



August 14, 2022

*“A False Christianity – Part 2”*

*SS 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King’s Kids.*

News:

Church **Camp** Aug 22-24

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How well does your god, match “The One True God”? (Exodus 20:3&5).

The **LORD** God is Yahweh Elohim. Lord is Adonai.

Can your image of God be good enough to be Saved, but still so inaccurate that you do more harm than good to the cause of Christ? Would you call that poor theology?

Can you recognize where and when you do more harm?

Shouldn't we devote ourselves to knowing the God Who is, rather than the god that resonates?

Knowing the One True God results in a very different Christianity than that based upon a skewed perception of Him.

A human being must come to the end of their own resources and, by the impulse of the Holy Spirit, turn to Jesus, trusting entirely upon His resources.

*Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.*

*God Bless You!*

A yielding to the work of Holy Spirit means caring enough about Christ and Christianity to get it right. That is done through genuine desire expressed in devoted prayer that God would reveal His True form to you. It is coupled with dedicated study.

Only in eliminating you from your understanding of God will you ever discover Him.

If conforming to Christ is not the most challenging thing you can imagine, then you are not imagining the Christ of the Bible.

Make sure that your personal ideology isn't projected onto a Holy and Perfect Christ.

The Scriptures do not hold life in their pages at all – the Scriptures simply point to where life is found.

A key to Bible interpretation is accepting that it is always all about Jesus.

#### **JOHN 5:41-47 ~**

What they needed was the human power elite to confirm Jesus' identity. We are so easily drawn in by the manipulative, self-promoting, narcissistic, charlatan who comes in their own name and we are so dismissive of those who simply serve without fanfare. Jesus would need a charlatan to endorse Him.

It wasn't that they had no Savior, it was that their Savior was a false savior.

When a person refuses to accept the Christ Who is, it means that they, at the very least, distort Him to better fit their own ideology, agenda, and desire. That is due to loving self, more than loving God.

Only God's love in us can enable us to love God more than we love ourselves.

Moses' inspired writings clearly showed God's character. Had the Jews reading Moses understood the message about God that he was trying to convey, instead of focusing on the words themselves, they would have recognized God's character in Christ.

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Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



# Lêtheia

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

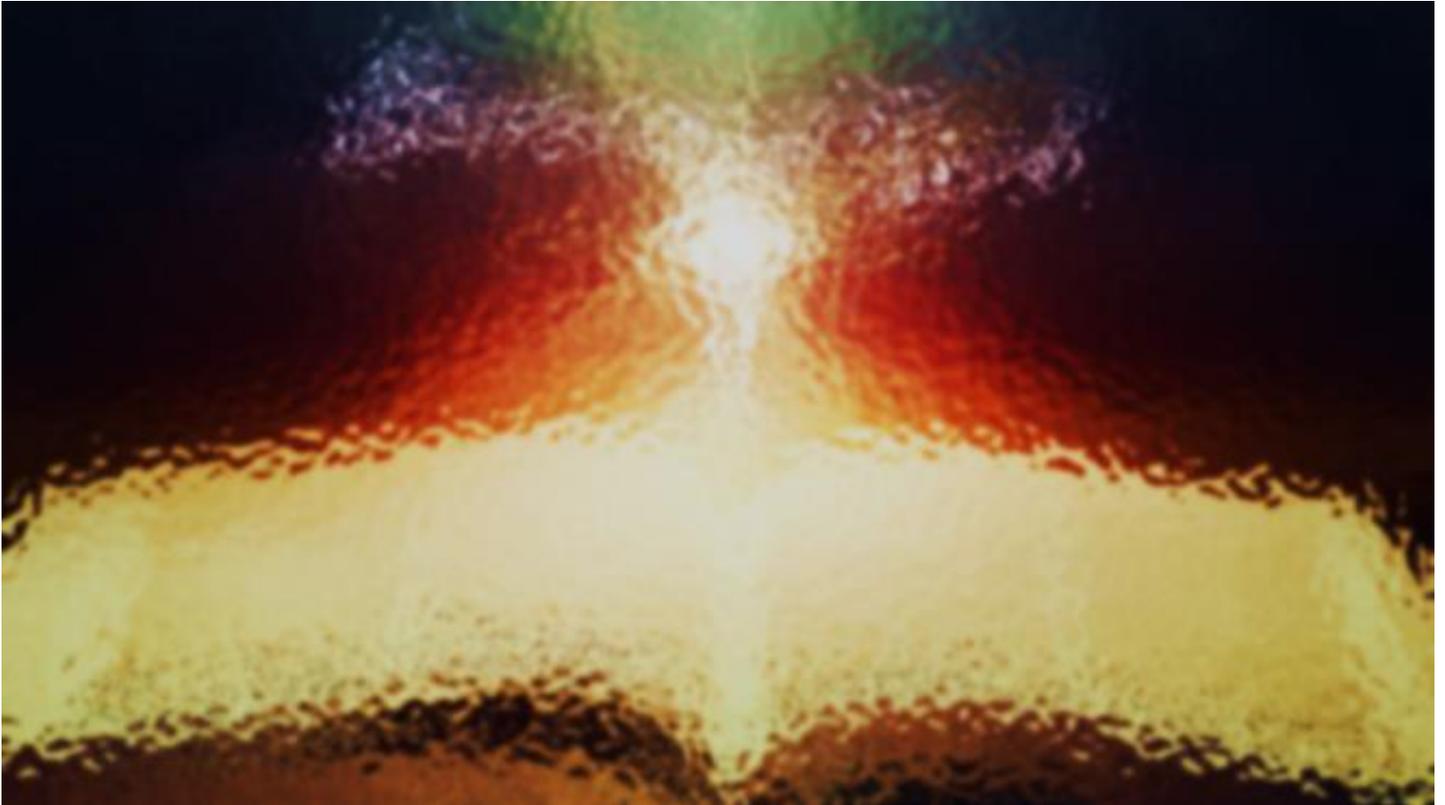



the gospel of

# JOHN

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ  
 ΘΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕ ΤΗ ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΣΤΟΣ Η ΝΕΝΑΡΧΗ ΤΙΡΟΣ  
 ΤΟΝ ΘΝ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΧΑΘΙΣ

Last week we had part 1.5 of a two-parter. In part 1, two weeks ago, we discussed what is probably the most important thing in Christianity. Put succinctly and as a question, it is, how well does your god, match “The One True God”?



If your god is too far from the “The God”, you cannot be Saved at all. That makes perfect sense, right? If the god that you bow to is a false god, then you do not bow to the True God. The argument could be made that you bow to both, but mixing a false god, or gods, together with the One True God is a blasphemous denigration of the One God. That goes back to the 10 Commandments, “Thou shalt have no other gods

before Me – I the Lord God am a jealous God” (Exodus 20:3&5).

## “The LORD God”

Elohim vs El

Yahweh vs Elohim

LORD vs Lord

The Lord God is Yahweh Elohim. Elohim is the plural of El, meaning God. That’s the God of everything, both animate and inanimate throughout the entire universe. The One True God, Creator of all and God of all whether recognized or not. The Name of God, Yahweh, is His Holy title reserved for those who are His very own. It is translated as “Lord” with small capital letters. In the typical English Old Testament, when Lord has lowercase letters, the underlying Hebrew word is Adonai simply meaning Lord and when they are small

capital letters the underlying word is Yahweh – the covenantal name of God.

There is a ridiculous “Source” theory about the Old Testament you might come across that was initially based on the fact that in Genesis chapter 1, God is only Elohim, and then in chapter 2, He’s Yahweh Elohim. The actual reason is that in chapter 1, He’s the God of everything. In chapter 2, He begins relationally dealing with His children and is therefore the God of His people Who happens to also be the God of everything. All of that is just free sprinkles on the cake I’m trying to bake for you today.

The point is not that God is jealous as we understand it but is merely pointing out a fundamental fact. It is utterly impossible to worship any other god without denying that Yahweh Elohim is the One True God. There can be no Salvation in such a case.



On the opposite end of the spectrum lies people who only bow to Yahweh Elohim as the One True God. Good news for them. Beyond that though is where we actually find most Christians. The God they worship is close enough to the True God, for Salvation, but still so inaccurate that they do more harm than good to the cause of Christ. You can call it poor theology.



As we've seen over the last two weeks it's a distortion created by us to better align with us. It is a dysfunctional relationship that results in dysfunctional Christianity. A type of Christianity that hinders, rather than builds God's Kingdom here on earth. If that describes you, how do you reckon that will work out for you, when you stand before Jesus and explain your ministry on His behalf, to Him?



Two important thoughts here. First, many Christians are so spiritually dull and disconnected from the True Christ that they not only don't recognize when they are doing harm to both the Body and the Kingdom, they actually believe that they're doing good. Just to be clear, the Body is the church, and the Kingdom is what we're commissioned to build – by preaching to the lost.

As a private citizen of the United States, it is your right to participate in a boisterous rally promoting whatever political candidate, or ideology, you wish. But as a Christian, your involvement might do more harm than good to the Kingdom. What's more important, an

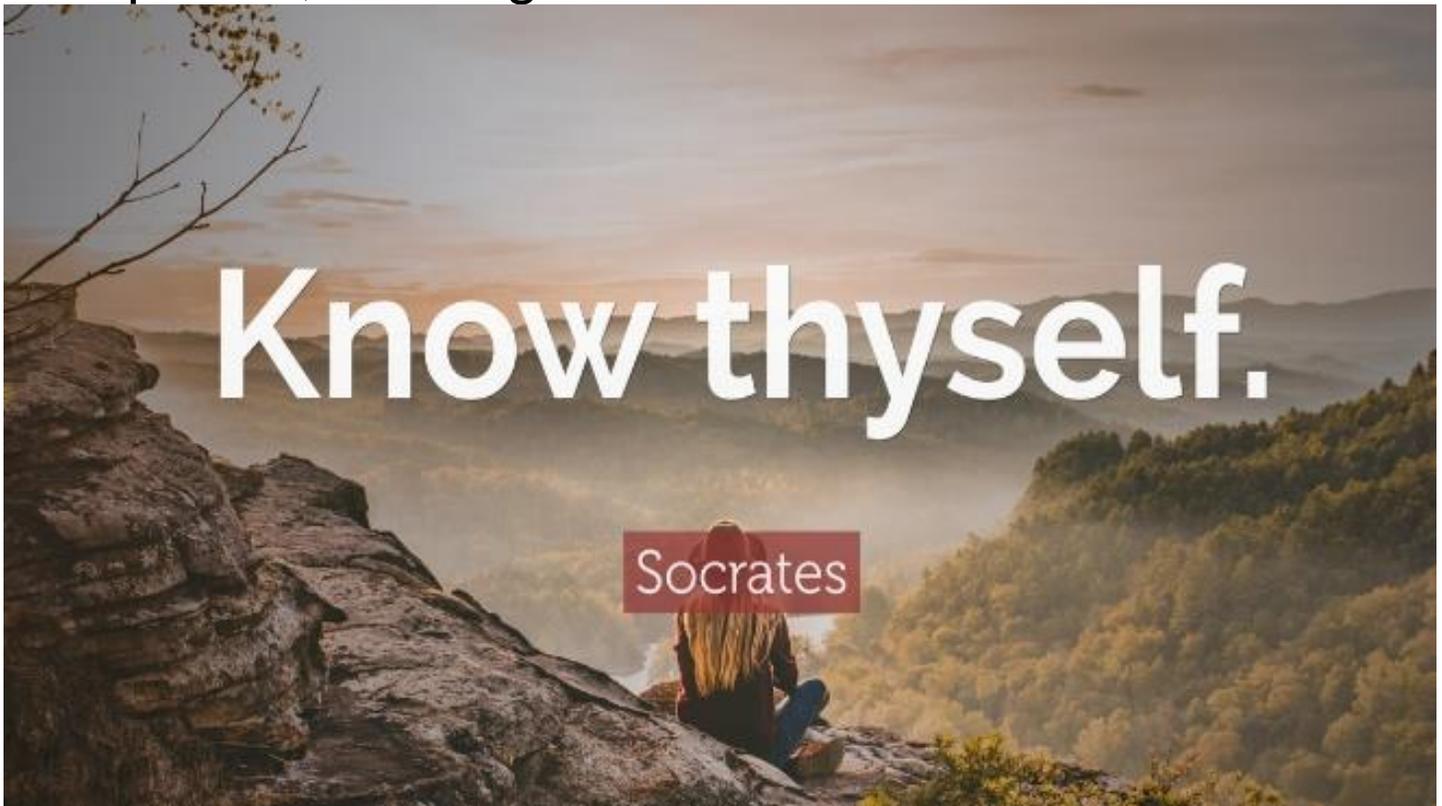
America more aligned to your comfort zone, or your conduct more aligned to your Lord and Savior's Commission? You have every right to put bumper stickers on your car, but if they are divisive, how does that help the cause of Christ?



The second thought can be formed as another question. Doesn't doing everything in your power to ensure that the God you are worshipping, serving, obeying, following, trusting, is the One and Only True God and not some distortion of your own manufacture?

Shouldn't we devote ourselves to knowing the God Who is, rather than the god that resonates? Wouldn't it

be wise to discover “The God” to be served, as opposed to creating a god to serve us – our interests, desires, and opinions? Can you see, that whenever we make a god who works to get our will done in Heaven, instead of His Will done on earth – it is nothing more than witchcraft? Let’s pull out all the stops to get to know Who God really is, as He is, no matter how challenging, and no matter how scary, and no matter how painful, that might be.



We do that by an intentional humbling of ourselves along with prayerful introspection. We must discover our appetites, our agendas, our prejudices, and our weaknesses. We must know us, for a variety of

reasons, but for this point, we must know us, in order to avoid tainting the evidence, with our own personality, proclivities, and preconceptions. It's like my old friend so-crates said, "Know Thyself."

Why? Because he went on to say that "The unexamined life is a life not worth living." Well, you could debate that, but it is certainly true that an unexamined life leads to harming yourself and others without recognizing the cause.

Then we take the Holy Bible, as the only objective witness we possess, and study it for what it actually reveals about the True God, not for what we want it to reveal a god.



That was two Sundays ago. Last Sunday, we had part 1.5. There we primarily talked about the fact that recognizing the One True God resulted in a very different Christianity than that based upon a skewed perception of Him.

We recognized that there is a crucial difference between a person trusting in themselves enough to choose Jesus and a person who, through the touch of the Holy Spirit and the choice of the Father, renounced their trust in self and instead, humbly fell into the outstretched arms of Jesus.

This is the reason you cannot argue a person into Heaven. It is the reason stirring a person up into an emotional state may result in a confession but will almost never result in a conversion. It is the reason fear of death, guilt over mistakes, sadness over loss, and the like, might produce receptivity to the Gospel, but rarely devotion to Jesus. It cannot be our choice.

A human being must come to the end of their own resources and, by the impulse of the Holy Spirit, turn to Jesus, trusting entirely upon His resources. Choosing Christ cannot be a human choice. It must be a human

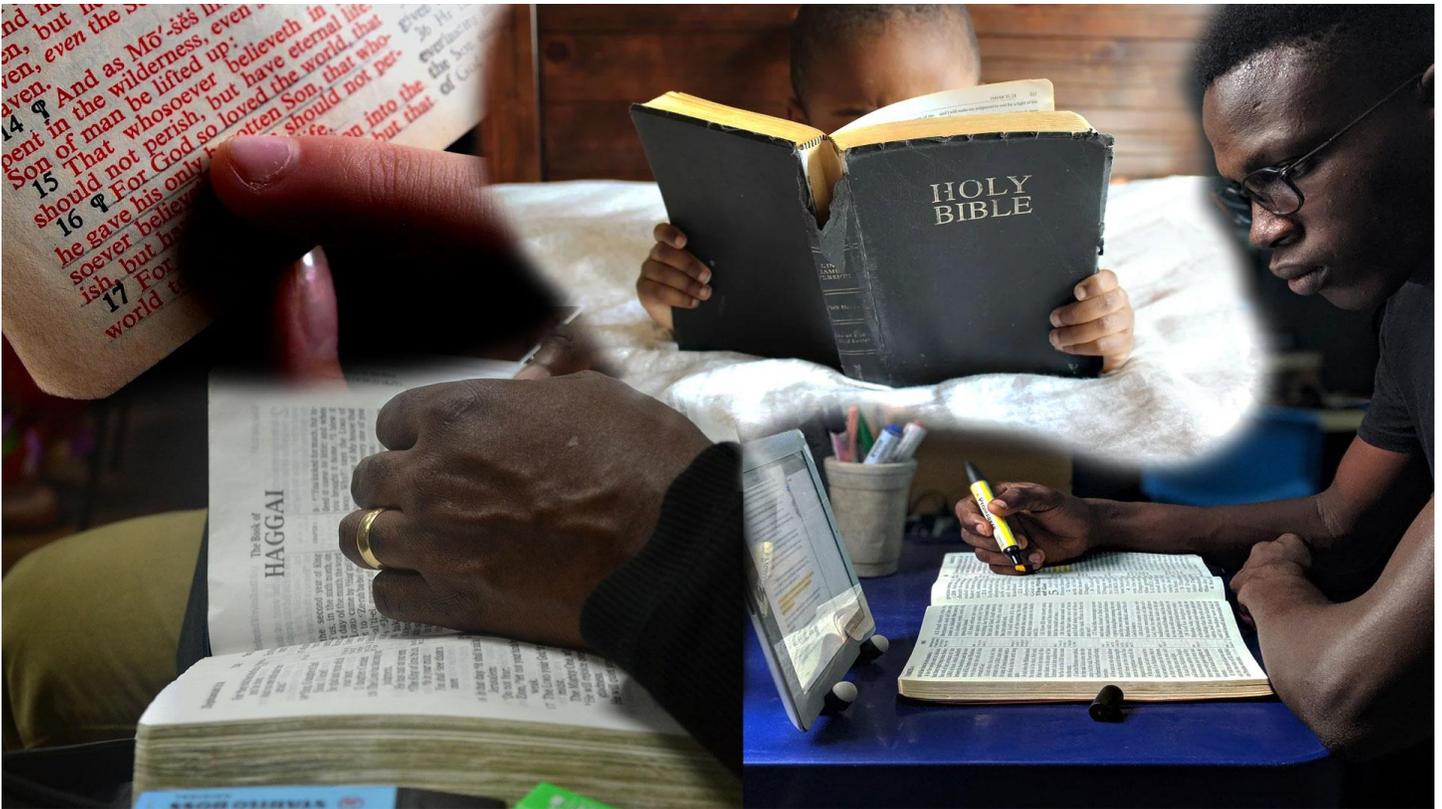
response to a Divine choice. In other words, it cannot be something done in your power, but in your weakness, so that it is not by your willpower, but by His Grace power.

Upon genuine Salvation, with the attendant indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, there is both a transfer and a transformation. Both are actually instantaneous and complete at that very moment, and both are partial awaiting entire fulfillment later. While a new Christian is immediately made a resident of Heaven and made holy in God's sight, neither thing happens instantly from our perspective.



Ah, perspective. In order for a Christian to think, speak, and act, as a Christian, a huge shift in perception must take place. It can only happen to the degree that we allow the Holy Spirit to renew our mind. Our dysfunctional relationship with the Lord, and our resultant dysfunction as Christians, is our fault, not His fault.

I used to ask, “God why won’t you fix me?” He answered, “Why do you keep getting off the operating table?” What can we do? Well, we can be intentional about active surrender to the Holy Spirit. While that’s the right answer, it may seem unclear. What it means more simply is caring enough about Christ and Christianity to get it right by working hard to discover, and to know, and to properly relate to the God of the Bible.



That is done through genuine desire expressed in devoted prayer that God would reveal His True form to you. It is coupled with dedicated study. That means more than merely listening to a sermon three times a month – it means praying over, thinking about, discussing, dissecting, and gaining comprehension of the sermon, or of the commentary, or of whatever other resource, to make the Scripture yours.

Only in eliminating you from your understanding of God will you ever discover Him. Here's a subtle Truth about that. You may be drawn to a scholar, teacher, preacher, pastor because His theology resonates with you...

Taking on their belief is only another way of keeping you in the driver's seat of your own religion.



If I'm the pilot-in-command of a jet currently being flown by my co-pilot, even though it would seem to be his operation, the truth is, I'm still in charge and I'm really just flying the airplane through him or her. Just because you accept my teaching, it doesn't mean I'm in charge of your theology – that responsibility still remains with you.

What I'm saying is be very careful about where you get your information and make sure that it isn't merely what you wanted to hear. One clue that a teaching is Biblical

is that it simultaneously challenges you and it's not easily dismissed. If it's something you don't want to hear, but deep down you know it's right – well, there you go.



It's similar to a process I've discussed with people trying to ascertain God's Will. Get into your prayer closet, all alone, and without distraction, and pray until you disappear in the overwhelming presence of Almighty God, and you know that you are hearing His voice and not your own. Then allow an impression to develop. Note that impression. Now come out of there and rationally think about that impression. If your mind is doing everything that it can to distort that impression

you can clearly see the difference between your human logic and God's Divine illumination.

Do that with Scripture and the scholarly information available. Find out if you're seeking a belief that works for you, or if you're seeking the One true God.

When you discover Who Jesus truly is you will be uncomfortable because He asks us to conform to Him, and He is as alien to us, as can be imagined. God is not like His creation. "God's thoughts are not our thoughts and God's ways are not our ways." Jesus as God made man is not like natural man. Obviously, becoming like Him is unnatural, and uncomfortable, and frightening, to us.

If conforming to Christ is not the most challenging thing you can imagine, then you are not imagining the Christ of the Bible.

Think about the Jews seething to murder Jesus as He spoke these words. They were devout. They believed in the inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility of the Bible. They studied that Bible diligently. They were zealous for God's honor and protective of God's glory. They

were attempting to protect God's reputation from Jesus – there's irony.



What's of paramount importance for us is to realize that most Christians today would do precisely the same thing. Imagine if Jesus appeared in human disguise at a MAGA rally and expressed dismay at the character of Donald Trump. How do you think the Bible believing, God loving, gun toting, Christians at the rally would respond? What if it was a pro abortion rally and Jesus said something about the sanctity of human life? How receptive would the protesters be? You may not realize it given the Evangelical circles you probably travel in,

but there are slews of liberals who think that Jesus is on their side.



Make sure that your personal ideology isn't projected onto a Holy and Perfect Christ – that is called blasphemy. To protect God from blasphemy by projecting blasphemy on God is ironic and it is as old as time.

How can you be a God loving, Bible studying, church going person and not only miss God, but misrepresent God? Verse 40 gives us the answer. Jesus said it was because such people are "Unwilling." "Unwilling to come to Him so that they may have life."

Their search for Christ in the Scriptures that they so revered, was a search for the Christ that they thought they wanted. When the actual Christ showed up, He was so alien to their expectation that they could not accept Him as a good man, let alone the Christ. No matter how many miracles – they would simply attribute them to evil because the alternative for them was impossible. Please do not make their mistake.



The Jews then, like many Christian today, truly believed that eternal life was found in the deep knowledge of the Scriptures. Jesus just told us that the Scriptures do not hold life in their pages at all – the

Scriptures simply point to where life is found. It is only found in the person of Jesus Christ the Word of God made the Son of Man.

From the Pillar Commentary, “The Scriptures, rightly understood, point away from themselves to Jesus.” It’s what I’ve always said, we here at Alêtheia work hard at understanding Scripture accurately and deeply. We do that, not as an academic exercise to puff ourselves up with more head knowledge (I Corinthians 8:1), but to recognize the Lord to Whom they point. We’re not Gnostics. It’s never about being more educated for education’s sake, it’s always about gaining a clearer understanding of Jesus so that our relationship with Him is enhanced, made more correct.

If a person fell in love with someone who had written a detailed autobiography and they were given that book to read, they would study the book, but would never be content only possessing the book. The book would merely be a way to better understand the person that they loved.



That then is a major key to Bible interpretation. It is always all about Jesus. Find out how the passage you are studying points to Christ, and you'll at least be starting with the correct Authorial intent. It's why the Jews, as one example, can pour over the Bible and never see Jesus in those pages, while a Christian sees Jesus throughout.

Well, now on to part deux... John 5:41–47, 41“I do not receive glory from men; 42but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. 43“I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

44“How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? 45“Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. 46“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. 47“But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Jesus had just finished giving us four major witnesses to His person and ministry beside His own Word. His audience was unconvinced. What they needed was powerful, respected, high ranking human experts to confirm Jesus' identity. If the High Priest, and the exalted priestly families, and the leading Rabbis, and the most honored Scribes, would endorse Jesus – well then maybe. Of course, that could never happen because they were those very people.

Note that Jesus said people clamor for those who come in their own name, while dismissing Him for coming in the name of the Father. This is another human characteristic.

## Curing Covid 19 by blowing on T.V.



(Kenneth Copeland) We are so easily drawn in by the manipulative, self-promoting, narcissistic, charlatan who comes in their own name and we are dismissive of those who want to serve without fanfare.

There are dozens of millionaire preachers holding sway over vast congregations of devotees. How? Cult leaders are first of all con artists. They are people with remarkable charisma who take what people fear and amplify it in order to promote themselves as a savior. As someone – as the only one – who can fix what is wrong. This is the thing that you deeply, emotionally

care about – it's going to be taken away – but if you support me, I can stop it.

It's always emotionally charged, take what people believe to be true, show them how it is in jeopardy, and bill yourself as the one on their side who will fight the battle for them – or at least battle with them as their leader.

Such people refuse to submit to any authority other than themselves and will react viciously if they are challenged. They think that they know better than the experts, whether scholars, generals, doctors, lawyers, etc. They constantly spout conspiracies and believe that they are so special that dark forces are after them specifically. They spin everything to cause you to question yourself. They thrive on chaos and intentionally destabilize relationships between those around them – they keep everyone off balance and walking on eggshells around them.

It isn't just in the realm of religion – you know? The point is that human beings are easily drawn to people who are charismatic self-promoters – people who come in their own name. We often ignore those who quietly

do the work in someone else's name. Quietly do the ministry assigned to them in Christ's name. Jesus came, not in His own name, not in a self-promoting power grab, but humbly doing what the Father showed Him to do in the Father's name. Bible scholar D. A. Carson said, "The chief punishment of the liar is not so much that he is not believed but that he does not believe; similarly, the chief judgment on those who deny that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God, is not so much that they have no Messiah, but that they follow false messiahs."

That's what Jesus meant when He said that they receive glory from one another and do not truly seek to glorify God. It wasn't that they had no Savior, it was that their Savior was a false savior. Their savior was based upon what they thought they needed to be saved from. Saved from the Romans, saved from poverty, saved from oppression, saved from sickness saved from inflation, and climate change, and a government run amuck. What do you need saving from and therefore, who is your Savior?



The One True Savior, God made flesh, isn't about to conform to Who people want Him to be, even if they are the most powerful people in the land, even if they are supposed to be His very own people.

Nothing has changed. Jesus does not need your vote of confidence. Trust me when I tell you that God will do what God does and we can either get on board with Him or be run over in the process.



I love money and  
money loves me.

Reverend Ike

quotefancy

In verse 42 Jesus said, “I know you.” It is emphatic and means that He knows their true heart – He knows their innermost desires and fears – He intimately knows everything about them and because of that He knows that they love them, not God. As I said before, it wasn’t restricted to the Jewish leaders – human beings, all human beings are in the same boat. I love me, and you love you – that’s the human condition. Only a humble, self-abasing surrender to the Holy Spirit can change that. Only God’s love in us can enable us to love God more than we love ourselves.

The proof of that absolute fact is that they refused to accept the Word of God, just as He is. Please get this crucial point. When a person refuses to accept the Christ Who is, it means that they, at the very least, distort Him to better fit their own ideology, agenda, and desire. That is due to loving self, more than loving God. Reverend Ike was a prosperity gospel charlatan. He would tell his mega church and his radio and television audience to “Close your eyes and see green – money all the way up to your armpits,” just before cajoling them to give generously. He died without taking his 13 million dollars with him. People 15 years later still adore him and follow his teaching.

The proof that you love yourself more than you love God is when you refuse to accept Him exactly as He is. Conversely then, the proof that you actually love God more than you love yourself is when you accept Him precisely as He is – can you see that?

Let’s have a bonus round. Can you see that it is the same for the people in your life? If you cannot accept a person for who they are, you love you, more than you love them. I’m not talking about tolerating bad behavior. I’m talking about loving a person for who they are,

rather than for who you think they should be. That works in families and in the church family, but also with the Lost. Love them enough to share Christ.

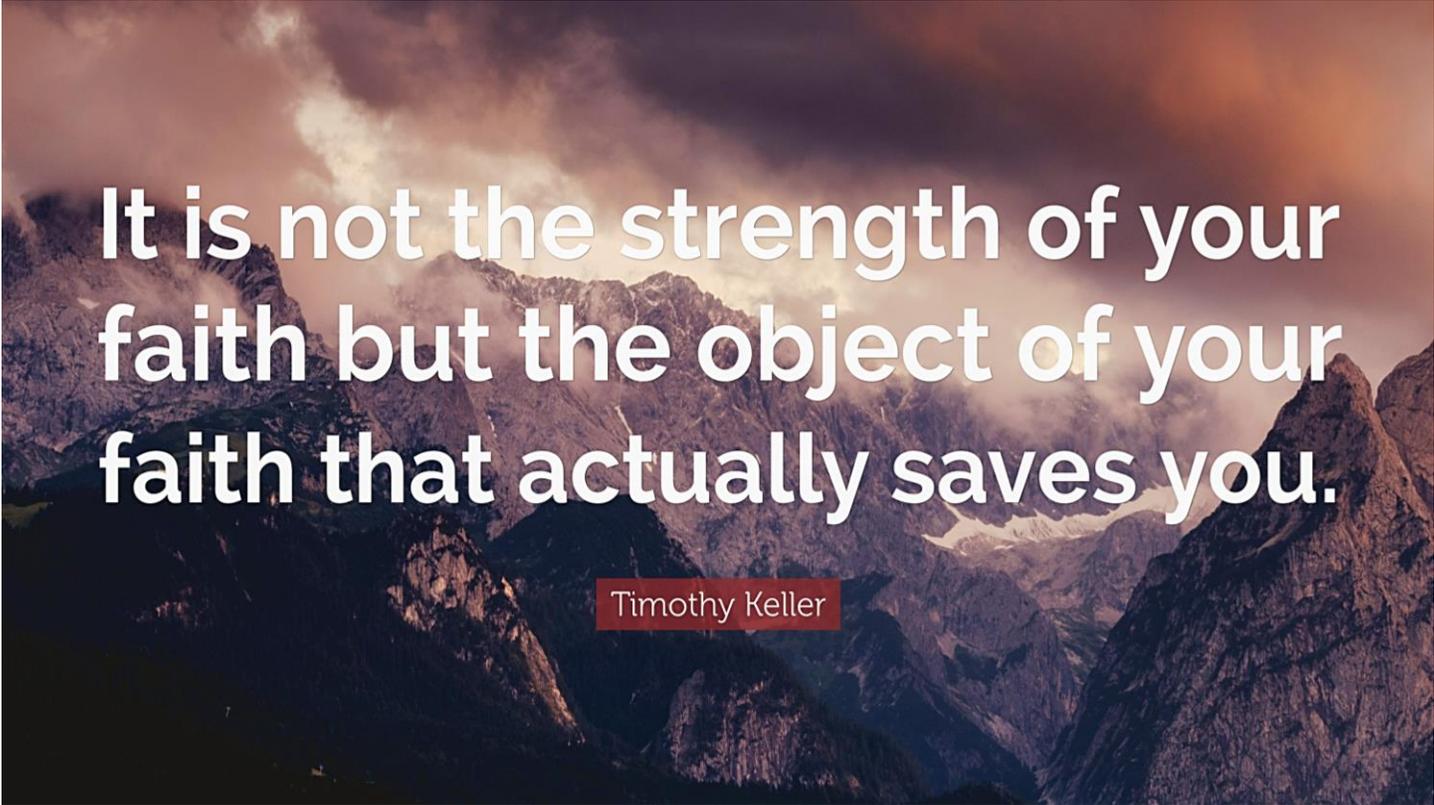


In verse 45 Jesus lets them know just how far off they are by invoking their greatest of all prophets. No one is greater in Judaism than Moses. “The Lord would speak to Moses face-to-face, as one speaks with a friend” (Exodus 33:11). God delivered the Jews out of Slavery through Moses. God gave the Law to the Jews through Moses. God led the people in the desert for 40 years through Moses. Jesus said it will be Moses who accuses you, because Moses would recognize, accept, and embrace Jesus.

Why? Because Moses loved God far more than he loved himself. Moses had already met Jesus in many different guises and Moses wrote Scripture, which we've already discovered, points to Jesus.

Moses didn't write about Jesus directly and didn't specifically address the coming Christ, or Messiah, in any detailed way. How can Jesus say that Moses wrote about Me? Moses' inspired writings clearly showed God's character. Had the Jews reading Moses understood the message about God that he was trying to convey, instead of focusing on the words themselves they would have recognized God's character in Christ.

His final chastisement was you have set your hope on the writings of Moses but don't actually believe what they say – don't actually understand their meaning. You fancy yourselves as the keepers of the faith and you don't have a clue what that faith is.



It is not the strength of your faith but the object of your faith that actually saves you.

Timothy Keller

That is an objective faith in a subject. Who is the subject? Not Moses, not further back to Abraham, certainly not further back to Adam. Not Scripture itself. The subject of the Bible is God and specifically God revealed to mankind. That is the Word of God, the Christ, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

If, in reading the Bible, you cannot get a sense of God's true character, Jesus will be a stranger to you too.

Why could they not get that? Their faith was actually in themselves because they really loved themselves. Let

us never make that same mistake – Lord, help us to never make that mistake. All erroneous theology starts with a love of self that is greater than a love for God.

Going back to a fundamental tenant of Bible interpretation called a Christocentric hermeneutic, we also embrace a Christocentric worship. That means that the focal point, or center, of our preaching, teaching, and worship is Christ Jesus.

Now, that's a very bad plan unless Jesus is indeed God the Word and representative of the totality of the Godhead. Well, He is, and so, when we worship Jesus, we do so in the power of the Holy Spirit and to the great glory of the Father Who sent Him.