

# Another Christ—Another Gospel

What charismatic leaders are teaching

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It is my desire that the reader of these lines be delivered from an error of eternal proportions. I am aware that some will misunderstand my motives and will be offended at what I say. My motivation is a heart of love—love for truth and love for the souls that are sadly deceived. If I remain silent, I become an accomplice to the crime.

*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto ANOTHER GOSPEL: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-7).*

Today teachers bearing the name “Christian” abound on every hand. But this is not necessarily a cause for rejoicing. Much of the New Testament was written to warn us of false teachings and false teachers. No student of the Bible should be surprised to learn that counterfeits to the genuine gospel continue to this day. Satan will name the Name of Christ if it helps to accomplish his evil purpose. He used (or rather abused) Scripture to tempt even Christ! This angel of darkness continues to transform himself into an angel of light (2Cor. 11:14)

Our community is home to one of the worst delusions imaginable. One of our local “prophets” has perpetuated a false gospel of a false Christ and has taught it to multitudes around the world. It is a clever scheme which appeals to many who are ignorant of the truth. It ultimately denies the most foundational truths of the Bible, while it exalts the Devil who dreamed it up.

## The Counterfeit Gospel

In the modern scheme, God is in trouble. He created the world and then turned it over to Adam. Adam was an incarnation of God, a little God ruling over the earth. One charismatic leader has said, “Just as dogs have puppies and cats have kittens, so God has little gods.”<sup>1</sup> But to God’s surprise, Satan came and tempted mankind to sin. In sinning, Adam handed the authority of the earth over to Satan. This teaching is called “man’s treason”. Now Satan is God in the earth. Furthermore, Adam fell from being an incarnation of God to being an incarnation of Satan. Instead of being a little God, every person is now a little Devil. In other words, everyone is demon-possessed.

God owed every person a chance to get out of this mess. Since Satan was their rightful owner, God had to bargain with him. In the contract, God paid a price to Satan for the redemption of all men. The price God paid was the deaths of Jesus Christ...that’s right, deaths, plural! Today we are taught that Christ had to die twice: once in the body and once in the spirit. In fact, the physical death of the cross was not really the big one; the spiritual death later on in hell was the crucial event. One prominent televangelist has gone so far as to say, “When His blood poured out it did not atone.”<sup>2</sup>

In order to save men, Christ had to identify Himself with them in every way. Since we are all little demoniacs, possessed by a satanic spirit, Christ likewise had to become a demoniac. We are being told today that, when He died, Christ ceased to be the incarnation of God and became the incarnation of Satan. According to one well-known teacher, “Jesus made Himself obedient to the Lordship of Satan at the cross.”<sup>3</sup> One Tulsa pastor teaches that, in His death, Christ took sin into His soul, lost the life

and nature of God, then received it once again in the resurrection; our iniquities penetrated His very character.<sup>4</sup> “He didn’t just carry iniquity...iniquity dropped into Him.”<sup>5</sup> This sounds alarmingly similar to the tragic teaching of Edward Irving, known as the forerunner of the charismatic movement, who in the late 1820’s taught “the sinful substance of Christ”.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, in His second death, Christ went to hell, the place of the demons, for that was His rightful place. There, He suffered much more than what He suffered on the cross. At some point, while in hell, a great transformation occurred: His spirit was born again. He returned to being God once again. Some teachers even say that Christ was justified while in hell—saved just like any sinner. After all, if He identified with us in every way, He had to be a sinner too! He had to offer a sacrifice for Himself as well as for others. “He went through the new birth just like you and I go through the new birth.”<sup>7</sup> This teaching is called the doctrine of “Christ’s identification”.

Because Christ died two deaths, He also had to rise again twice: once in spirit down in hell, and once in body from the grave. But the victorious resurrection from the grave, which is so central to New Testament preaching, is nowadays considered of only secondary significance, since the physical death itself was only secondary.

Since Christ died these two deaths for all men, yet all men are not saved, something else must be added to Christ’s deaths to make them work. Christ has done for us all He can do; the rest is up to us now. We must contribute our faith. Christ Himself had faith that He would overcome, and we too will overcome if we have as much faith as He had. If we can stir up enough faith, we will be transformed from being a Devil into being a God, returning to what Adam supposedly was in the first place.

My friend, I am not misrepresenting the false gospel which victimizes many today. Our local “prophet” has stated, “The believer is as much an incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth”.<sup>8</sup> He even goes so far as to say that salvation is “God [sic] imparting His very nature, substance, and being to our human spirits.”<sup>9</sup> This deification of man sounds more like Eastern mysticism or Mormonism than like the pure Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, one author has stated, “For so long we have said,... ‘Why don’t the Mormons change?’ Perhaps we should be the ones to change.”<sup>10</sup>

## What’s Wrong with All This?

There is only one God. He is the God whose nature and attributes are revealed in Holy Scripture. Contrary to the contemporary gospel, this God is totally sovereign. He truly rules over all. He never gave His control of all things over to man nor to Satan. He has decreed all that comes to pass, and is never in trouble, never frustrated, never confused. He never has to have a back-up plan in case of failure. He is all-wise and all-powerful. He is God.

Satan never had rightful possession of anything. He is a created being, an angel who rebelled. By virtue of being Creator, God is owner of everything. *The earth is the LORD’s, and the fullness thereof* (Ps. 24:1). He has never owed anything to Satan, and never shall. God is no one’s debtor. (See Rom. 11: 35-36.)

God did not give man a divine nature, nor an angelic (nor demonic) nature, but a human nature. Originally, Adam was neither an incarnation of God nor of the Devil. He was simply man. Yes, he was created in the image of God, but he was not God. When Adam sinned, he did not become a devil. He became a sinful man.

When He came to earth from heavenly glory, the nature which Christ assumed was an unfallen human nature, not an angelic nor demonic nature. Scripture expressly tells us, *Verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham* (Heb. 2:16). At no point in His life or death did this human nature change into a demonic nature. According to the new gospel, the one dying on the cross of Calvary is a Devil-man, not a God-man. In other words, Satan died for your sins!

Could any teaching be more perverted and pernicious?

The price for the redemption of sinners was not paid to Satan. Perish such a blasphemous thought! The price was paid by God the Son to God the Father. It was between the Persons of the Eternal Trinity that the transaction was accomplished. We read in Ephesians 5:2, *Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice TO GOD.* [Note that the sacrifice was not “to Satan” but “to God”.] Paul writes to Timothy, *For there is one God, and ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, the man Christ Jesus* (1Tim. 2:5).

Christ was never a sinner Himself. Hebrews 4:15 makes this plain: *He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* Again, *He* [that is, God the Father] *hath made Him, who knew no sin* [that is, God the Son], *to be sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him* (2Cor. 5: 21). In redemption, we do not become little Gods, and God the Son did not become a sinner. The true doctrine is not the so-called “identification” but rather imputation: my sin credited to His account, His righteousness credited to my account. There is a substitution of Christ in my place as my Surety who assumes my debt, but not a transformation of Christ into a demon-possessed man. To be consistent, the bizarre teaching of “identification” would require Christ to suffer forever and never be raised from the dead!

Christ died one death, not two. And what a death it was—even *the death of the cross* (Php. 2:8)! He did suffer both in body and in soul, but it all took place on the cross. Remember He said, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* (Mat. 27:46). There is absolutely no Scripture which teaches that our Lord endured any suffering beyond that of the cross. The few texts which the false prophets produce as proof of their claim actually prove their lack of scholarship. By their method of interpretation, we might as easily prove that black is white or that chalk is cheese! We read in Luke 23:43, 45 that the Lord entered into joy immediately after the cross: *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, TODAY shalt thou be with me in paradise...And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* The saying, *It is finished* (John 19:30), and the rending of the veil in the temple prove that the work of atonement was done then and there. He suffered no more. He did not say, “It is half-finished”! Furthermore, the book of Hebrews repeatedly states that Christ died once, not twice nor thrice (Heb. 9:26-28; 10:10-14).

There are a host of texts which show conclusively that Christ’s death on the cross, not some subsequent death in hell, satisfied the righteous demands of God. Here are a few:

*And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body BY THE CROSS, having slain the enmity thereby* (Eph. 2:16).

*And, having made peace THROUGH THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself* (Col. 1:20).

*Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people WITH HIS OWN BLOOD, SUFFERED WITHOUT THE GATE* (Heb. 13:12).

*Who His own self bare our sins IN HIS OWN BODY ON THE TREE, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed* (1 Pet. 2: 24).

Another whole family of texts proves that the blood atonement was the very climax of Christ’s redemptive obedience. To mention just a few:

*...feed the church of God, which he hath PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD (Acts 20:28).*

*Much more then, being now JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, we shall be saved from wrath through Him (Rom. 5:9).*

*In whom we have REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7).*

*But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD of Christ (Eph. 2:13).*

*But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST HIS SON CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN (1 John 1:7). [Note that it is not just the sins of the body which His blood cleanses, as is commonly claimed.]*

I cannot imagine any doctrine more anti-Christian than to say Christ's blood did not atone. But sadly enough, this is precisely what many blind followers are hearing from their blind guides. This subtle shift of emphasis from the cross to hell as the focal point of redemption is grotesque, as well as unbiblical.

Christ was never born again nor justified as they teach. In Scripture, He is called the firstborn in His human nature, by virtue of His bodily resurrection, not because He was regenerated like a sinner. (See Col. 2:18, etc.) He was justified (1Tim. 3:16) only in the sense that He was declared to be what He eternally was: righteous. He never had need at any point to be made or constituted righteous. That is, His true nature was declared, but He had no sin for which to be pardoned.

Finally, nowhere does the Bible teach that we must whip ourselves up into a frenzy called "faith" and then trust in that faith. Yet our local "prophet" has written a booklet entitled "Having Faith in Your Faith".<sup>11</sup> But Scripture everywhere teaches that Christ is the object of faith, as well as its author. Friend, there is an eternity of difference between trusting Christ and trusting your trust.

## **The True Gospel**

The true good news is that God in pure mercy and grace, out of the goodness of His heart and out of no obligation to man, has freely taken upon Himself the redemption of a chosen number of unworthy sinners from Adam's race. This redemption He has infallibly accomplished. He Himself secured for His elect a perfection which they themselves could never produce. That perfection was wrought by Christ in His incarnation, life, death and resurrection. That which God's justice demands, His grace provides. In Christ, sinners are acceptable to God.

Yes, Christ did suffer hell for those He redeemed: it was while He was on the cross, as His blood flowed down. A real transaction occurred there: all His sheep were ransomed. The price for His people was tendered to the Father, and the Father was satisfied with the payment. Redemption was accomplished. Therefore, salvation is sure. Nothing is left up to chance.

Now, all who trust in Christ, turning from their sin and submitting to His authority, are declared righteous before God's tribunal. Yet, even this faith to embrace Christ is a gift from God, according to Ephesians 2:8; it does not originate in man. Even the desire to be saved comes from God. Therefore, salvation is all of grace!

God is not in any trouble! Right now He is accomplishing all His eternal purpose—getting glory and honor to Himself by saving His people from their sins.

## The Greatest Deception

My friend, the differences between the genuine gospel and the counterfeit are momentous. We are not dealing here with a slight aberration of the truth, about which I might remain silent. Rather we are dealing with a diabolical fabrication of lies. The whole nature and character of God is at stake. Consider these two principles:

1. To say that God is indebted to the Devil makes the Devil to be above God.
2. To say that the sinless Son of God became a demoniac and that His blood did not atone for sin, is to deny everything the Scriptures teach about His Person and Work.

Thus, this false system exactly reverses the truth by making Satan to be God, and making God to be Satan! Exalting the Devil...debasing God. What could be more hideous and blasphemous? This elaborate system of deception is neither biblical nor historical. It must be labeled what it is: A FALSE GOSPEL. We are talking about two very different Christs, and there is no true salvation in a false Christ. A false gospel can only give false peace.

God's Holy Word pronounces a curse upon any man or angel who preaches any gospel other than the true one. *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed* (Gal. 1:8-9). We have been warned that false prophets would come with false teachings: *...there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction* (2 Pet. 2:1). My dear reader, will you be destroyed with them? Will you hear the Devil's gospel or God's?

### References:

- <sup>1</sup> Earl Paulk, *Satan Unmasked* (Atlanta: K Dimension Publishers, 1984), p. 96.
- <sup>2</sup> Kenneth Copeland quoted by D.R. McConnell, *A Different Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), p. 118.
- <sup>3</sup> Kenneth Copeland, *Substitution and Identification*, taped message [quoted by Michael Horton, ed., *The Agony of Deceit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1990), p. 274].
- <sup>4</sup> Willie George, *Redeemed From Hell*, taped message EO925.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>6</sup> See Arnold Dallimore, *The Life of Edward Irving* (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1983), pp. 77-82.
- <sup>7</sup> Willie George, *op cit.*
- <sup>8</sup> Kenneth Hagin, *Word of Faith*, December, 1980, p. 14.
- <sup>9</sup> Kenneth Hagin, *Zoe: The God-Kind of Life* (Tulsa: Faith Library Publications, 1997), p. 2. McConnell (see note 2) devotes several pages to proving that Hagin plagiarized this and many other statements from E.W. Kenyon.
- <sup>10</sup> Earl Paulk, *Unity of Faith*, (Decatur, GA: Chapel Hill Harvester Church), p. 4 [quoted by Horton, p. 278].
- <sup>11</sup> Kenneth Hagin, *Having Faith In Your Faith* (Tulsa: Faith Library Publications, 1981).