

## The Deceptive Danger of a Different Jesus

Intro: Jesus is on fire in our culture today. He is popularly hot and He is popping up everywhere. We sometimes think that our culture wants nothing to do with Jesus, but the evidence is overwhelming that our society is becoming increasingly enamored with Jesus. Two of the larger grossing movies of our time were about Jesus (the Passion and DaVinci Code), Jesus occasionally pops up on the Simpsons and on South Park where he fights with the devil. Our fashion industry has put Jesus on its T-shirts with “Jesus is my homeboy” worn by the likes of Pamela Anderson, MaDonna, and Ben Affleck. Jesus is even on a monster truck for “Redneck Outreach.” Speaking of rednecks, Ricky Bobby of Talledega Nights fame even mentions that he likes to pray to the 8 lb 6 oz baby Jesus with the golden fleece diaper. Even Kayne West, a rapper, had an extremely popular hit, “Jesus Walks With Me” and wore a crown of thorns on the cover of Rolling Stone with the title, “The Passion of Kayne West.” While I think he has completely missed who Jesus truly is, he is obviously wanting to be like Jesus in some manner. Jesus is everywhere in our popular culture and the largest image of Jesus, the cross, is also big money in our culture today being worn by movie stars and musicians, fashion designers and athletes.

We are being pulled in hundreds of directions, toward proclamations of Jesus’ that do not measure up to the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Bible. There are different Jesus’ everywhere around us, being made to serve man’s will rather than God’s will. Do not be taken in, O Bride of Jesus Christ, Satan is still working to deceitfully trick us into reaching for the fruit of self-reliance and power outside of God. He is still trying to create a fear that forgets God’s goodness and the sense that there is something more that we need other than the true Jesus. And he will use the image of Jesus and the name of Jesus to deceive us because he is a sinister liar and murderer, the thief who comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. In the name of tolerance we are told that every Jesus presented is equally valid and pragmatic. We are told that those who claim that the biblical Jesus, who died in our place on the cross and rose from the dead three days later, is the only way to God, then we are extremists, the worst of all possible crimes. But, my friends, Jesus is extreme, and His love is an extremely electric love, and He has chosen you for a bride. He makes promises that He keeps, and proves His love by giving up His life and His honor for you. He speaks tenderly to us when we have gone to other lovers and impatiently concern ourselves with other powerless sweet-talking purveyors of happiness.

Paul was concerned that false teachers were calling the Corinthians away from their betrothed groom, Jesus, and were being called away to adulterous affairs with different Jesus’. He fears it greatly as the attendant who is called to present us as the bride of Christ. So, he is extreme and intolerant, as a mother bear when her cubs are threatened, bearing the claws and teeth of truth he works to call us back to a singular devotion to Jesus.

### 1. Danger of Tolerance

- a. NOT tolerance as patient, calm, respectful discussion of ideas and struggles within all of us!
  - i. Rather, tolerating the *teaching* and the *teachers* of different Jesus’, different gospels, and different spirit than truth
  - ii. Do not tolerate anything that adds to the work of Jesus as necessary for salvation or growth in holiness
  - iii. Do not tolerate anything that subtracts from Jesus or His work in history or the present, or the future
  - iv. We need to be intolerant, taking away the authority and the public platform of individuals who preach heresy
- b. Foolishness of the extreme
  - i. "folly" is linked in contrast of "moderation"
    1. Reckless and thoughtless
    2. Careless and Tactless
  - ii. Paul's accusers viewed him as "extreme" in His preaching and in His gospel
- c. Foolishness of boasting (v17)

### 2. Danger of being led away from simple devotion to Jesus

a. Deceived like Eve

i. Eve was tricked by Satan into thinking sin would bring about good

1. Satan disguised himself as someone who was wise and promised wisdom and discernment
2. He led to question God's goodness, sufficiency, faithfulness, and His promise ("Did God really say...")

**Satan makes good look evil, and evil look good.** The Bible says, "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20; see also verses 20-21). By using his tactics, Satan is able to undermine Eve's belief in the goodness of God. She began to look upon God with suspicion. Now, in the midst of a perfect creation, Eve has become discontent with all that she has. "There must be more," she thinks, prompted by Satan's questions and innuendoes. The "evil" of partaking of the forbidden fruit now appears as the "good" God has unfairly withheld from her.

**Satan deceived Eve by mixing error with truth.** As we look at the account of the fall of man in Genesis 3, we see that most of what the serpent said was right. At first it was just in seemingly "little things" that Satan departed, but eventually this was followed by the big lie: "**You surely shall not die.**" That is his conclusion. But what is his premise? His premise is: "**Because your eyes will be open and you will be like God knowing good and evil.**" Is that a lie? It certainly is not because that is what God says at the end of chapter 3:

22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken (Genesis 3:22-23).

What the serpent told Eve was true, not in the same way they hoped it would be true, but it was true in a certain sense. Satan quoted Scripture when he tempted our Lord (see Matthew 4:4, 6). The Scriptures he quoted were true, but Satan misapplied them, employing them in a way that made disobedience to God seem justified. The most cunning and dangerous false teachers are those who seem to embrace the Word of God, but subtly undermine it.

~Bob Deffinbaugh

b. Thoughts led astray

- i. From devotion to Christ (single-heartedness)
- ii. Simplicity of devotion
  1. Simplicity IS: Singularity of purpose and passion
  2. Simplicity is NOT: Easy
    - a. Doctrine of Election shows us that faith is not easy
- iii. Singularity of devotion
- iv. Picture of the Divine Wedding
  1. Yahweh speaks of himself as the husband of his people
    - a. Is 43:1-3a
    - b. Isaiah 54:5-6
  2. Jesus speaks this way of His followers
    - a. John 14:1-3
    - b. We live in the betrothal period
    - c. Betrothal in the first century was legally and spiritually binding
      - i. "The term betrothal, in Jewish law, must not be understood in its modern sense, that is in its agreement of a man and woman to

marry by which, however, the parties are not definitely bound but which may be broken or dissolved without formal divorce.

Betrothal means an agreement between a man and a woman that was definite and binding upon both groom and bride who were considered as both husband and wife in all legal and religious aspects except that of actual cohabitation.” -Jewish Encyclopedia

- ii. To break a betrothal required a divorce, to cheat on a betrothed was considered adultery (Mary and Joseph).
  - iii. At the end of this betrothal period the groom would return in bright array to receive his bride and take her to their new home.
- d. The Bride and the Groom is the most powerfully intimate relationship that exists in humanity

c. Leads to divine jealousy

- i. Righteous jealousy of the husband of a threatened wife
- ii. Look how God responds to adulterous Israel
  1. Hosea 2:14ff
  2. James 4:5, God’s Spirit within us jealously longs over us
  3. The purpose of the Holy Spirit’s teaching through Paul, vis. Through Scripture, is to prepare us for Jesus, to present us to Jesus, for the glory of Jesus.
- iii. Evil Man? Yes, servants of Satan they are (vv13-15)
- iv. Those who preach another Jesus, and different spirit and gospel are servants of Satan, who disguise themselves as servants of righteousness and of light

3. Danger is in the acceptance of the preaching of a different Jesus

a. Another Jesus

- i. we have not preached
- ii. Jesus is popularly “hot” even today
  1. Different Jesus’s
    - a. Capitalist
    - b. Marxist
    - c. Feminist
    - d. Socialist
    - e. Mushroom

b. Different spirit

- i. you have not received
- ii. “What can God do for me?”

c. different gospel

- i. you have not accepted
- ii. Tons of different gospels, none about the cross of wrath/mercy and punishment/grace.

d. “You have born it well”

- i. Sarcastic rebuke of their “tolerance”

Conclusion:

Jesus has betrothed Himself to you. He chose you for intimacy with Him, for rest in Him, security in His choice of you and in His completely extreme forgiveness of our shameful adulteries. He is preparing a place in our Father’s house for us, coming back in bright array to take us to be with Him. He desires you to know Him. His love for you is shown in the dowry that He paid, the forgiveness that He shows, the preparation that He is making, the glory that He shares. This is your husband, O Bride of Jesus!! Do not fear that He will ever let you go! There is nothing that you have done that He

has not seen before and cannot forgive. There is nowhere you have been that He will come to woo you back again with tender words.

And as we wait for His return to take us to be with Him, let us not tolerate other lovers, making promises that they will love us better or make us more secure and happy. Let us beware of the false preachers of a different Jesus, who will twist and slander our Great Lover's name and work, and let us keep our eyes on our true Husband, our Maker, our Redeemer, the Holy One who put down His glory, wooed a rebellious and adulterous people who are prone to wander away, gave up His very life to purchase whores like us, and to make us His chosen Bride! Oh the day when our Redeemer returns to take us home. Hold on to Him! Hold on to His promise, for He loves you extremely.