people.” How is this angel going to manifest himself? As a man with the same powers as the witnesses or something dramatically different? It doesn’t say, but if we are to gather anything from the following chapters, it is that we are now reading about the very, very last days of God’s indignation prior to Jesus’ return. That is all that is mentioned about this special angel.

The witnesses and the angel will have incredible power (backed by miracles) to preach the true Gospel to the world. How many will see, hear and change their minds and repent? No one knows for certain, but I suspect millions.

The Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to the nations during some very trying circumstances, the tribulation and then God’s wrath upon the nations. If I am understanding Revelation 7:9-14 correctly, then both Israel and the Gentiles will have this time to repent and believe in order to take part in the first resurrection. With God’s last effort to get to those who will listen and who haven’t irrevocably hardened their hearts, many will see, change and believe. As it was said of Abraham, he believed, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness (Gal. 3:6).

What we are considering here is a wonderful hope for millions. If God tells us in Romans 11 that a vast number of Israelites will be saved, should we not also anticipate a great gathering of Gentiles as well?

Is the mission given to the Church at present nullified? Absolutely not. This mission is as much for those preaching the Gospel as for those receiving it. We are to be about doing the work of the Lord and not in a slack manner. The Great Mission stands: Go and make disciples of the people of all nations, teaching them all of the commands that I have given to you!

Revelation 7:9-17 describes a huge group of people who will have come out of “the great tribulation.” They are from all the nations, and tribes, and peoples. This is truly an astounding declaration. Possibly millions will be converted just before the end, and many will be Christians whose ignorance will be purged by the preaching of the witnesses. We probably all have friends who are extremely fine and law-abiding people and zealous in practicing their faith. We have relatives with the same virtues. The thing they are missing is true knowledge. I

have been to funerals where the deceased friend was eulogized. And I think that I have not accomplished a tenth of what some of these people have in their lifetimes.

If friends and relatives and strangers who have character, humility and a modicum of biblical knowledge hear the preaching of the two witnesses and the angel, that may well spark in them a light of understanding, removing the veil of ignorance. This is the profound and glorious result of the greatest preaching and acceptance of the Gospel message since Jesus walked the earth. God will find a way to save lots of human beings much to the dismay of the destroyer, Satan — many in the first resurrection and many more in the second resurrection. The angels in heaven rejoice to know and see God and Jesus triumph over Satan in the end. Satan will gather some to himself, but God will gather great numbers to Himself when all is said and done. The witnesses and the angel will have extraordinary power to influence millions just before the end of this age and the ushering in of the millennium of God’s Kingdom on earth.

I’ll leave you with this last thought. When John the Baptist asked Jesus if he was the one, the Messiah, Jesus answered, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them” (Matt. 11:4-5). Besides that, Jesus walked on water and changed water into wine. Would Jesus have had the kind of following and acceptance without those miracles? Would the Apostles have garnered the following they did without the miracles?

I’m not saying that miracles must accompany belief, but in the major paradigm shifts of biblical history, including but not limited to: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, et al, God got the attention of mankind through the demonstration of His awesome power. And in spite of that, many still did not believe. In John 20:24-29 Jesus appears to the disciples, and Thomas, not being with them, said he would not believe the resurrection unless he sees Jesus and could feel the marks in his hands and side. Jesus finally appears to Thomas and tells him that he was indeed fortunate and blessed, because he had seen Jesus and been with him to see the miracles. But he goes on to tell Thomas, “Blessed are those who have **not seen** but yet have still believed” (John 20:29).

As we all know, there will never be a time like the last days. The two witnesses and the Gospel angel will electrify the earth and its inhabitants with God’s power and Gospel to the degree that many who now have dim eyes will see clearly — not unlike the scales falling off the eyes of the Apostle Paul. I pray that day comes soon to alleviate the suffering of the masses and usher in God’s Kingdom on earth. ✧

Logos (“word”) and Grammatical Gender

By Carlos Xavier, Georgia

Many assume that the “word” in John 1:1 is a person because in Greek *logos* (“word”) is a grammatically masculine noun which is accompanied by grammatically masculine pronouns *outos* (he/it) and *autou* (him/it). However, it’s a fundamental mistake to confuse grammatical gender with biological gender. People are confusing a thing, “word,” with a person — a human male person, no less! This has led to the millennia-old misinterpretation that John was describing the existence of the Son prior to his birth.¹

But in the Old Testament “the word of the LORD” is never a person; it is never referred to as a “he” or “him.” For example, in the LXX the pronouns *outos* or *autou* never refer to the *logos*!

For the Jews the *logos* was the manifestation of God Himself, YHWH. *Logos* is similar to other invisible qualities of God that were personified, like His wisdom and prudence (see Proverbs 8-9). And we all know that by definition a personification is not an actual person!

Even noted evangelical scholars like Craig Keener, in his *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, concede this biblical fact:

“The personification of this ‘Word’ makes sense. The OT had personified Wisdom (Prov 8), and ancient Judaism eventually identified personified Wisdom, the Word and the Law (the Torah), sometimes identifying them with each other (e.g., Sirach 24:1, 23; Baruch 3:28-4:1).”

Another evangelical work, *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, rightly connects this Jewish Wisdom literature concept with the prologue of John 1:

“This personification of *logos* in John parallels the use of Wisdom in the OT and in the Apocrypha. Prov. 1:20-33, 8-9, Sirach 24, and Wisdom 7:22-11:1 illustrate the personification of Wisdom, and many functional parallels exist between Wisdom’s personification in those texts and in John 1:1, 14. For example, **both Wisdom and the Word dwell among God’s people, both act as God’s agents of creation, both are the reflection of the glory of God, and both bring light and life to God’s people.**”

These qualities of God can be “enfleshed,” i.e., embodied in people, like glory in Moses, “the word of the Lord” in the prophets, and wisdom in Solomon. Even later rabbis were “celebrated as Torah incarnate”² because they were said to have absorbed the Law of God.

As a matter of fact, to this day, Orthodox Jews have a tradition of burying old Torah scrolls because for them

“the Torah scroll is so important, is so holy, that when it’s no longer usable we bury it **as if it was a human being.**”³ So if Old Testament authorized people of God and even old Torah scrolls were understood this way, how much more God’s own uniquely procreated human Son?

The truth is that Jesus was “God’s wisdom in person but not a personified, hypostatized, pre-existent figure alongside God.”⁴ ✧

The End of the Age in 1 and 2 Thessalonians

There is a great need for Christians to share Paul’s simple program for the end of the age. This is beautifully laid out by the Apostle in many of his epistles, but more distinctly than anywhere else in 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

Popular readings of the Bible often reflect a failure to examine the context of any given verse. It is essential in reading the Bible (or any piece of written information!) to follow the logical progression of the writer. The chapter breaks in our Bible have sometimes allowed us to wreak havoc on what Paul wrote. We simply must not disturb the movement of Paul’s thought by interrupting the flow of his thinking with arbitrary gaps, or reading one verse without its context.

Let us see how important this is in the Thessalonian letters.

The Coming of Jesus

Paul has his eye on the Second Coming as he writes. It is a major concern of his to keep his flock properly instructed about that great event of the future. “For what is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our lord Jesus at his coming?” (1 Thess. 2:19). Yes, the lord is coming. So Paul prays that “he may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our lord Jesus with all his holy ones” (1 Thess. 3:13).

1 Thessalonians 4

A question had arisen in the Thessalonians’ minds. How were the Christians who had already died to meet Christ at his coming? The answer is given by Paul as a “word of the lord” (4:15) — i.e., based on sayings of Jesus to which Paul had access, some of which were later written down in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 (the Olivet discourse). The plan is quite simple:

“We who are alive and remain until the coming of the lord will not take precedence over those who have fallen asleep [in death]. For the lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and

¹ For the NT writers the *logos* is also the Gospel message itself. See Heb. 4:12-13; Eph. 6:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Luke 8:11 with Matt. 13:19.

² Holdredge, *Veda and Torah*.

³ <https://warszawa.jewish.org.pl/en/2017/04/ceremony-of-burying-torah-scrolls/>

⁴ Kuschel, *Born Before All Time?*

with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the lord in the air, and in this way we shall always be with the lord...Now as to times and epochs, brethren...," Paul continues (the chapter break must be ignored), "You yourselves know full well that the *day of the Lord* [which he has just finished describing] will come like a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 4:15-5:2).

That is to say, when the *world* is saying "'peace and safety,' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child" (5:3). In other words, disaster will overcome *the godless* unexpectedly like a thief, and they will not escape. But that "day of the Lord," which Paul had just described as the time when the saints would be caught up to meet Jesus, will not overtake the Church as a thief. It will, however, have a catastrophic effect on the world.

In 2 Thessalonians, Paul continued his theme, adding new material deliberately. This was to counteract the deceptive influence of a "spirit" or "letter pretending to come from us," maintaining that this great event, the coming of the Lord, was immediately "at hand" (2 Thess. 2:2, KJV, ASV).

The Scheme for the End

Paul had one burning desire. It was to reinforce, against false teaching, what he had already taught the Thessalonians in his first letter. So in 2 Thessalonians 1:7 he begins by telling the church that they must expect to suffer tribulation until the moment of relief arrives. What was that moment? Until *when* must they expect to be persecuted? Verse 7 tells us: God will give you relief from tribulation "when the lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the Gospel of our lord Jesus" (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

This is precisely what Paul had said in his first letter, though now he adds further details. Christians must be ready to be caught up to meet the lord as he comes. They will then be safe, while the lord's appearance will overwhelm the heedless world.

Tribulation Until Christ's Coming in Power

Not only must the Church expect tribulation right up to the moment when Jesus is revealed from heaven in flaming fire (2 Thess. 1:7), but we must also realize that certain events must happen *before* Jesus comes back (2 Thess. 2:1-3). In 2 Thessalonians 2 Paul opens by restating his subject. He wants to instruct his readers further about "the coming of the lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him" (v. 1).

His readers will remember from 1 Thessalonians 4:17 that they are to assemble to meet Jesus. This event, the day of the Lord — he had already called it the "day of the Lord" in 1 Thessalonians 5:2 — cannot happen before the

apostasy and the revelation of the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:3). The restrainer — it is a singular male being (v. 7) as well as a neuter force (v. 6) — will hold back the Antichrist until the latter is finally allowed to appear. Later, Jesus will arrive. This arrival is his Second Coming, and his coming means our gathering together to meet him (2:1). That great event will save the Christians as 2 Thessalonians 1:7 had said, and it will mean the end of the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:8) as well as punishment upon the godless world (1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:8).

Summary

Paul was evidently most unhappy about misconceptions in regard to the one Second Coming. He wanted to assure the Thessalonians that dead Christians would not be left out of the great Second Coming event. They would meet Christ in the air with the Christians who survived until the great day. That day would take the wicked world completely by surprise. It would be as unprepared as a homeowner who does not expect a thief to break into his house.

Later a wrong idea began to circulate in the church — that the promised day of the Lord was to come without any further delay. Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians 2 specifically to correct this false idea. He says that "the coming of our lord Jesus and our gathering together to him" (v. 1) cannot occur before two things happen: 1.) The falling away (apostasy) and 2.) the appearance of the Antichrist (cp. 1 John 2:18). Following the reign of Antichrist, Jesus will appear in glory and destroy the Antichrist. This is the simple program described by 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12. The Church's task is to guard the information faithfully and teach it to others.

A coherent picture of the end emerges, provided the text is allowed to coerce us. Interference with the message sometimes occurs when our own presuppositions block our understanding and deafen us to Paul's words. We must be careful that we do not drown Paul's instructions with our own noisy ideas! ✧

Jesus' Fiercest Warning

Perhaps the most profoundly disturbing saying of Jesus is the one in Matthew 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to me 'lord, lord,' will enter the Kingdom of heaven [Kingdom of God], but only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that future day: 'lord, lord, did we not preach and prophesy in your name? Did we not cast out demons in your name? Did we not do many miracles in your name?' And then I will say to them, 'I never recognized you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

This statement is made in the closest connection with Matthew 7:13-14, where Jesus warns: "Enter [the Kingdom] by the narrow gate, because the gate is wide and the way is broad which leads to destruction, and many go in through that way. For small is the gate and narrow

is the way that leads to life [in the Kingdom] and few are able to find it.” And then in the very same breath, Jesus said, **“Beware of false prophets, who come to you dressed up as sheep, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits”** (7:15-16; compare the parable of the seed and sower to see what *seed* is necessary to produce true fruit: Matt. 13:19: “the word about the Kingdom,” Mark 4, Luke 8).

Now connect this to Jesus’ other reference to people saying, “lord, lord”: “Why do you call me ‘lord, lord,’ and **you refuse to do what I say?** Everyone who comes to me and hears **my words** and does them, I will show you whom he is like” (Luke 6:46). The one *hearing the words/teaching of Jesus but not doing them* is building his house without a foundation. Only the ones hearing and obeying the word/words of Jesus are the true Christians.

So then, the strong and alarming warning of Jesus is simply this. It is fatal to address Jesus as “lord,” if we do not also lay the foundation of believing his Gospel-teaching and teachings, the **Gospel of the Kingdom**. In other words Jesus without his Gospel of the Kingdom word and words is a false, counterfeit Jesus. Calling Jesus “lord” and not believing his teachings and words is the fatal trap into which we must not fall. False prophets are those who speak of Jesus, but not of his Gospel teachings/words. Where the phrase “Gospel of the Kingdom” is absent, beware! Be alarmed!

This central and dramatic warning was so essential that it was repeated by both the Apostles Paul and John. In I Timothy 6:3, Paul said, “If anyone comes to you and **does not bring the teachings of Jesus,**” be alarmed and beware. You are being scammed!

John repeated exactly the same apostolic warning in 2 John 7-9: “Many deceivers have gone out into the world, the ones not confessing Jesus Messiah as coming as fully human. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.” Then in verse 9-10: “Everybody who in the name of progress **does not remain in the teaching of the Messiah** does not have God. The one remaining in that **teaching of Messiah**, he is the one who has the Father and the Son. If someone comes to you and does not bring **that teaching**, do not receive him into your house or greet him.”

There is a parallel with the current coronavirus pandemic. We are to distance ourselves from anyone who does not stress, emphasize and insist on the **Gospel teaching and teachings of Messiah Jesus**. Where, we should immediately ask, does the teaching of Jesus begin? What was his first foundational command? The answer is in Mark 1:1: “the beginning of the Gospel” and Mark 1:14-15: “Repent and believe God’s Gospel about the Kingdom.” That is a command!

Now please listen to these statements from recent times: Dr. James Kennedy of Coral Ridge Ministries (he died in 2007):

“Many people today think that the essence of Christianity is the teachings of Jesus. That isn’t so. The teachings of Jesus are somewhat secondary to Christianity. If you read the epistles of the Apostle Paul, which make up about half of the New Testament, you’ll see almost nothing whatsoever said about the teachings of Jesus. Not one of his parables is mentioned. In fact, throughout the rest of the New Testament there’s little reference to the **teachings of Jesus. In the Apostles’ creed, the most universally held Christian creed, there is no reference to the teachings of Jesus or to the example of Jesus. In fact, in recounting Christ’s earthly life, the creed states simply that He was ‘born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and was buried.’ It mentions only two days in Jesus’s life — that of His birth and that of His death. **Christianity centers not in the teachings of Jesus but in the person of Jesus as the incarnate God who came into the world to take upon himself our guilt and to die in our place.**”⁵**

Also from Kennedy: “But Jesus says, ‘I am the way.’ **It is not the teachings of Jesus, it is not the preaching of Jesus**, it is not the example of Jesus, it is not the Sermon on the Mount, it is not the Beatitudes, or anything else that He **taught or said** that is the way. The way is Christ Himself, the divine second Person of the Trinity, the Creator of the galaxies that came into this world” (“The Only Way,” *Daily Truth* newsletter).

This is a huge and glaring falsehood, since Paul preached exactly the same Gospel of the Kingdom as did Jesus, to all, Jews and Gentiles alike, in Acts (14:22; 19:8; 20:24-25; 28:23, 31).

Now this equally astonishing, misleading and alarming statement from another top evangelical scholar, Dr. Harold O.J. Brown:

“Christianity takes its name from its founder, or rather from what he was called, the Christ. Buddhism is also named for its founder. And non-Moslems often call Islam Mohammedanism. But while Buddhism and Islam are based primarily on the *teaching* of the Buddha and Mohammed, respectively, **Christianity is based primarily on the person of Christ. The Christian faith is *not* belief in his teaching, but in what is taught **about him**. The appeal of Protestant liberals to ‘believe as Jesus believed,’ rather than to believe in Jesus, is a dramatic transformation of the fundamental nature of Christianity.”⁶**

That is a colossal lie. You cannot believe in Jesus and not believe his teaching!

Then also C.S. Lewis. Lewis denies Jesus while claiming to follow him! He wrote: “The **Gospels are not**

⁵ D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe, *The Presence of a Hidden God*, 2008, chapter “How I Know Jesus Is God,”

p. 82, emphasis added.

⁶ *Heresies*, 1984, p. 13, emphasis added.

‘the gospel,’ the statement of the Christian belief.”⁷ So then the words of Jesus are not the Gospel! This must be the ultimate falsehood, the ultimate deception. So Jesus has to be rescued from “church”!

Dr. James Dunn: “Hurtado does not think it **necessary for Jesus to have thought and spoken of himself in the same terms as his followers thought and spoke of him** in the decades subsequent to his crucifixion, in order for the convictions of those followers to be treated as valid by Christians today; though he also notes that most Christians probably think that there was ‘some degree of continuity’ between what Jesus thought of himself and subsequent Christology.”⁸

Has he read the New Testament?!

Professor Richard Hiers made this amazing admission: “Interpreters of Christian **persuasion have ordinarily not been especially interested in what Jesus intended and did in his own time.**”⁹

Note this carefully from Dr. H.A. Wolfson, leading authority on what the post-biblical “church fathers” did:

“The Church Fathers’ conception of the Trinity was a combination of Jewish monotheism and pagan polytheism, except that to them this combination was a good combination. In fact, it was to them an **ideal combination of what is best in Jewish monotheism and of what is best in pagan polytheism**, and consequently they gloried in it and pointed to it as evidence of their belief. We have on this the testimony of Gregory of Nyssa, one of the great figures in the history of the philosophic formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. His words are repeated by John of Damascus, the last of the Church Fathers. The Christian conception of God, argues Gregory of Nyssa, is neither the polytheism of the Greeks nor **the monotheism of the Jews**, and consequently it must be true. ‘For the truth passes in the mean [middle] between these two conceptions, destroying each heresy, and yet accepting what is useful to it from each. **The Jewish dogma is destroyed** by the acceptance of the Word and by belief in the Spirit, while the polytheistic error of the Greek school is made to vanish by the unity of the nature abrogating this imagination of plurality’ (*Oration Catechetica*, 13).”¹⁰

Think about what you just read! The church fathers admitted that they were rejecting the Jewish (and Jesus’) understanding of God. They worked out the later fearfully complicated definitions of God and Jesus in relation to God, and found themselves caught in a web of impossibly difficult arguments trying to explain how God can be one and at the same time three.

But the easy truth and fact is this: “There is no indication that Jesus would have understood the ‘Father,’ from whom he felt himself to have been sent and to whom he felt himself to be related in a special way, differently from the monotheistic God of Judaism.”¹¹

“The Shema was the prayer which all pious Jews were expected to recite three times daily...It occupied a similar special position in late Judaism to the Lord’s prayer in Christianity.” That is very true. But then Dr. Anderson speaks of “the Church that did not any longer recite the Shema. But here at least in his statement of the first commandment, Jesus stands foursquare within the orbit of Jewish piety.”¹²

Anderson has admitted that Jesus was a unitarian! But on what authority was this fundamental teaching of Jesus defining the one true God discarded? The Church did not abandon the lord’s prayer! Why abandon his creed? ✧

Comments

• “My passion is evangelizing the true one and only Gospel of the coming Kingdom as Christ and his disciples preached it, in public. I appreciate the labors of Sir Anthony and these resources, and am forever indebted, especially to the time it all must’ve taken. Such valuable knowledge of truth, blessings from God utilized wisely, glory to Him! God is amazing how He works in our lives.” — *California*

• “After being a Jehovah’s Witness for 10 years, learning Jesus is not the angel is very eye opening, and it makes much more sense. Thanks for sharing.” — *Youtube*

• “Thank you again for your clear teaching on this false concept [the pre-tribulation rapture] that many of us good Christians were brought up believing. I always had a strange feeling when listening to others trying to explain (with twisting of Scripture, picking and choosing, and intricately applying tidbits from around the Bible) how the Thessalonians passage could possibly be speaking of two events.” — *Youtube*

• “I was a victim of the Hebrew Roots movement for 7 long years. Praise God He opened my eyes and allowed me to repent. Certain teachers in that movement will tell you that Paul was a false teacher. They will also say not to read the book of Hebrews. One Hebrew roots teacher says to rip it out of your Bible!” — *Youtube*

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⁷ Introduction to J.B. Phillips’ *Letters to Young Churches*, p. 9-10, emphasis added.

⁸ *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* p. 93, fn 2, emphasis added.

⁹ *Jesus and the Future*, 1981, p. 1, emphasis added.

¹⁰ Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, p.

361-363, emphasis added.

¹¹ *One or Three? From the Father of Jesus to the Trinity*, Karl-Heinz Ohlig, pub. Lang, 2000, p. 31.

¹² Hugh Anderson, *New Century Bible Commentary on Mark*, p. 280.