

Here's the pattern:

1. Affirm Jesus verbally.
2. Redefine Him subtly.
3. Re-center on something else.
4. Slowly remove His exclusivity.

Christianity is unapologetically exclusive in access — only through Jesus.

AND unapologetically inclusive in invitation — anyone who comes will be received. Exclusive in access. Inclusive in invitation. That's the gospel.

1) Prosperity Gospel: Jesus Becomes a Tool

1. Is Jesus the prize... or is Jesus the path to the prize?
2. If following Jesus costs you comfort, health, money, reputation — is He still worth it?
3. When hardship hits, do you assume God has abandoned you, or do you run closer to Christ?

2) "Jesus + Mediators / Merit": Christ Is No Longer Enough

1. When you sin, do you run straight to Jesus — or do you feel you must go through another mediator to be restored?
2. Is salvation resting on Christ's finished work — or on Christ's work plus your performance?
3. When Jesus said, "It is finished," what was finished? Fully paid... or partially paid?

3) Christian Nationalism: Jesus Gets Fused With a Flag

1. Is Jesus King over your politics — or have your politics begun to trump Jesus?
2. Would you follow Jesus if obedience cost what your party typically stands for?
3. Does your political identity increase a love of enemy or does it cause you to hate others?
4. Is your deepest citizenship heavenly or national?

4) Gender Identity Ideology: Self Becomes Lord

1. Is identity something you receive from God or create for yourself?
2. Does Jesus have all authority over your body — or do you?
3. Does following the Way of Jesus ever require denying yourself, even at the level of your greatest desires?
4. If God is Creator and Jesus is God in the flesh, does our embodied design matter?

If the self is on the throne, Jesus isn't. For any of these, if Jesus isn't on the throne. If He is not the center of the bullseye, then He's not Lord in your life.