

GUARDING
THE GOSPEL BY
UNDERSTANDING THE

DANGER OF SYNCRETISM

There is an all-out spiritual war taking place around us with cosmic and eternal ramifications. It is the battle for the Gospel. This “eternal gospel” (Revelation 14:6¹) is what God has done and will continue to do through Jesus Christ, the Son of God Who was made flesh. Planned from eternity, the Gospel was set in motion at Creation and is the focus of all human history. The Trinity and the entire angelic realm are fixed on the advance of the Gospel as Christ builds His Church. Knowing this, Satan and his demons are totally committed to thwarting the Gospel, though ultimately in vain.

Throughout human history, Satan, the father of lies, has used one particular tactic effectively. Everywhere the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed, Satan aggressively plants false gospels. His goal is to remove the power of the Gospel by stripping it of its key truths.

Syncretism: An Effective Weapon in Satan’s Arsenal

How does Satan accomplish the distortion of the Gospel? *Syncretism*. This word describes the blending of religious and philosophical beliefs that are otherwise incompatible with one another. When applied to the Gospel, syncretism

is the mixing of biblical Christianity with other religious beliefs, values, or practices that results in a fundamental change in the gospel message. Syncretism is one of the most persistent dangers facing the Church and global missions.

The Cults

We call those organizations that most blatantly distort the Gospel “cults.” Cults are those that hold to parts of the Bible while denying key fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Often these claim to be the true or restored worship of God.

Various cults reject doctrines such as the Trinity, the full deity and humanity of Jesus Christ, salvation by grace through faith alone, and the sufficiency of Scripture. Cults are active worldwide and sprout up wherever the Gospel is preached. They are far more normative in the world than many Christians realize.



Christian Denominations Who Lost Their Way

The largest of these includes Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. They claim to believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, but add numerous doctrines and traditions that are incompatible with the Gospel and other clear Bible teachings. Wherever it is found, Catholicism has absorbed much from pagan religions.

Numerous mainline Protestant denominations have departed from even the most basic commitment to gospel truth. Many keep their historic denominational names, despite having moved away from believing essential doctrines for which members once lived and died.

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Claiming to be Christians, many of these denominations no longer believe in the final authority and sufficiency of Scripture. They have absorbed popular godless ideologies and redesigned the Bible to match them: rejection of a literal Creation, confusion about gender identity, sexuality, race, environmentalism, and acceptance of infanticide (abortion), assisted suicide, and woke social justice. As they do this, they distort God's character and negate the purpose and power of the Gospel.

More Subtle Forms of Syncretism

More subtle is the form of syncretism that does not rewrite doctrinal statements but still empties Christianity of its meaning in practice. These Christians use most of the same language while redefining faith practically to serve human desires, cultural pressures, or personal ambitions.

Folk Christianity/Cultural Christianity



In many cultures today, Christianity has become a tool for material prosperity, power, or protection, rather than a call to repentance of sin, reconciliation with God our Creator through Christ, and new life in Him.

In parts of Asia, many view Jesus as an additional source of spiritual power for health, money, or success. In Western societies, Christianity is often reduced to spiritual therapy, moral inspiration, or self-

help. In Africa and other regions influenced by animistic worldviews, Christianity often becomes a thin layer over pagan rituals, ancestor worship, and spirit beliefs. People may formally acknowledge Jesus and Bible truth, but their lives show either an ignorance or rejection of gospel realities. This is Folk or Cultural Christianity, not saving faith.



Prosperity Gospel

The term "Prosperity Gospel" might cover the majority of these types of professors of Christianity. They want things from God—health, wealth, prosperity, protection from calamity, and power over others. These people believe

The largest cults from around the world include:

- Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Oneness Pentecostalists (USA-based)
- La Luz del Mundo (Mexico-based)
- Santa Muerte Devotion (Mexico/Central America)
- Kimbanguism (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Zion Christian Church (Southern Africa)
- Iglesia ni Cristo (Philippines)
- Shincheonji (South Korea)
- Eastern Lightning / Church of Almighty God (China)

that if they follow the traditions and teachings of their churches, they will gain the coveted things. The Bible is twisted to match their desires.



Millions grow up in Christian churches dominated by syncretism, making them Cultural Christians, not disciples of Christ. Biblical Christianity has been replaced (if ever known)

by a religion without regeneration, membership without discipleship, and worship without surrender.

The Gospel is not a tool for personal benefit, emotional therapy, cultural identity, or worldly success. It is the power of God for salvation, calling sinners to turn from idols, trust Christ alone, and take up their cross to follow Him. Every church in every generation must fight to preserve and proclaim the pure Gospel.



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