

## The Supremacy of Christ: Religious Syncretism

Colossians 2:6-10; 16-23 NIV

- I. A spiritually dangerous world.
  - a. They are doing really well and someone is trying to tell them there's more but it takes something different than just Jesus. "I'm holier than you, I've had experiences, I have a Jewish background, follow me and come into an even greater intimacy with God." \*If the enemy can't keep you from Jesus he will give you a push past Jesus.
  - b. "See to it that no one takes you captive...";
    - i. Jesus describing the world we would live in. Matthew 24:4-5 ESV "And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup>For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray."
    - ii. Paul describing what would come after him. Acts 20:29 NIV "I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. <sup>30</sup>Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them." \*A false prophet is not someone who missed it and apologizes; it's someone who draws people to themselves.
  - c. Spoofing and AI spoofs. Don't freak out but be aware that everyone may not be what they appear to be. We live in a world where we have to be discerning without becoming cynical. \*People who knew me well either immediately dismissed it immediately, or used their access to me to ask. \*We can do the same with Jesus!
  - d. Why is this the world God wanted us to live in? He doesn't just want us to believe in His existence; He wants us to choose Him like He's chosen us.
    - i. Adam and Eve failed their test.
    - ii. Jesus passed our test for us.
    - iii. Our test is to come to Him and then grow in Him. \*2Corinthians 11:3 NIV "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ." \*Faith became complicated – God isn't enough, you also need to eat this fruit.
  - e. Religious tolerance is when we respect everyone's right to believe whatever they believe – "in all things charity." Religious syncretism is when we add something to Jesus.
- II. Some have changed Jesus to their own version of Jesus.
  - a. Some preach another Jesus "whom we have not preached." \*2Corinthians 11:4a

- b. Muslims – Mohammed visited by Gabriel – Jesus was a great prophet and did miracles and was without sin, but didn't die on the cross for our sins. "Blessed be his holy name." Mohammed in the Koran gives God's final revelation, not Jesus. \*Works for salvation.
- c. Jehovah Witnesses – Only Jehovah is God, Jesus was the angel Michael before his incarnation and although he died for our sins, we have to add our works to be saved. \*Only a Divine Jesus can give a sacrifice to take away the sins of the world.
- d. Mormons – the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith – Jesus is a god but you can become one as well. Works based salvation. \*Many ways to Jesus – we all know in part and many of their followers don't know how weird their theology is.
- e. The New Age – Jesus is one of many spiritual guides – I'm not religious, but I'm spiritual! "My Jesus isn't your Jesus!"

### III. Living spiritually protected.

- a. Keep your spiritual eyes on Jesus! Hebrews 12:2 "Fix your eyes..." Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." Pure means "single, or unmixed/undivided." Grow up into Him – not more than Jesus, but more in Jesus. \*Not Jesus plus... \*the enemy will take the plus and touch it with pride and your Christianity becomes diluted and diminished. \*Next week we'll get into this more.
- b. Be careful who you follow!
  - i. Proverbs 13:20 NIV Choose your friends well because they'll lead you to heaven or hell.
  - ii. Hebrews 13:17a NASB "Obey your leaders and submit to *them*—for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account..." 13:17 NIV "Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account." "Obey" or "have confidence" – which is it? Follow those who you are persuaded to have confidence in.
  - iii. We are called to be part of a local church that is part of the bigger historical church He began – Heb. 3:13 It's easier to poison a well than it is a river. \*The wolf goes after the isolated sheep. Pastors have an anointing on their position to protect and release.
- c. Examine all teaching by the greater story of the Word of God. Acts 17:11 "Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." \*Jehovah Witnesses \*Protestant Reformation \*this is why we need to know our Bibles – find someone who knows it better than you and get into a study with them.

- d. Examine all prophetic experiences. Matt. 22:29 We need His power!  
1Thes. 5:19-21 NKJ “Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise prophecies. <sup>21</sup>Test all things; hold fast what is good.” Don’t despise and don’t be overly impressed! \*Conspiracy theories from hurt prophets who have a following on the internet. We have to be careful!
- e. Trusting the good Shepherd..
  - i. John 10:11 NIV “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” John 10:27-28 NIV “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all<sup>9</sup>; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.”
  - ii. He will go after the one that goes astray until He finds it – I will break their leg if I have to! Luke 15:4 NIV “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?” \*John’s revelation – He wants to forgive me; it’s okay that I don’t love Him as much as He loves me. \*This coming Wednesday – invite. \*Prayer for those who have been astray. \*Final prayer for those who are out there and need to come home!