

Pagan Occult Gnostic Christianity

Fred R. Coulter—July 8, 2006

Quite an unusual name and title, isn't it? Why is there so much confusion in Christianity particularly, and in religions in the world altogether Especially when we read that God is not the author of confusion (1-Cor. 14). How do we come to all these different brands of Christianity?

I have in front of me a cartoon of the Presbyterian Church USA General Assembly. They're having a panel discussion on 'Name that Trinity,' with the audience sitting over to the left of it.

- the first one says: Father, Son, Holy Spirit
- a woman says: mother, child and womb
- another man says: rock, redeemer, friend
- another one says: rock paper and scissors

The caption at the bottom says, 'Bad news, we just got word that the Episcopalians are praying for us.'

The significance of that is that they just elected a woman to head up the Episcopal Church who believed in ordaining homosexual ministers, and gay marriage.

That shows how much confusion that there is in Christianity, and how far it has been led astray. That's why the title of this sermon.

We also know from the account in Genesis that Satan is the one who comes along and he likes to tell people that he's going to enlighten them. If they accept that, then he enlightens them step-by-step into his evil. In that he has many, many counterfeit religions, and many, many doctrines within Christianity.

The overall thing that happens with this is that Jesus described. He said that ***'the eye is the light of the body. If the light that is in you is darkness, great indeed is that darkness.'*** That's where Satan wants to get all of mankind into the darkness of his way. We also know that he is 'the god of this world.' Let's see what Satan does and how he operates, and this is Satan's goal all the way through:

2-Corinthians 4:1: "Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted." *So, there is:*

- the Truth of God
- the Light of God
- the understanding of God
- the Spirit of God

and that's why we always have to go to the Word of God to understand things concerning

1. God
2. Jesus Christ
3. the Word of God
4. the process of salvation

That's why God has made sure that there are Bibles everywhere in the world!

Verse 2: "For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain..." *So, they're not dealing in lies and in myths, as we have seen later on!*

"...not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully..." (v 2). *That's what happens when people begin to mix these various doctrines!*

We will only examine a few of the doctrines, but we will list all of them that show how occult gnostic and pagan beliefs got into Christianity. I think you're going to be really surprised. We're going to look at all of those first, and then we will look at the things that show the Truth and how you know that you are of the Truth and how you can combat all of these things that are going on in the world.

But today I was talking to my son and he said that he saw the movie Narnia, which he said that it was one the worst movies that he's seen in a long time as far as bringing out these gnostic and occult things. They even have the resurrection of a lion. I think it's the lion, a witch and Narnia. It seems like there's a pattern. Remember, the DiVinci Code just came down, lowering and degrading Christ, telling all kinds of lies about Him. That He was married to Mary Magdalene and so forth. Now here comes a satanic witchcraft movie.

That's a pattern that happens. Look at all the different movies that comes down with that, and then there's a movie about Christ. Most of them are not any good. Mel Gibson's *Passion of Christ* looked pretty good, but it was completely displaying the Catholic point of view of Christ and the crucifixion, and so forth.

I think you're going to be surprised how many gnostic and occult doctrines that there are in Christianity. I've gotten most of my information out of this book *Forbidden Faith, the Gnostic Legacy from the Gospels to the DiVinci Code* by Richard Smaley. It's a tough and dry read, so I don't necessarily recommend that you get it. He brings out many things that are important in it.

"...but by manifestation of the Truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience

before God. But if our Gospel is hidden... [that's what Satan wants to do] ...it is hidden to those who are perishing" (vs 2-3).

That means are those who have not been called and living in sin and have not repented, and those who are serving Satan the devil directly.

Many of the things that we're going to cover will show that there is a structure of worship of Satan in the world today, and soon there's going to be open Satan-worship in the world. ***It is coming more and more a we see these things developing!***

Verse 4: "In whom the god of this age **has blinded the minds of those who do not believe...**" ***If you don't:***

- believe the *true God*
- believe in the *true Jesus*
- believe in the *truth of the Word of God*
- live by it
- love God

then "...lest the Light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them." *They're blinded, and he blinds them through various things! Through various beliefs!*

Whenever you study any of these pagan beliefs, any of the doctrines of the Gnostics, occult or even Christianity today, it always goes back to Babylon and Egypt. Notice how many times we've covered this on the occult: ***don't go back to Egypt!*** What the Gnostics and the occult do is, 'there are the mysteries of Egypt that we need to understand. 'That centers around the goddess. Always the goddess, regardless of the name. Notice how widespread this is:

Revelation 17:1: "And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, 'Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters... [symbolic of great apostasy from God, unfaithful to God] ...with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication... [it's a religious and political system that is worldwide] ...and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication'" (vs 1-2). ***They became spiritually intoxicated with false doctrine!***

There are many, many degrees of this starting from Satan worship directly all the way down to angel-worship, worship of men and worship of false gods and goddesses. There are many, many layers of structures in this.

Verse 3: "Then he carried me away in *the* spirit to a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast that had seven heads and ten horns, full of names of blasphemy. And the woman *was* clothed in purple and scarlet, and *was* adorned

with gold and pearls and precious stones; *and* she had a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominations and *the* filthiness of her fornication... [here it identifies her] ...and across her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT..." (vs 3-5).

This tells us where to go for understanding. This tells us the basic doctrines that will be coming.

"...THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS..." (v 5). This is not just a version of the Catholic Church with the Protestants, this is ancient Babylon with all the other religions of the world, because they came out of Babylon.

"...AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And after seeing her, I wondered with great amazement" (vs 5-6).

- Have inquisitions been conducted by the Catholics against true Christians? ***Yes!***
- Have there been killing of true Christians by other so-called Christian religious denominations? ***Yes!***
- Have the Hindus come against Christians? ***Yes!***
- Have Buddhists come against Christians? ***Yes!***
- Have Islamic followers come against Christians? ***Yes!***

As a matter of fact, that's the center of what's going on in the world today! So, it covers a great vast amount of time in history and religion and so forth.

In these Gnostic religions—pagan occult gnostic 'Christianity'—the whole term, the most gnostic occult religion in the world today is Hinduism, with all of it's various beliefs and demonic things. The next is Buddhism, and then Jewish and Christian cabalism! If you've never heard of *cabalism* you'll have to do a little study on that. Mystic cabalism gets into sacred names. So, 'Christian' cabalism is bringing sacred names into the New Testament. That's what it's doing.

Many people don't realize that there's also a mystic Islam, which is kind of a pentecostal version of Islam, where they just work themselves into a frenzy until they get into a trance, and they're referred to many times as 'whirling derbies' where they get fast music and do turning in circles. Many of them have long hair and just let their hair flow around until they get whipped up in a frenzy. That is part of mystic Islam.

There's also mystic 'Christianity'; a lot of that is in the Catholic Church, because when they can't explain it, they tell you that it is a 'mystery.'

We'll talk about one of the greatest mysteries that they have, which identifies them.

There's also mystic Orthodox, and a lot of this is shown in the monastic system, where they have priests that just get away from the world, everything, and all the beliefs that they have are basically the old Gnostic beliefs, which is that creation is evil, mankind is evil and there is no salvation except knowledge. Sex is evil, therefore, any Christian group that has celibate priests, nuns, temple virgins and so forth, they are part of mystic and Gnostic belief, *which is contrary to what God teaches!*

God teaches right from the beginning that what He created was good. The problem that happened was when sin entered in. After God created everything that He created on the earth:

Genesis 1:31: "And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, *it was exceedingly* good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

When God created Eve and brought her to Adam, He said, concerning mankind, Genesis 2:18: "And the LORD God said, '*It is* not good that the man should be alone. I will make a helper compatible for him.'"

Look at how many celibate priesthoods that they have. Look at all the troubles and difficulties that they get into. It creates nothing by adultery, fornication, homosexuality, pedophilia, etc., which we are still suffering with today. Even the Catholics today say, 'Let's solve these problems by letting priests marry.' *Oh no! we can't do that!*

But not many people realize that they are following the Gnostic teachings that came out of Babylon, which came out of Egypt. So, all the monastic system in part of Gnosticism and occult practice within 'Christianity.' So, these are the identifying things that we can look to.

Some of the other things that are important to understand is—and we'll save the most important one for the end—idols. We're going to see that keeping the first four commandments are key and central to identifying pagan, occult, gnostic 'Christianity: idols, prayer beads, and more importantly, the day of worship.

The Jews have the proper day of worship, but they don't accept Christ. So, without Christ the proper day of worship doesn't bring them spirituality or salvation; *you must have both!* Some of these things I cover in some detail in the book *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days, Which?*

They day of worship, and they all know which day they worship on. Muslims know that they

worship on Friday, true Christians and the Jews know that they worship on Sabbath, the pagan occult gnostic 'Christianity' worship on Sunday. They know which day of the week Sunday is: *the first day of the week!*

However, there's a slight of hand that occurs in Europe. Most people don't realize this: the European calendar shows Sunday as the seventh day. They can say, 'Look, there's the seventh day.' That shows you all the confusion and everything that Satan has brought in with all these religion systems that he has.

Another aspect of it is *enlightenment*. I already mentioned about the extremes in sex. Another one is *sacred names*, and another one is adding *witchcraft practices*, which are beginning to accept now even in some Protestant denominations under the guise of doing good, becoming your better self, tapping the inner power within and so forth. Then a key one is *reincarnation*.

The Catholics may not say that they have this, but they have a form of it and it's the worship of saints, which is the worship of the dead.

They have the nature of man wrong; they don't understand that. The doctrine of immortal man and going to heaven. The doctrine of heaven and hell, with torment, and also purgatory.

All of them have various methods of salvation by works. All of them have a great degree of demonism in it.

In the secular field, you have organizations such as the Rosicrucians, the Masons, the Knights of Columbus, the Illuminati. And especially in this last century theosophy by Madame Blavatsky and Jung. They have sent the psychological format and religious format—which is basically the driving force behind the coming one-world order. So, Satan has it all stacked up and lined up.

Let's look at an important thing in how you tell the difference:

1. you have the Sabbaths of God; that is a sign
2. the nature of God

Every one of these changes the nature of God! When you go to the first commandment, here is the first thing that is done. We have seen this when there has been infiltration within the Churches of God, and what they have done with the doctrines. The first thing they do is begin to change the nature of God and the nature of Jesus Christ. ***That becomes a key and important component of their doctrines!*** So, Satan knows!

Exodus 20:1: And God spoke all these words, saying, 'I *am* the LORD your God, Who

brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. **You shall have no other gods before Me**” (vs 1-3).

In changing the nature of God that is the first step in leaving the true God! How do they begin doing it? *By going against the command of God that you should not add to or take away from.* Let’s see how God forbade them to do so, and this is going to be one of the signs of those who truly follow God.

Deuteronomy 12:28: **“Be careful to observe and obey all these words, which I command you, so that it may go well with you...”**

Another sign that we see with the Protestants is that they change the nature of the Law of God—and change the nature of God, as well—and the first thing they do is say that you don’t have to read the Old Testament, that’s all been done away. That’s one of the signs of the occult and gnostic beliefs.

But God wants it to “...go well with you...” and ***they say the opposite***, that if you keep the commandments of God you are under a curse. That’s not true, so they have:

- changed the nature of God
- they have changed the nature of the Word of God
- they have rejected the Old Testament

Because they rejected the O.T. they don’t read it to find out what they need to do!

“...go well with you and with your children after you forever **when you do that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God**” (v 28).

We will see later on more identifying marks, which make the separation between the pagan ‘Christianity’ of this world.

Verse 30: “Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them... [those nations that God cut off] ...after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?’”

So, everything that comes out of Babylon, Egypt, and these false religions—that are against Christ and part of an antichrist system—start blending these things with Christianity. That’s why when you look at all the different doctrines, especially the Catholic Church, which has so many of these pagan doctrines mixed in with it that it is almost unbelievable that people call it ‘Christian.’ But that shows how they have hijacked the name of Jesus Christ and actually brought in another Jesus

and how that affected the early New Testament Church.

Verse 31: “You shall not do so to the LORD your God...” *God doesn’t want us to go to other religions to bring in aspects to their way of thinking and their way of worship, to worship God. **He has defined all of it, and set it down in His Word!***

“...for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods...” (v 31).

How utterly deceived, and in darkness, are people when they come to the point in their lives that they willingly dedicate their children to be burned in the fire to the gods. Think about that! Think about what kind of mental process that Satan has to lead them into to come to that conclusion, that they willingly take it up.

One of the idols of Molech was that he had outstretched arms; it was a giant, big bronze idol and it always had a fire burning in his belly. He had outstretched arms where the people would come and give the child to the priest, and the priest would put it on the arms of the idol and the arms would raise up and roll the child into the burning belly of the god! They thought that this was pleasing to the god, somehow this would bring them blessings.

“...even their sons and their daughters they have **burned in the fire to their gods**” (v 31).

It shows how extreme these things can be. Today, they don’t do that, but as we pointed, ***abortion is really the same exact thing!***

Verse 32: “Whatever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it.”

We also know that the only One Who can make any changes to anything is God ***Who gave the commandments of God!***

The nature of God: In the Bible we find, and it’s very unusual because no other religion has two gods; all the rest of them have a trinity or more.

{Note booklets: *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalm* and *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*, which defines the oneness of God. Those are very important to read, know and understand. But in the Old and New Testaments it is revealed that there are two in what the Hebrew word for God is ‘Elohim.’

Deuteronomy 6:4: “Hear, O Israel. Our one God [Elohim] is *the LORD, the LORD.*” *That agrees with Psa. 110.* ‘Elohim’ is a plural word meaning more than one.

The Jews have gone to great lengths to try and negate the fact that there are two of Elohim by

taking most of the places in the Old Testament^[transcriber's correction] where YHVH is and they substitute it for *Adoni*. So, people don't know that there is more than one. Even the Jews changed the nature of God from two to one.

{note book: *Messianic Christology* by Arnold Fruchtenbaum} He is a converted Jew and he goes through and shows all the way through the Old Testament that there are two of Elohim. In Psa. 110 it displays both of Them:

Psalm 110:1: "The LORD said unto **my Lord**..." David is writing this. Who was David's Lord? *The Lord God who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt!* So then, who is the LORD Who said to David's Lord, which verifies that there are two Lords in the Old Testament.

"**The LORD said**...'Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool'"—referring direction to Jesus Christ.' (tie in with 1-Cor. 15:24).

Let's see how Jesus asked a question of the scribes and Pharisees, who by that time were believing in just the one God.

- if you believe in **just one** God, then you reject Jesus as God.
- if you believe in **three in one** (a trinity) then you exalt the Holy Spirit to being a person and a god

When nowhere in the Old or New Testament does it show it. *Those are the key signs!*

Matthew 22:41: "While the Pharisees were assembled together, Jesus questioned them, saying, 'What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose Son is He?' They said to Him, 'The Son of David.' He said to them, 'How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'"? Therefore, **if David calls Him Lord, how is He his Son?**' And no one was able to answer Him a word, neither dared anyone from that day to question Him anymore" (vs 41-46).

Then they would have to admit Who and what Jesus was! We're going to see what the Bible says. It's important, the nature of God is the key thing.

We've seen before in a subversion of a Church of God that *the first thing they did* was change the Bible that they used for church services and preaching, from the *King James* to the *NIV*! The *NIV* has so many things missing in it, that it is a terrible, terrible translation, though it is more easily readable in English.

This is the key in unlocking and

understanding the deception of pagan 'Christianity.'

1-Timothy 3:16: "And undeniably, great is the mystery of Godliness... [this is referring to Jesus Christ Himself] ...God was manifested in *the flesh*..."

How was He manifested in the flesh? That becomes an important thing, ***because the Gnostics say that*** the spirit of the One called Christ possessed the body of a man called Jesus, and that's why Jesus didn't sin. When He died it was just the physical body that died. He was not God truly manifested in the flesh. What kind of flesh?

1-John 4—here was a problem that they had when the apostles were still alive and writing, and so forth. They had the infiltration of the gnostic Jesus.

1-John 4:1: "Beloved, **do not believe every spirit**..." These beliefs come:

- by inspiration of Satan and his deception
- by inspiration of demons, who palm themselves off as righteous angels

"...**but test the spirits**..." (v 1).

- How do you test them? *We're doing it right now! What is said and how you compare that with the Word of God!*
- What had God taught?
- How has God taught it?

"...whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (v 1). *Jesus also said that there would be many false prophets and false christs!*

This also tells us that whenever there are false spirits, there are false prophets preaching false doctrines! That's how all this paganism entered into what is known as the 'Christian' church: Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox.

All the doctrines that I have innumeralated here, that point out the difference, are the main basic doctrines of pagan 'Christianity' today. There are some that don't believe all of them; there are some that believe more of them, so there are varying degrees of belief and confusion among them.

Verse 2: "By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the flesh* is from God." *That means that He was God manifested in the flesh!*

As we've seen before, He took on the human form in exactly the same way that we have.

Verse 3: "And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in

the world.” **What kind of flesh did Jesus come in?**

- He didn’t come in a different kind of flesh
- He didn’t come with a different kind of human nature
- yes, He was begotten of His Father
- yes, He had the Holy Spirit from begettal

What kind of flesh did He have? This is the key underlying thing in understanding how to identify the errors of *pagan* ‘Christianity.’

Romans 8:3: “For what *was* impossible for the Law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh... [because human beings sin] ...God having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

This is telling us that one of the key things to understand about the nature of Jesus Christ is that:

1. He was God before He became human
2. He took on the same fleshly existence that we do

“...in *the* likeness of sinful flesh...” means that *He was subject to sin if He chose to sin!* Otherwise, how could He be tempted?

Let’s learn a very important thing that helps us understand and separate between *pagan* ‘Christianity,’ a *pagan* false christ with long hair, and all of the gnostic occult beliefs that have gotten into ‘Christianity.’ Really, when we analyze why all of these things, like in the Gnosticism that has come out, coming to the surface now? *I think so that we can have a clear definition and understanding of where these false beliefs came from, and that we can identify them!*

- they’re not of God
- they’re not of the Bible
- they’re not of the things that Jesus taught

That’s important for us in the days that we are living in!

Hebrews 2:14: “Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner... [in exactly the same way] ...He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil.”

- Was Jesus subject to death? *Yes, He died!*
- Was Jesus subject to sin? *Yes, He was!*

The first thing that came in one of the big Churches of God, years ago in the 1990s, was that it was impossible for Jesus to sin. If it’s impossible for something to happen to you, why would you have to resist a temptation to do it. Heb. 4:14 would be an impossible verse if it were impossible for Jesus to

sin. It is improbable that He would sin, but it was possible that He could sin if He would have chosen to do so.

Hebrews 4:14: “Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a High Priest *Who* cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things **according to the likeness of our own temptations; yet, He was without sin**” (vs 14-15).

Look at it this way: Some of the modern things that they’re developing now, they’re making weapons that are impervious to destruction. How they’re doing it is very ingenious, especially for tanks. I don’t know what kind of electronic generator that they have in the tank, but they have it now where they can put an electronic magnetic shield around the tank. Any missiles coming in will make them bounce off, or explode before they hit the tank.

So, they can drive along and it really doesn’t matter what you shoot at us, because we have this electronic generator on and this puts a magnetic shield around us, and nothing can touch us.

- If it was impossible for Christ to sin, how could He ever be tempted?
- If He didn’t have human nature like we do, how could He be subject to sin?
- Yet, be without sin?

This is all apart of the nature of God, which is very important. The whole aspect of every one of these things with *pagan* ‘Christianity’ is that you change the nature of God and you make them break the first commandment and what happens? *Just like dominoes, you break all of them!* That’s why the nature of God is the key important thing to understand!

Along with the nature of God is that the Gnostics and pagans believe that Mary was born without sin. So, that gets into the mother/goddess type thing. That she had no sin in her human nature. Well, if Jesus had sin in his human nature—came in the likeness of sinful flesh—then she had to because He received His human nature from his mother Mary.

Then it took 1800 years for the Catholics to agree that she was bodily assumed into heaven. Sometimes it takes a while for a lie to stick! It took 1800 years to make it stick!

At the heart and core of gnostic teaching is that the Lord God of the Old Testament is the Father and is way up in heaven and that’s where everyone originates as a speck of spirit or light and then comes

down into a human body and the whole process of conversion is coming to knowledge and being enlightened and all of the different aspects.

I think in the book *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* I cover the eastern spiritualism by Deepak Chopra. That really shows the whole Gnostic view of it. But part of it is that it wasn't God Who created the earth, it was a lesser god or demiurge, and He was essentially evil and was the one who brought darkness to the earth. *When we read Col. 1 we see that Paul is counteracting that very teaching:*

Remember where we started, that 'everything that He made was very good.'

Colossians 1:16: "Because by Him were all things created... [that's Christ] ...the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist" (vs 16-17).

So, He's not a lower, lesser God! If you change the nature of the Father, change the nature of Christ, you've changed the nature of God and then you add in a goddess figure, or you add in the Holy Spirit, and you've completely changed the nature of God and you're worshipping the wrong god.

Verse 18: "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church; Who is *the* Beginning, *the* Firstborn from among the dead..."—*meaning that He rose from the dead, not that His possessed physical body and spirit went back to God.*

"...so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence" (v 18).

Let's see something else that refutes the demiurge theory of the Gnostics, which is that these various demiurges—lesser gods—had varying degrees of darkness. With these varying degrees of darkness there had to be spirits who would bring enlightenment.

This is why John wrote what he has in 1-John, and let's see how very important that he handles this in, and again showing the nature of God and the nature of Christ.

1-John 1:1: "That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of Life; (and the life was manifested... [we saw that it was the flesh] ...and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us)" (vs 1-2).

This tells us the same thing in a *summarized*

way that there were two Jehovahs—LORD (the Father)/Lord—one was manifested in the flesh Who became Jesus Christ.

Verse 3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ." *Notice that there is no goddess and no Holy Spirit!*

Verse 4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light... [the one that was manifested in the flesh and created all things] ...and there is no darkness at all in Him" (vs 4-5).

So, John is writing fighting this Gnosticism about a false Jesus and the false spirit that comes with it. Then John brings out the opposite:

Verse 6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him..."—*which they do!* 'We have knowledge, we have been enlightened and we know the truth about Jesus.' ***But it's not like the Bible says!***

"...but we are walking in the darkness..." (v 6). What does it mean to walk in darkness?

- you're not walking according to the Word of God
- you're not walking according to the commandments of God
- you're not walking according to the instructions of Jesus Christ

"...we are lying to ourselves..." (v 6). *They are deceiving themselves*, and who is there helping them to deceive themselves? *None other than Satan the devil who is deceiving the whole world!*

"...and we are not practicing the Truth" (v 6). What is Truth?

- God's Laws are Truth
- His commandments are Truth
- His Word is Truth
- Jesus Christ is Truth manifested in the flesh
- He is the Way, the Truth and the Life

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin."

It is faith in the blood of Jesus Christ and the blood of His sacrifice that cleanses us from sin! You don't need special works that you need to do to conjure up different aspects of asceticism or

depravation or in some cases, of beating and slashing your back like you saw in *The DiVinci Code*. There was a Franciscan monk applying the sign of torturing the self. They call it ‘suffering with Jesus’; if Jesus suffered, you have to suffering in the same way and you inflict it upon yourself.

In *The DiVinci Code* we saw two ways of doing it: he had on a chain that had many, many sharp points that would go into the flesh and cause slight bleeding and pain. That if he did this he was more righteous. *That’s a gnostic teaching!*

The Bible teaches that you repent! You accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the blood of His sacrifice cleanses you from all sin. Not your own blood that you bleed in suffering.

Then he had one of these whips that he would whip his back and break open his back, and this was to somehow make him more righteous before God. *That’s what John is combating here!*

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin...”—*we don’t have a sinful nature!* Just like in Christianity today, Gnostics have various and wide, diverse beliefs. One of them is that we’re really not sinful, and all we need is knowledge to change and we’ll do better.

Think about the modern, humanist, secular point of view. Isn’t that exactly, identically the same. If we educate people and we teach them to be good, because we’re basically good by nature, not basically sinful by nature, *but it never works! Look at the world, they haven’t gotten rid of any sin!* As a matter of fact, the more that they teach that, the more sin, because it’s wrong!

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.” *Here’s how to handle sin:*

Verse 7: “...the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.”

Verse 9: “If we confess our own sins...” To whom? *Not to a priest, who cannot forgive sin! Only God can!* That is another gnostic, pagan belief that you run to the priest and you confess yours sins and he says that your sins are forgiven. However, you have to do some works: as the Catholics do, so many ‘hail Marys’ and ‘our fathers’ and genuflex, etc. Or the beating of yourself with lashes so that you are suffering with Christ.

Verse 9: “If we confess our own sins...” *There’s one thing that’s important:* When you go to God alone on your knees, you can be totally honest. If you go to a man, you never tell everything, and you never really tell it how it is. *But if you go before God Who knows your heart, and confess your sins:*

“...He is faithful and righteous to forgive

us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (v 9).

So, when you’re dealing with the nature of God, the true nature of God tells how we can have our sins forgiven and how to have a relationship with God.

The false ones have different ones have different ways of doing it and it doesn’t forgive sin.

Verse 10: “If we say that we have not sinned... [we’re good people] ...we make Him a liar... [because He said that *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*] ...and His Word is not in us.”

So, you have the two aspects of it. You go all the way from ‘we are good people’ to *you are sinners and you get rid of sin by doing works!*

The Buddhists have different ways of doing it. Islam has an extreme way of doing it. If you become a human bomb and blow up yourself, then you will immediately go to heaven—your immortal soul—and you will be rewarded in heaven with 72 virgins.

All of that is a different nature of God, different nature of human nature, and they cannot understand the salvation that is in the Bible. It’s really quite something how this goes all the way back to the way of Cain! *This is Satan’s recycling service!*

Let’s see what else that this helps us to do, because there is a way to understand the Truth.

1-John 4:3: “And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world.... [and greatly magnified now] ...You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world” (vs 3-4).

In other words, *when you are converted*—repent, baptized and have the Spirit of God—*and are growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and the knowledge of God’s Word, God in you through the power of God’s Spirit is greater than all the forces of evil in the world!* And with all of the difficulties that come along!

Verse 5: “They are of the world...”

- Who is the god of this world? *Satan the devil!*
- Who are worshipping? *Satan the devil!*

They are worshipping a false Christ!

“...because of this, they speak of the world...” (v 5). *Everything they do is focused around*—even though there are some things that

appear spiritual—and following the way of the world!

“...**and the world listens to them**” (v 5). *That’s why all of these false prophets have so many followers!* They speak of the world, they appeal to carnal human nature: ‘Oh, you’re not sinful, you just need to learn how to do good.’ *Especially for those who have been in these monasteries and have been forbidden to marry, or even to look upon a woman!* There’s one monastery on Mt. Athos that the only female thing that they ever allowed there are chickens so they can have eggs. That’s to take away all the temptation of the flesh!

Well, God didn’t create sexuality to be castrated and not used! God said, ‘Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband.’ You need to have it such that there’s not all kinds of rampant divorce as we see today. Now, there are causes of divorce that the Bible talks about. We won’t get into that, because that will be an aside of what we are talking about.

“...**and the world listens to them**” (v 5). That’s why you can have like Robert Schuler and his son at the Crystal Cathedral, which is right along the freeway. One of these days that whole thing is going to tinkle down with an earthquake, and all the crystal is going to be destroyed! That’s why so many people follow the pope; *he is the leader of the greatest pagan, occult, Gnostic ‘Christianity’ in the world!* People who get offended at that:

- need to prove what is true
- need to prove what is right
- need to prove what is wrong

Verse 6: “We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us...” What happens? *They become offended!*

“...By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception” (v 6). *We know what is right and we know what is wrong!* God expects us to understand that!

Col. 2 was written to those who are getting caught up in philosophy, which is Gnosticism and occultism. Let’s see the warning that Paul gives. We’re not going to go through a detailed reading of this: There are several sermons available on Col. 2 at truthofGod.org

Here’s the warning that Paul gives after saying that you are in Christ, the knowledge of Christ and everything:

Colossians 2:6: “Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord... [that is the *true* Christ, the true understanding of His nature and the

nature of the Father] ... be walking in Him; being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. **Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit...**” (vs 6-8).

Here is another key that I found when reading the book *Forbidden Faith* about Gnosticism: ***All of the religions of this world are based on philosophy coming out of Babylon and Greece!*** You have Aristotle, Socrates and Pythagoras, Aristotle and Pythagoras both went to Babylon to learn of their philosophies. The philosophy in Greek is just a little modification of the Babylonian philosophy.

What is the guiding thing of the pagan Gnostic religions today? *Aristotle, Plato through St. Thomas Aquinas and Augustine.* Protestantism is based on a revival of Augustine.

As I’ve said in the past, Protestants are only reformed Catholics. The first key to understand is that the Gnostics believe that the eighth day is the day of worship and that is Sunday.

“...**takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit...** [it’s not going to result in anything true or lasting or spiritual with God] ...**according to the traditions of men...**” (v 8).

What happens when you ask a question about religious practices? *They say, ‘This is a tradition!’* people say, ‘Oh!’ *They don’t ask where it came from or originate!*

“...**according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ.** For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power” (vs 8-10).

Here is what philosophy leads you to do, v 18: “Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize by doing his will **in self-abasement...**” *We see that in every religion!* Not humility and repenting to God, but afflicting the self!

“...**and the worship of angels...**” (v 18)—*the worship of fallen angels!* ‘Foolishology,’ because that’s exactly what it gets into! In this book *Forbidden Faith* by Smalley, he talks an awful lot about philosophy, and it goes back to these basic philosophers.

“...intruding into things that he has not seen... [gaining the inner power, drawing on the power of the universe, tuning into the better self] ...vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind” (v 18). **Isn’t that what happens?**

- all vain

- all haughty
 - all self-centered
- rather than having the*
- true humility of God
 - true love of God
 - true faith of God

Verse 19: “And not holding fast to the Head, from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God. Therefore, if you have died together *with Christ*... [through baptism] ...from the elements of the world, why are you subjecting yourselves **to the decrees of men**... [traditions; do this, do that, do the other thing] ...**as if you were living in the world?** *They say, ‘You may not handle! You may not taste! You may not touch!’* The use of all such things leads to corruption, **according to the commandments and doctrines of men**, which indeed have an outward appearance of wisdom in voluntary worship of *angels*, and self-abasement, and unsparing treatment of *the body*, not in any respect to the satisfying of *the needs* of the flesh” (vs 19-23).

Whenever someone says, ‘I’m a minister of Christ and you don’t have to read the Old Testament, and Christ did away with the Law’ **he’s not of God! He’s preaching a false Jesus!**

Let’s see how Paul had to fight this, because when you change the nature of God and you change the nature of Christ, you bring in another Jesus! When we understand that during the time of the New Testament Church, there were a lot of Jews who were Gnostics. They basically followed the teachings of Philo of Alexander. If you think that *Josephus* is a hard read, Philo is worse, because he was truly Hellenistic, believing in the philosophies of the Greeks that came from Babylon intermingling the philosophies of Egypt, which came from Babylon. He believed in a trinity, and a false version of Logos. He didn’t know about Christ, though he lived during the time when Christ was in His ministry. I think he died in 37_{A.D.}

2-Corinthians 11:4—this goes right with the warning against philosophies: “For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus... [changing the nature of God] ...whom we did not preach...”

- Didn’t Paul preach that Jesus was God manifested in the flesh?
- Didn’t Paul preach and write that Jesus could have sinned?
- Didn’t Paul preach and write that Jesus was tempted like we are?

Yes!

“...or you receive a different spirit...”

[because a different spirit comes with *false prophets*] ...which you did not receive, or a different gospel...” (v 4). *The Gospel is the knowledge of salvation through Jesus Christ, so this is a **different** gospel!*

“...which you did not accept, you put up with it as *something* good” (v 4). So, just like many people do today when there is a false Jesus taught and a false doctrine taught, they say, ‘Oh, isn’t that interesting?’ And they get led down a garden path like they have a ring in their nose.

Then Paul boasts a little bit because they were boasting.

Verse 12: “But what I am doing, I will do, so that I may cut off *any* occasion from those who are desiring an occasion; so that in the things they boast of, they also may be found even as we *are*.”

If they are boasting they ought to be boasting in the true Jesus.

Verse 13: “For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.” *That’s exactly what we have in the pagan ‘Christianity’ going back however far you want to go back.*

Verse 14: “And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”

I read a release put out by the Vatican and how that Pope Benedict XVI gave out an encyclical quoting using these Scriptures and saying that there is coming an antichrist who is going to teach Judaism. What is that against? *That’s against Christians who keep the commandments of God that they label as Judaism!*

Verse 16: “Again I say, no one should consider me a fool; but if otherwise, receive me even as a fool, that I also may boast a little. What I am *now* saying, I do not speak according to *the* Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. Since many boast according to *the* flesh, I also will boast” (vs 16-18).

Especially if some of them were Jews, they would be boasting, saying, ‘I heard Jesus, I know Jesus, and He didn’t say that or this other thing.’

Verse 19: “For since you are *so* intelligent, you gladly bear with fools.... [Isn’t that what happens?] ...For you bear *it* if anyone brings you into bondage, if anyone devours *you*, if anyone takes *from you*, if anyone exalts himself, if anyone beats you on the face. I speak as though we were under reproach for being weak; but in whatever way anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I also am bold. Are they Hebrews?... [This came from Hellenistic Judaism] ...So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they *the* seed of Abraham? So am I”

(vs 19-22).

He didn't ask if they were Greeks or Romans, he didn't ask if they were Egyptians. So, you can see the clever counterfeit runs parallel with the truth, and Paul had to fight it.

Let's look at some Scriptures that define how you find the true Church of God. There are many Churches of God out there in the world today, and many of them have a lot of the correct and right doctrines. There are some with different doctrines and beliefs. Let's see how in the book of Revelation it defines true Christians with whom Satan is greatly angry and desires to destroy.

Revelation 12:17: Then the dragon was furious with the woman... [the Church] ...and went to make war with the rest of her seed..." *Notice that it identifies them and it tells you:*

- true Christians
- true Churches of God

[#1]"...who keep the commandments of God..." (v 17).

You can go through all the sermons that we've done about the commandments of God

[#2]"...and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v 17). What is the testimony? *Simply stated is the teachings as found in the Gospels!*

So, they keep the commandments of God and have all the teachings of Jesus Christ, and in turn keep the commandments of God. That means that Jesus Christ was the Lord God of the Old Testament before He was manifested in the flesh.

The four Gospels in the canonized New Testament, *not the Gnostic gospel that has come about!*

Rev. 14:12 defines Christians individually, and a Church of God in particularly.

Revelation 14:12: "Here is *the* patience of the saints; here *are* **the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.**"

This is a very important distinction because *it takes faith to keep the commandments of God!* Anyone can say that the commandments are done away. What faith have they exercised? *None!* God says to remember the Sabbath and keep it Holy. It takes faith to do it, because you need to believe God. *So, the faith of Jesus also expands out into the ones who have the Spirit of God!*

Let's see some other defining things concerning a true Christian and the true Churches of God. Here's what their whole lives are going to be centered around. They live in the world, but are not

of the world. They know the Truth, the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error.

Mark 12:28: "And one of the scribes who had come up *to Him* [Jesus], after hearing them reasoning together *and* perceiving that He answered them well, asked Him, 'Which is *the* first commandment of all?' Then Jesus answered him, '*The* first of all the commandments *is*, "Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the* Lord, *the* Lord. And **you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.**" This *is the* first commandment'" (vs 28-30).

This defines those who love God. If you love God this way this also means that you are going to keep the first four commandments, because they are based on loving God.

Verse 31: "And *the* second *is* like this: .You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."

He also says, 'On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 22). Loving your neighbor are the last six commandments. *Those are the identifying signs!*

Another sign; Matthew 4:4: "But He answered *and* said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God."'"

Remember that Christ was God manifested in the flesh. So, that takes care of the testimony of Jesus, too.

Here is how true Christians worship God. They are not going to be all caught up in huge, big cathedrals, temples, idols, statues, monuments, obelisks, crosses, any of that.

They are going to worship God and His commandments in Spirit and in Truth! If you believe any of the pagan, occult, gnostic lies *in your form of Christianity, you are not worshipping God in Truth!* When you intermix lies with Truth you have a lie.

John 4:19: "The woman said to Him [Jesus], 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. **You do not know what you worship...**" (vs 19-22).

That's what it is with the pagans, because they are in Samaria. They had Simon Magus at that time and they worshipped him just like they worship the pope today. Simon was a sorcerer, a Gnostic leader.

“...We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.... [that’s referring to that it’s coming through Him: Jesus Christ] ...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers... [that means there are false worshippers] ...**shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth...**” (vs 22-23).

You can take “...in Spirit and in Truth...” and expand that out many, many different ways. All the keeping of the commandments in the Spirit (Matt. 5-7). In Truth:

The Word of God with a sincere heart and mind converted with the love of God, Truth of God and the Spirit of God.

“...for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God *is* spirit, and those who worship Him **must worship in Spirit and in Truth**” (vs 23-24)—*it is obligatory!*

Those are the keys to separate out true Christianity from the pagan, occult, gnostic ‘Christianity’ that permeates this world today!

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Corinthians 4:1-4
- 2) Revelation 17:1-6
- 3) Genesis 1:31
- 4) Genesis 2:18
- 5) Exodus 20:1-3
- 6) Deuteronomy 12:28, 30-32
- 7) Deuteronomy 6:4
- 8) Psalm 110:1
- 9) Matthew 22:41-46
- 10) 1 Timothy 3:16
- 11) 1 John 4:1-3
- 12) Romans 8:3
- 13) Hebrews 2:14
- 14) Hebrews 4:14-15
- 15) Colossians 1:16-18
- 16) 1 John 1:1-8, 7, 9-10
- 17) 1 John 4:3-6
- 18) Colossians 2:6-10, 18-23
- 19) 2 Corinthians 11:4, 12-14, 16-22
- 20) Revelation 12:17
- 21) Revelation 14:12
- 22) Mark 12:28-31
- 23) Matthew 4:4
- 24) John 4:19-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 14; 15:24
- Matthew 5-7

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The DiVinci Code* by Dan Brown
- *Forbidden Faith, the Gnostic Legacy from the Gospels to the DiVinci Code* by Richard Smaley
- *Occult Holidays or God’s Holy Days—Which?* by Fred R. Coulter {truthofGod.org}
- *Messianic Christology* by Arnold Fruchtenbaum

Booklets {truthofGod.org}:

- *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalm* by Carl Franklin
- *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch* by Carl Franklin

Sermons: Colossians 2 (several available at truthofGod.org)

FRC:bo
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