

General Topics :: The American Religion - A Gnostic Christianity

The American Religion - A Gnostic Christianity - posted by a-servant, on: 2017/8/26 22:53

"Today we have a new gnostic awakening that is taking place all over the Christian Church! It is being called various names such as "revival", "renewal", even "transformation", "the power of God" but it is far removed from Scripture and no different than the Gnostic doctrine once practiced early on. We need to comprehend the extent of this gnostic influence today: Seeing it for what it is will help you withstand the deception that is now taking place. But you must see it for what it is or you will be carried away by it. I do not see any more middle ground on this issue, it will increase even more."

The Gnostic Jesus, a Gnostic Christianity
letusreason.org/Latrain18.htm

The American Religion

book by Harold Bloom

Gnosticism: Bloom thinks religion in America is more Gnostic than Christian.

"The American Religion" masks itself as Protestant Christianity yet has ceased to be Christian.

"The American Jesus was born at Cane Ridge."

"According to Bloom, the American Religion began on August 6, 1801, when 25,000 frontier-people of many denominations showed up at Cane Ridge, Kentucky for a huge revival meeting. Many went non-linear. Bloom: "Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists at once became American Religionists, rapt by ecstasy." And: "The drunk, sexually aroused communicants at Cane Ridge, like their drugged and aroused Woodstockian descendants a century and a half later, participated in a kind of orgiastic individualism, in which all the holy rolling was the outward mark of an inward grace that traumatically put away frontier loneliness and instead put on the doctrine of experience that exalted such loneliness into being-alone-with-Jesus."

What are the characteristics of the American Religion? The belief that:

- 1) What is best and oldest in us antecedes the Creation. "The God of the American religion is an experiential God, so radically within our own being as to become a virtual identity with what is most authentic (oldest and best) in the self." And: "God is within." And: "We are mortal gods, destined to find ourselves again a world as yet undiscovered."
- 2) What makes us free is not belief but knowledge. "Awareness, centered on the self, is faith for an American."
- 3) Freedom is solitary. "The believer returns from the abyss of ecstasy with the self enhanced and otherness devalued." And: "The freedom assured by the American Religion" is a solitude in which the inner loneliness is at home with an outer loneliness."
- 4) Once redeemed by Christ, man returns to innocence. "Only the American Religion promises what Freud tells us we cannot have: "an improved infancy."
- 5) The Bible is the Word of God. "The American Religion, unlike Judaism and Christianity, is actually biblical."

The American Jesus.

"The American Christ is more American than he is Christ." And: "Jesus" is a nineteenth- or twentieth-century American, whose principal difference from other Americans is that he already has risen from the dead. Having mastered

this knowledge, he teaches it to whom he will. And: The American Jesus is the resurrected friend, walking and talking one-on-one with the repentant sinner. And this Jesus comes to one of his own free will, and not the sinner; he chooses one.

source: goodreads

Bloom is a Jew, not a Christian, however:

... the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. Luke 16:8

these 2 articles/books together is very meaty stuff you most likely will not appreciate if you never thought about the fact that America's religious contributions to the modern world are very different than anything that is regarded as orthodoxy for the first 1800-1900 years of Christianity.

Then again nothing is really new under the sun, it just got remixed and dished up again under new labels. The American version however is the endtimes version of it, and much more intoxicating than the original. It went around the world and has polluted original Christianity to such a high degree that no society or church is not affected by it, so I would slightly disagree with the opening statement of "no different than Gnostic doctrine once practiced early on".

It is different in a way that originally cults and the church were separated, at least initially, today they almost merged completely, in front of our eyes.

When God's word was preached at Cane Ridge, many people were barking like dogs and jerking their bodies uncontrollably.

The American Religion, unlike Judaism and Christianity, is actually biblical. -- Harold Bloom, on what it means for Americans that "The Bible is the Word of God"

Few people are really on the narrow way in any strict or straight is the gate sense, it's mostly a huge compromise with darkness posing as light. Of course we are told to come out of her, my people, and salvation is offered to anyone that repents. Today nobody knows anymore of what they should repent of - and why. That is the real and serious problem of our time. There is not really any cure for any patient that insists that there is nothing wrong with them.

Yet, it's still time to repent of the American religion,

Seek the LORD while he may be found...

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Re: The American Religion - A Gnostic Christianity - posted by docs (), on: 2017/8/27 8:29

If Harold Bloom is not Christian but a unbelieving Jew why should the church accept his evaluation and opinions of the church? If he or his associates, known for their intellectual training and vigor and not their spirituality, were to come to the true church they would find it doesn't resemble Cane Ridge.

- posted by leyoung (), on: 2017/8/27 10:12

David Winter, I agree with you.
And "a-servant", most of that article sounded like poppycock.
Why did you post it?
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Re: - posted by a-servant, on: 2017/8/27 20:26

It's about understanding how the gnostics invaded the church,
let's get to the basics of that here:

The old/new Gnostics :

"The Christians had the Scriptures. But Knowing God through a written book was considered Head knowledge and insufficient for a spiritual life. The Gnostics offered experiential knowledge, the deeper things that came from the spirit."

"The Gnostics thought that one must directly experience the spirit to learn the truth, this being apart from the word. Stepping over into the supernatural, experience becomes the teacher and gives them real knowledge. What was and is now being taught is spirit to spirit communication that is completely outside the Biblical revelation given by the apostles."

Re: - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2017/8/28 6:59

A-servant, I take that you're warning about revelation apart from and contrary to the Scripture which is prevalent today.

One thing I haven't ever seen anything about regarding the early charismatic revivals is the discerning of spirits. I know that there are reports regarding mainline denominational pastors who publicly refuted these meetings but I got the impression that these pastors rejected or simply denied the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. I know this is probably a gross oversimplification of the situation and that God has always had faithful Spirit lead brethren but the accounts or summaries of such have not discussed these people's views. I'd really appreciate seeing the people's testimonies to balance out the fans and detractors.

Re: I Was a Flaky Preacher - posted by savannah, on: 2017/8/28 9:50

"I'd really appreciate seeing the people's testimonies to balance out the fans and detractors"

Some may benefit from this book by a pastor named Ted Brooks.

It's his testimony. It can be read at the following link.

<http://www.theearlychurch.com/english/flake.htm>

Re: - posted by a-servant, on: 2017/8/28 20:14

Not sure how many of you ever travelled extensively, or lived or is living in any other parts of the world than the USA.

Then, after a few years, it's possible to clearly see what is essentially Christian, as in a local church in Asia for example, and what is distinctively American in origin.

Spiritual beliefs can be an exact portrait of the national character of a nation. America for example created: Pentecostalism, Mormonism, Seventh-day Adventism, Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses and other religions.

From the first link in the OP by LetUsReason Ministries:

"We have heard the argument that "the man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument" This is what we are confronted in Mormonism, no matter what objective proof is shown to a Mormon, they rely on their subjective "burning in the bosom" experience and ignore what the Bible states as objective truth. Beliefs and systems of thought came from personal experience but this does not mean they are from God or of the truth.

For those who have begun to practice their Christianity like this, it becomes very difficult to make sense to them why it is wrong. Because they cannot understand the truth from the word, they are unable, incapable to read or hear the word in its correct interpretation, its always outside the Biblical context and meaning. It means only what they want it to mean and that is subject to change at their own whim. Instead they have trained themselves to look to an experience and feeling to validate what they perceive as the truth. They can no longer follow logic through to its conclusion because they are not intellectually attentive, and the words that we are familiar with do not mean the same thing to them."

Re: - posted by a-servant, on: 2017/8/29 20:20

"The Gnostic sense of spirituality is derived from an inner gnosis (experiential mystic knowledge) that goes beyond reason, logic and most of all, the Holy Scriptures. For many, spirituality is perceived intuitively or psychically, as opposed to Biblical faith, i.e., simply believing and obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Spirituality experienced mystically is thought to be a witness of an inner union with God, the basis of which is self-consciousness which means it is no longer a matter of reason, faith and grace.

An inner self-conscious feeling of holiness seems to be of primary importance. To arrive at a high spiritual level, all objective consciousness of the external world must be lost.

The Persons of the Trinity, the Holy Scriptures, doctrine and morality becomes irrelevant.

The ideal sought after is a higher consciousness of union with the divine inner self called the "Christos". When this union is experienced, a sense of spiritual worthiness as well as a feeling of being a "Son of God" equal with Jesus Christ is felt. This subjective experience is seen as a baptism into the Christhood and a knowledge of one's own worthiness.

Knowing God

The "Gnostic" teaches that knowing God and His Presence is experienced in a mystic or intuitive sense rather than through faith in the person Jesus Christ according to the Holy Scriptures. The Gnostic builds his faith on subjective experiences, whereas the true Christian builds his faith on the written Word of God, the only God-given premise of the true faith.

As in the eastern religions, the perception of God is sought subjectively rather than in God Himself and the written Word. There is a desire to know God through feelings, mystic thoughts, voices, visions and dreams. A "sense" of the "presence of God" is believed on as long as spiritual experiences last. When these experiences subside or cease, spiritual fervour wears down to rise again when a spurt of vain and endless fantasy starts a new "spiritual" cycle.

Gnostic prophets are known to have a form of godliness based on a spiritual roller coaster experience. Their philosophy of known God depends on touching God experientially. Faith is produced subjectively through experiences and then turned inward on self until a feeling of "knowing God" or "possessing God" comes about. The Word of God and the commandments are not believed on as the final voice of God, or as the only source by which He is known. One of the characteristics of a false prophet, albeit sometimes hard to detect, is the lack of love toward the commandments of God.

--- Travers van der Merwe

Re: - posted by DEADn (), on: 2017/8/29 21:45

Here is a book written by a Lutheran pastor on this subject.

<https://www.amazon.com/Gnostic-America-Contemporary-according-Christianitys/dp/0692260498>

Re: "Strange Fire" proposing yet more strange fire - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2017/8/29 22:03

These teachings about what classifies as Gnostic is on very dangerous ground. By the definition proposed by Travers van der Merwe, Jesus Christ was a Gnostic as were the Twelve, Stephen and Paul. Authors like van der Merwe have defined Gnosticism so broadly that they can accuse anyone with an experiential knowledge of God of being one.

Jesus was Gnostics??? - posted by Sree (), on: 2017/8/30 10:21

Quote:

"The Christians had the Scriptures. But Knowing God through a written book was considered Head knowledge and insufficient for a spiritual life. The Gnostics offered experiential knowledge, the deeper things that came from the spirit."

By this definition, Jesus himself was Gnostic! Let us see what Jesus spoke about head knowledge.

John 5 :37 -You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.

Here Jesus plainly said that searching the scripture diligently is not enough, but an experiential hearing of Jesus is needed. He did not say 'you are unwilling to believe me', but he said 'you are unwilling to come to me'. He wants them to have a come and see experience like how the 2 disciples of John had. Even now it is the experiential encounter with Jesus that gives eternal life, not diligent searching of scripture.

Matt 13:52 -And Jesus said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

A scribe who knows the scripture well is of no use to kingdom of heaven but when he becomes a disciple of Jesus by experiential carrying the cross and following Jesus everyday (Matt 16:24), then when he shares treasures from his knowledge.

The reason we have boring sermons in more than 99% of churches, is because there is only knowledge but no experience. There is no supernatural anointing.

Re: Jesus was Gnostics??? - posted by a-servant, on: 2017/8/30 20:34

Which Jesus Do You Follow?

by M. Dauer

FUNDAMENTAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY:

• Based on: God's Word.

• Acknowledges: Deity of Jesus Christ.

• Believes: Man is basically sinful, and only GOD can correct the evil in him.

• Gives glory to: GOD

• God: Believe in a PERSONAL GOD who is all good.

• Salvation: Spiritual rebirth that takes place when an individual chooses to believe by faith the DEITY of JESUS CHRIST, recognises the SIN in his life and chooses to follow Christ and turn from his sin according to the Scriptures.

⌘ Faith based on: The Word of God.

⌘ The Answer: Jesus Christ - according to the Scriptures.

⌘ Christ: Jesus Christ, the one and only fully God and fully man.

⌘ The Bible: NOTHING should be added and NOTHING should be taken away from the Bible. It is the COMPLETE WORD OF GOD. Interpreted literally and the literal meaning received.

⌘ Commitment: To the Lord Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures.

GNOSTIC/NEW AGE THOUGHT:

⌘ Based on: Man's word.

⌘ Acknowledges: Deity of man.

⌘ Believes: Man is good and getting better.

⌘ Gives glory to: Self

⌘ God: Belief in God or a great force or energy or One Mind. An impersonal God with both good and bad.

⌘ Salvation: Spiritual awakening that comes when an individual experiences "his own divinity".

⌘ Faith based on: Experience.

⌘ The Answer: Finding the "self" or "god" within and striving with "works".

⌘ Christ: A position of status held by all deserving members. Arrived at by "self", "experience" and "works".

⌘ The Bible: They pick and choose Scriptures to suit their purposes. They say the Scriptures can be "interpreted" in many different ways. Spiritualised to say whatever they want.

⌘ Commitment: To self - or God through a passive or emotional experiential form of religion.

. . . they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also other Scriptures, unto their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16)

Re: - posted by a-servant, on: 2017/8/30 20:36

RE: so broad...

The long, 2 pages article in first link in OP names names, so you can say "hey, it's not about me, so it must be only about other people" - but that's not the case, it concerns us all.

To accuse someone with "the reason to write warnings like that 'in broad' is to accuse other people is a silly accusation.

What's more serious is to confuse the apostles with gnostics, assuming their experiences had anything to do with our current time lust for going far beyond that. When the standard are current day heretics it may not be easy to detect something as old as gnosticism as a principle for anybody living in the year 2017, and takes a lot of reading and even more unlearning of false teachings.

If someone wants to keep it really simple, you can go with the last statement: "One of the characteristics of a false prophet, albeit sometimes hard to detect, is the lack of love toward the commandments of God."

I wouldn't say that's hard to detect. The epistles 1John + 2John is enough by itself to prove them wrong. That's why no false prophet/teacher will teach why it's a sure way to distinguish between the light of salvation and the light that is darkness.

Once that is sorted out, and it has not been sorted out yet on the broad road of opinions, it may be possible to understand the difference between sensuality and spirituality. And why Christian spirituality is not sensual, and mysticism has no place in Christian spirituality.