

Jesus + Modern-Day Substitutes – *Master Class*

"IN CHRIST ALONE"

It is CHRIST and CHRIST ALONE. CHRIST + *NOTHING!*

Colossians 2:6-15 | Revelation 2:1-7

This class stems from a message from the Faith ID series out of the book of Colossians

- Emphasizing that **Christ Jesus** is supreme...the creator of all things...the CENTER of the life of a Christian. He is the image of the invisible God, and is in control, above all and holds all things together
- **It is Christ and _____ ! Christ plus nothing!**
- At this point, Paul had never been to Colossae. It was near Ephesus, where Paul spent 3 years, was probably started this those from Ephesus, namely Ep'aphras (Col 1:7)
- **Like America**, Colossae, and nearby cities Laodicea and Hierapolis, were **rich** and **influential people**, (Laodicea being the largest city, also mentioned in Rev)
- In the book of Colossians, **ch 1** is **doctrine** and **ch 2** is the **danger of _____**
- **Like America**, they had many Christians, but also many **other beliefs, religions** and **mysticism**.
- Just like a newly planted green LAWN, some **WEEDS** had begun to pop up [**false teachings and ADDITIVES**] We call these _____. And if left alone, heresy often thru diff cultures, like weeds, corrupts and destroys. Heresy is False teachings. **Beliefs** or **opinions** that are greatly **at odds or contrary to Christian doctrine and principles**.
- It is whatever teaching or practice that is incompatible with and undermines the Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - Jewish Ceremonialism (vv16-17 – faith and works mixture)
 - Angel Worship (v18)
 - Asceticism (vv20-23) Severe self-discipline and avoidance of all forms of indulgence (religious)
 - Gnosticism v8 (**special mystical knowledge for salvation for a select few**) – Root word is "to know"
 - Philosophy (young people most susceptible to this)
 - ¹claims anything done in the body, even the grossest sin, has no meaning because real life exists in the spirit realm only.
 - ²claims to possess an elevated knowledge, a "higher truth" known only to a certain few, not from the Bible, but acquired on some mystical higher plane of existence
- But our foundation is found in Jesus Christ alone. Paul establishes up front, **JESUS AS THE CENTER (Col 2:2-10a)**
 - "...resulting in a **true knowledge of God's** mystery, that is, **CHRIST HIMSELF**," (Col 2:2c NASB)
 - "I am saying this so **that no one will deceive you** with arguments that sound reasonable." (Col 2:4 CSB)
 - "See to it that no one takes you CAPTIVE through **PHILOSOPHY** and **EMPTY DECEPTION**, according to the TRADITION OF MEN, according to the ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD, rather than according to Christ. For in Him (Christ) all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and **IN HIM (Jesus) YOU HAVE BEEN MADE COMPLETE**...; (Col 2:8-10a)
 - Paul tells us to make sure that "no one takes us CAPTIVE [deceive, kidnaps, seduces, enslaves you]"

- So, we are to:
 - **STUDY** (consume) the **Word** of God [2Tim 3:16-17; 2Tim 2:15]
 - **BE TAUGHT** the truth of the Word of God by appointed **teachers** and **preachers** [Eph 4:11-13]
 - **BE LED** by the **SPIRIT** of God [Gal 5:16-18]

As a **reminder**, Paul tells us:

- That "**All things are lawful**, but **not** all things are **profitable**. All things are lawful, but not all things edify." (1 Cor 10:23)
- "But the Spirit explicitly says that **in later times** some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to **DECEITFUL SPIRITS** and **DOCTRINES OF DEMONS**, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron," (1 Tim 4:1-2)
 - a. So, **behind** every false religion, every false thinking, and every slippery slope that leads to an anti-Christ doctrine or behavior, **is a** _____.

Now, let's talk about 9 MODERN DAY SUBSTITUTES:

- 1) **WOKEISM** – Getting people hyped by claiming its own interpretation of justice, righteousness, sin and truth
 - a) In a nut shell it's a man-made attempt to morally fix issues that only Truth can heal
 - b) Wokeism is about finding your truth not the truth
 - c) It's about finding morality without the standard of Gods compass
 - d) It's about bringing the oppressor to justice even if it means becoming that which you hate
 - e) Wokeism is about seeing everything through the lens of your personal situation and not the lens of God's plan
 - f) Wokeism says: Women are killed on highways that men built,
 - g) 1860-Youth group Called wide awakes sided with Abraham Lincoln to abolish slavery They would travel around to politicians house and blow horns in the middle of the night. Now follow the course...LGBTQ, Me Too movement
 - h) J.K. Rowlands wrote an article and directed it towards people who menstruate. The push back came and said the implication was only women could menstruate and for those who self-identified this was offensive.

2) **CHRISTIANITY IS A WHITE MAN'S RELIGION**

- a) **DRAWINGS** -- The corporate world would call the drawing of a **white, blue-eyed Jesus**, "**unconscious bias.**" Movements would call it, "**lack of representation.**"
 - Children's books, Bible cartoons, old and many current Bible movies
 - An inaccurate picture can be guilty of both
 - The answer lies in **STUDYING** the Word of God for yourself [Moses' 1st wife Zipporah from Midian desert, his 2nd wife was a Cushite / Ethiopian, most scholars believe that Moses was darker in order to pass as an Egyptian, Solomon's Shulammitte bride, Queen of Sheba, Simon of Cyrene (Libya) who helped Jesus carry the cross, the Egyptians were people of color

- b) **Lack of diversity in the mission field**
- c) **Garden of Eden** → Most theologians will say Western Asia (in the Middle East, near Iraq), not Europe!
- d) **Jesus' Birth** → in the Middle East, in Bethlehem of Judea, just south of Jerusalem
- e) **European Colonialism / Slavery** → wrongfully used the Bible to justify it
- f) **Christianity went to Africa before** it went to **Europe** or **European Colonialism**
 - At **Pentecost**, there were Jews and Proselytes from Africa (**Egypt, Libya, Cyrene**) who received the Gospel (Acts 2:10) and took it back with them
 - The **Ethiopian Eunuch** received the Gospel and took it back to Ethiopia (Acts 8)
- g) Christ followers were **first call Christians in western Asia** (at the Church of Antioch)
- h) There are **more non-white Christians than non-white Christians** (300+M Africa; 77M underground China)
- i) Many **early Christian fathers were black** (North Africa) way before European colonialism
 - **Augustine**, Bishop of the African city of Hippo who shaped Christian doctrine for the Western church
 - **Tertullian**: Coined the term Trinity and was an apologist, defending the Christian faith against both pagans and heretics
 - **Origen**: A theologian and developed the Biblical exegesis process
 - Cyprian, Athanasius, Clement, St. Anthony, Pachomius
- j) The real issue that people have who says this is a “white man’s religion” simply do not know the books of the Bible nor the teachings of Jesus Christ
 - To take the Gospel is to **ALL nations** (Mat 28:19)
 - Wasn’t it God who told Samuel **NOT to look at the OUTWARD appearance**, but that **God looks at the heart!** (1Sam 16:7)
 - Paul said, “there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is **Lord OF ALL**, abounding in riches **FOR ALL who call on Him**; for **whoever will call on the Name of the Lord will be saved**.”

3) SAGE BURNING / SMUDGING

4) ANCESTRY – Reverence (another way of spiritual but not Biblical -- connect with your past and ancestors so that your past gives you guidance to your future).

- a) Referred to as “Ancestor Worship” – those who give prayers and offerings, such as money or fruit, to the spirits of dead relatives who lived good and moral lives
 - Like on the **Black Panther** movie or **Thor** or **Shaka Zulu**
 - Its origins are in Chinese, African, Japanese, and Native American **pagan belief systems**
 - Believing that spirits of ancestors can affect the present and future circumstances of the living
- b) Probably the closest Bible story is back-slidden **King Saul**, trying to conjure up the prophet **Samuel** who had died earlier (1Sam 28:11)
- c) That somehow, the **spirits** of our moral relatives act as a **mediator between the living and the Creator**
- d) But the **Word of God** says that
 - there is only **one Mediator** between the living and God—that is Jesus Christ ([John 14:6](#); [1 Tim 2:5–6](#); [Heb 8:6](#); [9:15](#); [12:24](#)).
 - after people die they go to Heaven or Hell, but do not inhabit this physical world ([Luke 16:19–31](#); [2 Cor 5:6](#); [Heb 9:27](#); [Rev 20:11–15](#))
 - those who believe and have put their faith in Jesus Christ, He acts on their behalf [He is our High Priest and sits at the right hand of the Father advocating for us] ([Acts 26:23](#); [Rom 1:2–5](#); [Heb 4:15](#); [1 Pet 1:3–4](#))
- e) We are not to worship anyone/thing else or attempts to inquire or contact the dead ([Exo 22:18](#), [Lev 19:32](#); [20:6](#), [27](#); [Deu 18:10–11](#); [1 Sam 28:3](#); [Jer 27:9–10](#); [Gal 5:19–21](#))