Choose Your Jesus

Today’s message is a follow-up message that Larry taught a while back. The week following this message, I listened to similar messages by other Pastors throughout the week that elaborated on this subject and I had a few of my own thoughts that I thought needed to be heard. It truly is the most important topic that we could be discussing today. Who Jesus is, what He has done for us and what He is going to do for us in the future really answers the question, “why am I here and what am I supposed to do for the rest of my life here on earth?” Not only is it important to know the “Jesus” that you serve and love, but it is equally important to know the “Jesus” others serve and love if fulfilling the Great Commission is vital to you as a Christian.

Last year, Larry and I taught on a series of messages regarding religious cults, such as; Christian Science, Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Scientology, Buddhism, Islam, Spiritualism, Universalism, and a number of many more. I found it extremely interesting to learn about other religious cults that I knew very little about. But the biggest eye-opener was learning about what Mainline Protestant Churches believe, not only about Jesus, but their overall viewpoint of the Scriptures in general. If you don’t already know, there are some very radical differences in beliefs!

When I use the term Mainline Protestant Churches, I am referring to church denominations that we all know of and have heard of, for example; United Methodist Church, the Lutheran Church, the Presbyterian Church, the United Church of Christ the American Baptist Churches, the Episcopal Church, and many more. These are a group of Protestant denominations in the United States that contrast in history and in practice. These churches played a leading role in the Social Gospel movement and were active in social causes such as civil rights and equality for women. As a group, the mainline churches have maintained religious doctrine that stresses social justice and personal salvation. Mainline churches share a liberal approach to social issues, for example, the acceptance of not only gay and lesbian members, but gay and lesbian leaders and pastors within their ranks. As time has progressed, many of these Mainline Protestant Churches preach that the Bible and it’s “ways” are outdated and no longer as significant as they were in Jesus’ day. Mankind has evolved as so should the church. We certainly don’t have enough time today to cover all of the beliefs of these different denominations, but we are going to discuss some major differences between what the Bible teaches and what some churches and cults believe and teach to their congregants. I might want to add that as we consider these different belief systems, many of these beliefs stem from a specific person or person’s misinterpretation of the Bible. For example, Jehovah’s Witnesses are, for the most part, followers of the interpretations of Charles T. Russell and J.F. Rutherford. The Mormons, by their own admission, adhere to those interpretations found in the writings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. These are interpretations of the Bible, not scripture in and of itself.

If we continue, as a whole, to believe every doctrine available to us in this realm, we would be a terribly confused people, or in the words of the younger generation…a hot mess! Jesus’ nature, his personhood and work have been so perverted over time by the working of these various viewpoints that His true nature and identity has been altered and the reason for why He came and walked amongst us in the first place is negated. And that is the exact reason that we are discussing this topic today…so we know, and don’t forget, who He is and why He came to save us, and why He gave specific instructions as to how to carry out His work. For many in our society, it is much easier to believe some of these falsehoods than it is to believe the truth. How can we, mere humans, conceptualize the virgin birth, being resurrected from the dead, the feeding of the 5000 or the turning of water into wine? These types of miracles from Heaven were foreign to mankind until Jesus’ arrival to earth.

But for us sitting is this room, and many of the Evangelical churches of today, we adhere to the Scriptures and they are the evidence of the truth…error free and the very breath of God. We were warned ahead of time that there are those who would “pervert the gospel of Christ, “and who represent “any other gospel”. But there is no other gospel, only a counterfeit of the original gospel and the author is Satan himself. The biblical evidence will allow no other conclusion. Again, just so we all understand, an “evangelical” church can mean different things to different people. Some have a narrow application of the term evangelical in reference to the denomination called the Evangelical Church. Others use it broadly in reference to Protestant churches that continue to hold to the inerrancy of Scripture and salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. However, most commonly, the term evangelical refers to theologically conservative individuals or churches that affirm biblical inspiration and salvation as a personal faith experience in Jesus Christ. **That is who we are and what we preach here at Seekers. Jesus is our number one priority. From cover to cover, from Genesis to Revelation, the entire Bible’s number one topic focuses in on Jesus.** But what we hear in today’s pulpits can be terribly confusing as to what Jesus they worship. Let’s take a look at some scripture that depicts these kind of teachings (prophecy) will take place and are taking place around the globe.

Will you please stand with me and turn to Galatians 1:6-10 as we honor God’s Word together?

Just to bring us up to speed before we read this passage, Galatia was a region located in modern day Turkey. Paul visited the southern part of that region early in his Christian career (Acts 14) what was known as Lystra, and Derbe. In fact, while in Lystra, Paul was stoned by some Jews from Antioch and Iconium and was thought to be dead. The next day he traveled to Derbe to preach the good news and won over a large number of disciples. Two days later, he returned to Lystra to finish what he had started…the church. In the following passage, Paul writes them a letter asking them to remember what they were first taught.

[**6**](http://biblehub.com/galatians/1-6.htm)I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— [**7**](http://biblehub.com/galatians/1-7.htm)which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. [**8**](http://biblehub.com/galatians/1-8.htm)But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! [**9**](http://biblehub.com/galatians/1-9.htm)As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!

[**10**](http://biblehub.com/galatians/1-10.htm)Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

<Prayer>

Let’s combine what the Apostle Paul said to the people of Galatia to that of the people of Corinth. Turn to 2 Corinthians 11:1

[**1**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-1.htm)I hope you will put up with me in a little foolishness. Yes, please put up with me! [**2**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-2.htm)I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. [**3**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-3.htm)But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. [**4**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-4.htm)For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

<Now skip down to verse 12>

 [**12**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-12.htm)And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. [**13**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-13.htm)For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. [**14**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-14.htm)And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. [**15**](http://biblehub.com/2_corinthians/11-15.htm)It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

After revealing the existence of a counterfeit Jesus, Holy Spirit, and gospel, Paul completed the parallel by showing that there are also counterfeit “apostles” and “disciples”, represented by the master architect of deceit…Satan. These counterfeiters are also the ones described as wolves in sheep’s clothing.

How many of you watched the video by Michael Yousef about the new movie “The Shack”? I listened to it twice and Dr. Yousef does an amazing job of defending the Gospel. He is a true apologist! He pleads to his audience not to,” let emotions control their minds. Let the Holy Spirit do that. Let your mind be the thermostat that sets the temperature of your heart.” He explains that when your emotions, your feelings, control your mind, you allow deception to penetrate into your belief system and what was once true to you becomes a lie, just like this book and the movie has done to many people, even born again believers in Christ. That is exactly how the Universal church originally began in this nation. Universalism is a belief that Jesus is a way, not the only way, but just one of the many ways that lead to heaven and eternal life. “It is Universalism that single handedly destroyed Christianity in Europe and in England. And it is Universalism that is working hard to destroy the remnant of faith in American churches today.” For fear that none of you will watch this video, I want to take just a few minutes to listen to Dr. Yousef’s summary as to why you shouldn’t buy the book or go watch this movie. And for those of you that already have, did you miss out on any of these points as you read it’s pages or watched the movie? Let’s listen.

**Play Audio. 18:16 – 24:08**

This book and this movie is pure Universalism. It’s no wonder why Oprah follows this religion. It teaches that no matter what you have done or continue to do in life, you are forgiven. No matter what religion you follow, there is a pathway to heaven for you. All roads lead to heaven. This is pure unadulterated heresy…falsehood and considered demonic in nature. People have said that this movie/book has changed their life. This movie/book has saved them. It’s their emotions, it’s Satan getting people to believe in this lie. Some of you might be saying to yourselves, “Bo, aren’t you taking this a little too far?” I answer with a resounding NO! This is a matter of life and death we are dealing with here…eternal life or eternal death! This is serious business we are talking about. Why fill your mind with a bunch of falseness just because it makes you feel good? Do you have any idea as to what Jesus is feeling as he watches people read this book and watch this movie? He is heartbroken.

Enough of that. Let’s move on and discuss the nature of the other Jesus as it applies to other cults and religions.

First, let’s discuss the Jesus of Christian Science for a moment. This cult was born in the 1821 by Mary Baker Eddy. Mrs. Eddy declared concerning her Jesus: The spiritual Christ was infallible; Jesus, as material manhood, was not Christ. In other words, Jesus, the Son of God was a spirit and never was flesh and blood. The spirit of Jesus is infallible and is the Christ, but Jesus in the flesh was nothing more than a mere man with all of the flaws. They also believe that the material Jesus never died…he simply was put into a tomb and somehow escaped. Additionally, they assert that there is no hell and evil is but an illusion. The sinner makes his own hell by doing evil, and the saint his own heaven by doing right. It’s interesting to note that when Mrs. Eddy died, she amassed a fortune of 3 million dollars in 1908 and left absolutely nothing to any charities.

Listen to what the Living Word has to say about Mrs. Eddy’s belief in her Jesus. It is found in

1 John 4:1-6

1Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

4You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

For the sake of time, let’s move on to another cult’s belief in who Jesus is to them. We all know and have seen this group of people knocking on doors throughout our country…The Jesus of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

This cult believes that Jesus is a god but not the Son of God nor do they believe He is the second person of the Holy Trinity. For Jehovah’s Witnesses, their Jesus is an angel (Michael the archangel) who became man. How ridiculous! There are many other outrageous differences in beliefs as it pertains to the Holy Scriptures, but I want to stick to the main topic here…Choose Your Jesus.

Moving on, what do the Mormons teach about who Jesus is to them?

The teachings of the Mormon religion, which differ from both Christian Science and Jehovah’s Witnesses, claim that their god is one among many gods, as evidenced by their own literature:

*“Each of these gods, including Jesus Christ and his Father, being in possession of not merely an organized spirit, but a glorious body of flesh and bones.”*

This is just 3 religions that we covered that clearly teach and preach about a different Jesus…a Jesus that represents a different Gospel and imparts a different spirit. And those that hear about these different Jesus’, where do you think their final destiny will be?

There may be people in this audience today or those that may watch this video later on our website that will believe that it is beneath their dignity to engage in the criticism of the beliefs of others, and the society in which we live has done much to foster this belief. “Live and let live” some will say, “don’t rock the boat” yet others will say. But I say, where are the defenders of the risen Christ, our Savior and Lord and the Jesus of the Bible? If you haven’t noticed, we don’t know the meaning of what “Politically Correct” means in this fellowship. Some “so-called” believers can’t handle the truth. We preach Jesus who is the way (the only way), the truth and the life and no one, no one, no one, goes to the Father except by Him! We must remember that in Acts 17:6, Paul and his companions were the ones that caused trouble throughout the world because of their belief in Jesus, the Son of the Living God. It’s time to turn the world upside down again friends!

Please turn with me to Matthew 7:15 please. We have read this scripture a number of times here at Seekers but it is vital that we keep it at the front of our minds as we move closer and closer to Christ’s glorious appearing. This is Jesus speaking here.

15“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

21“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ 23Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

There is little doubt that Jesus intended this as a warning, for He prefaces His statements with a very strong Greek term: *prosecho (*beware); literally, be wary of or take care, because of false prophets.

And then we read in Matthew 24:4 Jesus again says,

4Jesus answered: “Watch out that no one deceives you. 5For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many.

And the Apostle Paul gives his own warning to the Ephesians in the book of Acts starting in verse 20: 27-31

27For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. 28Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.b 29I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

And then to the people of Philippi, Paul gave this warning found in Philippians 3:18

15All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. 16Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

17Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. 18For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. 20But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

As I was studying for this message, I found the following article on the internet and I thought it summed up the message that I brought today. I don’t necessarily agree with it all, but I do agree that it pinpoints some of the various “Jesus’” that are being taught and preached in our congregations today. I hope that I don’t offend anyone here today or watching on video by reading it. Listen intently and I think you’ll find that it is applicable.

(An excerpt from an article I read on the internet)

False idols of who Jesus is come in all shades and styles, but there’s nothing that’s created more false idols of who Jesus is than man’s own heart.

Unfortunately, most people have created a “Jesus” of their own liking, fashioned in the recesses of their carnal minds (or created by some religious leader that they’ve submitted their lives and entrusted their souls to) and that’s the “Jesus” they serve and worship. Ironically, these false idols of “Jesus” bear a striking resemblance to those who created them (and their desires), but very little–if any–resemblance to the Jesus of the Bible.

Since there are so many versions of “Jesus” circulating out there I’ve decided to create this easy to use (but non-exhaustive) resource as a way to help you know which “Jesus” you worship based solely upon what you believe about Him.

If your Jesus . . .

. . . is the sibling of Satan; born from a sexual encounter between God the Father who was once a man (Adam to be exact) and God’s own daughter Mary; who was crucified because he practiced polygamy; who did not pay for the sins of the world on the cross but in the Garden of Gethsemane, whose sacrifice was insufficient since you still have to work your way to heaven and in some cases your own blood must be spilled to redeem yourself; and who could not maintain his church but had to commission a lying, swindling, occult-dabbling, womanizing, pedophiliac, adulterer, Freemason, con-artist who was known for telling tall tales (whose own account of the first vision changed several times), to “translate” an ancient and “inspired” book that needed almost 4,000 corrections, changes, and alterations since it’s first publication, and to “restore” the church that your Jesus couldn’t keep together . . .then you worship the Mormon Jesus.

If your Jesus . . .

. . . is a created being (Michael the Archangel to be exact); who is not God but a god (thus making you a polytheist); who will condemn you for celebrating your birthday or giving your child a life saving blood transfusion; who did not die on a cross but on an upright stake; whose body is unaccounted for and still missing today because he did not physically rise from the dead but only raised “spiritually;” whose sacrifice was insufficient because you still have to earn your own salvation; and who–in spite of accepting worship from those around him–does not want you to worship him . . .then you worship the Jehovah’s Witness Jesus

If your Jesus . . .

. . . is most commonly depicted as a helpless infant or dead upon a cross; who is bound to take orders from his mortal mom who he created (the Creator subjecting himself to the creation); who has to share his glory with the mortal human Mary; who is our mediator between his earthly, kindhearted, and loving mother and his angry, vindictive father; who is sacrificed again and again every week (in spite of the Bible saying He was sacrificed once and for all, never to be sacrificed again) because mortal human priests have incredible power to call him down from heaven and magically turn him into a cracker and wine (again being subject to his creation instead of the other way around); and whose sacrifice was insufficient because you still have to merit your own salvation . . . then you worship the Roman Catholic Jesus

If your Jesus . . .

. . . is a hippie-like figure who no longer considers the Bible as a final authority but questions the very Scriptures and their perspicuity, even going as far as to justify such sins as homosexuality; who no longer differentiates between sheep and goats, wheat and tares, truth and error, light and darkness, the broad road and the narrow path, but now warmly accepts Roman Catholicism, Lecto Divina, and other false religious traditions and mystical practices (it would be judgmental not to); and whose motto is “come as you are and you can stay that way too because only Pharisees would tell you otherwise,” . . .then you worship the Emergent Jesus.

If your Jesus . . .

. . . is a registered Republican; wrapped in the American flag; whose purpose for coming to earth was to show us that the gospel is salvation through legislation; who wants us to set up God’s kingdom on earth by our efforts and political action; who exists to help your son win the football game and your daughter win the dance recital; and who doesn’t mind sitting on the shelf till you’re ready to pull him out at Christmas, Easter, weddings, funerals, national tragedies, or whenever you want to feel good about yourself . . .then you worship American Jesus.

If your Jesus . . .

. . . never mentions your sinfulness or his holiness, but instead emphasizes having a good time in church with a rockin’ praise band; boasts of a fun atmosphere for kids; has a relevant message from the latest Hollywood movie . . . then you worship the Laodicean Jesus (see also Mega-Church Jesus below).

If your Jesus . . .

. . . is a Hawaiian shirt-wearing, big-teeth smiling, latte-drinking-while-preaching, motivational speaker peddling the message that God’s greatest hope for mankind is that they reach their full potential by finding their purpose in this life and living that best life now . . .then you worship Mega-Church Jesus

If your Jesus . . .

. . . considers praise music and CCM to be the two sacraments of the church; considers a membership in a Christian CD music club to be evidence of sanctification; emphasizes the church praise band’s practice sessions over that of church Bible study, prayer, evangelism, and holiness; suggests that the church is a place to showcase one’s talent for rockin’ a guitar for God; and who believes that music “reaches people” in a way that the gospel can’t . . . then you worship Musician Jesus (aka Golden Calf Jesus).

If your Jesus . . .

. . . believes public school teachers, Christian psychologists, the church, the lead pastor, and especially the “youth pastor” are all responsible for your child’s biblical and spiritual upbringing, development, nourishment, and maturity (everyone but their own parents); who teaches that peers of the same age group (and often the opposite sex) are the best mentors and role models for your children; whose “youth ministries” are most commonly identified by lock-ins, pizza parties, bowling nights, and lots of drama (both kinds); and who considers that those best qualified to pressure your child/teen into repeating a “sinner’s prayer” is the twenty-something hip dude who’s never raised any children of his own, has way too much gel in his hair, and knows more about MTV and U2 than theology and his Bible . . . then you worship Youth Pastor Jesus.

If your Jesus . . .

. . . is an ascended master (one of many); who does not believe in sin, holiness, or redemption; and is accepting of all religions because he himself is just one of many paths to enlightenment . . .then you worship New Age, the Universal Jesus (a.k.a. Oprah Jesus)

And finally, if your Jesus . . .

. . . is the sovereign, mighty, holy, King of kings, Lord of lords, chief cornerstone; the Alpha and Omega; the First and Last; the Son of God; God in the flesh; a completely sufficient Savior; eternally existent; Creator of all things; who is, who was, who is to come; who became flesh; subject to no human; reigns over all; was born of a virgin; who shed His priceless Blood for His elect; who laid His life down upon a rugged cross, took that life up again–body and all–on the third day, snatched the keys of Hades, and removed the sting from death; who is the Prince of Peace, the Great Physician, Immanuel, God with us; whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light; who is a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, who is the faultless, sinless, unblemished, Lamb of God; the only mediator between God and man; the narrow gate; the way, the truth, the life; the only way to the Father; and who is worthy to receive glory, and honor, and power forever and ever, Amen!. . .then you worship the Jesus of the Bible.

So I ask you, after listening to all of this, which Jesus do you choose? We have heard the warnings and prophetic teachings from Scripture about those who will choose another Jesus, a Jesus not of the bible and our concern is that you know that you know that you know that you serve the Risen One, the Savior of the World, the Bread of Life and are not swayed by every wind of doctrine. Guard you hearts and minds from the evil one and stick to what the Holy Spirit is revealing to you as to what is truth. And we will wait together for the rapture of the church that grows nearer and nearer every single day.

Who is the Jesus that Seeker’s chooses to serve and worship?

Philippians 2:6-11

[**6**](http://biblehub.com/philippians/2-6.htm)Who, being in very nature[a](http://biblehub.com/niv/philippians/2.htm#footnotes) God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

[**7**](http://biblehub.com/philippians/2-7.htm)rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature[b](http://biblehub.com/niv/philippians/2.htm#footnotes) of a servant,

being made in human likeness.

[**8**](http://biblehub.com/philippians/2-8.htm)And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to death—

even death on a cross!

[**9**](http://biblehub.com/philippians/2-9.htm)Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

[**10**](http://biblehub.com/philippians/2-10.htm)that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

[**11**](http://biblehub.com/philippians/2-11.htm)and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

Let’s pray together.