

The Top 10 Non-Biblical “Christian” Religions – Why they contradict the Word of God

Introduction

Many cults claim to be Christian and to adhere to the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Some of these groups also use the word ‘church’ within their name in order to give the impression of Christian orthodoxy. Yet they manipulate what the Scriptures say to accommodate their own philosophies and doctrines. Some will claim a special ‘revelation’ from God or an angel to justify what they are doing or perhaps produce their own literature (including a deceptive Bible version) to undergird their false teaching. Changing terminology and definitions also enables them to mislead and deceive those who are unaware of what has happened.

These groups masquerade as Christian and though their claimed objective may be to lead people to Jesus Christ, in fact they point to another Jesus and another gospel (Galatians 1:8-9; 2 Corinthians 11:1-4).

Those who seek the truth need to understand that there is no greater guide to understanding what is true and to free a person from deception than the written Word of God contained in the Bible. It is powerful, authoritative, reveals the Lord Jesus Christ and changes lives for the better, both now and in eternity.

God’s Word – the Bible

God’s Word powerful and authoritative and the Bible tells us that He spoke creation into existence:

*By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.
He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;
He lays up the deep in storehouses.*

*Let all the earth fear the Lord;
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
For He spoke, and it was done;
He commanded, and it stood fast. (Psalm 33:6-9)*

God’s Word is the revelation of God Himself and reveals Him to any who seek the truth. No religion or philosophy of man can be exalted above the Bible. Every doctrine and teaching whether within or outside the church is subject to it.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16)

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

God's Word reveals that Jesus Christ is God Almighty and that He is the living Word of God who came into the world by being miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary at Bethlehem. He lived a sinless life and then suffered and died on the cross as a sacrificial atonement for our sin, taking our place so that we might receive forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of God and eternal life with Him in glory. He physically rose from the dead, demonstrating the truth of His promises and to confirm He is the way, the truth and the life.

The marvellous promises of the Bible are for every person who wishes the truth about God and humanity and where their future lies if they choose to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of their lives.

Overcoming deception

It is disastrous for truth and the eternal well-being of untold millions that so many groups distribute false doctrines and teaching that deceive many. Only an examination of what they have written or said compared with the Holy Bible can show you the truth.

In this paper you can read selected teaching of these ten (10) groups compared to the Bible

- Roman Catholicism (1.2 billion)
- Eastern Orthodox (225-300 million)
- Seventh day Adventists (25 million)
- Mormonism (15.8 million)
- Jehovah's Witnesses (8.3 million)
- Oneness Pentecostalism (4 million)
- Unity School of Christianity (1.5 million)
- Unification Church (over 1 million)
- Christian Science (85,000)
- Christadelphians (50,000)

Not every teaching of these groups is examined, but only a selection. There are also many other groups who teach variations of these highlighted false teachings.

Our heart is that anyone reading this paper will read the Scriptures for themselves. Where there is a conflict between what a group teaches with the Bible, the Bible is always to be preferred. Once assured that the teaching of these groups is false, we should refuse that teaching and hold fast to biblical truth (See Jude 3).

The Bible version used here is the New King James Version (**NKJV**), but any reasonably literal version may be used to the same result.

May the Lord bless you in seeking the truth found in Him.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM (1.2 billion)

The Roman Catholic Church is the particular Christian denomination which acknowledges the Pope as its head and with a hierarchy of bishops and priests. It emphasises tradition, ritual and the authority of the Pope as the claimed successor of the apostle Peter together with a doctrine of papal infallibility, defined in 1870. It also controversially claims to be the only 'true church' able to define Christian doctrine.

1. The Bible

The false teaching:

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that its members must believe the church's teaching under its self-defined "Tradition" even where it is inconsistent or contrary to the Bible. Church defined dogma concerning faith and morals must be accepted and believed and in those areas the Pope (who is self-declared as head of the Christian church) speaks and writes infallibly.

What they say:

Magisterium: The living, teaching office of the Church, whose task it is to give as authentic interpretation of the word of God, whether in its written form (Sacred Scripture), or in the form of Tradition. The Magisterium ensures the Church's fidelity to the teaching of the Apostles in matters of faith and morals. (Catholic Church, Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000) (hereafter "CCC") Ibid p.887)

The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living, teaching office of the Church alone. (CCC Ibid 27; para 85a)

For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered (Catholic Church, Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd Ed. (CCC Ibid at p.234, para 882b).

Christ endowed the Church's shepherds with the charism of infallibility in matters of faith and morals. The exercise of this charism takes several forms: "The Roman Pontiff, head of the college of bishops, enjoys this infallibility in virtue of his office, when, as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful—who confirms his brethren in the faith—he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals.... (CCC Ibid p.235; para 889-890)

The truth - What the Bible says:

Jesus Christ alone is the head of the church:

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23)

The Bible teaches the sufficiency of Scripture for us:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and (2 Peter 1:2-3)

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Corinthians 2:12-13)

The Bible warns against adding or subtracting to Scripture:

You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. (Deuteronomy 4:2)

Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar. (Proverbs 30:5-6)

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19)

The Bible teaches that we should follow the commandment of God and not the traditions of men:

He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? (Matthew 15:3)

Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' " (Matthew 15:7-9; and see Mark 7:8-9, 13)

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. (Colossians 2:8)

2. Salvation

The false teaching:

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that salvation exists only for its members and that good works and the reception of its sacraments are necessary to receive salvation, especially water baptism. It states that there can be no assurance of salvation even if these teachings are followed. It rejects the biblical teaching that salvation comes only by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

What they say:

"Outside the Church there is no salvation" How are we to understand this affirmation, often repeated by the Church Fathers? Re-formulated positively, it means that all salvation comes from Christ the Head through the Church which is his Body (CCC Ibid p. 224; para 846)

Hence, they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it. (CCC Ibid p.224; para 846)

This Sacred Council wishes to turn its attention firstly to the Catholic faithful. Basing itself upon Sacred Scripture and Tradition, it teaches that the Church, now sojourning on earth as an exile, is necessary for salvation. (Catholic

Church, “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium,” in *Vatican II Documents* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011); Lumen Gentium at para 14).

Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament (CCC Op cit p.320; para 1257).

Moved by the Holy Spirit, we can merit for ourselves and for others all the graces needed to attain eternal life, as well as necessary temporal goods. (CCC Ibid p.490; para 2017)

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It is not acquired by good works, religious ritual, sacraments or water baptism:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)

the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ (Romans 3:22-24)

So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” (Acts 16:31)

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:22)

And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. (1 John 3:23)

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

The Bible teaches we can have full assurance (confidence, security and certainty) of salvation:

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end (Hebrews 6:11)

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:22)

that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:2-3)

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:1)

3. Purgatory

The false teaching:

The Roman Catholic Church teaches the necessity of prayers for the dead and also that purging of sin after death occurs in a place called 'purgatory'.

What they say:

All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on Purgatory especially at the Councils of Florence and Trent. (CCC Ibid p.268-269; para 1030-1031)

The expiation of sins continues in the mystical Body of Christ and the communion of saints by joining our human acts of atonement to the redemptive action of Christ, both in this life and in Purgatory. (CCC Ibid p. 878)

Through indulgences the faithful can obtain the remission of temporal punishment resulting from sin for themselves and also for the souls in Purgatory. (CCC Ibid p.374; para 1498)

We must be purified either during our earthly life through prayer and a conversion which comes from fervent charity, or after death in purgatory. (CCC Ibid p.896)

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that those who accept and have faith in Christ will not be separated from Him in life or after death:

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.. (Romans 8:38-39)

We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:8)

The Bible teaches that after death the believer's works will be tested by fire and not the believer themselves:

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

The Bible teaches that suffering in this life (even for our faith) is not redemptive. Christ's sacrifice at the cross where he shed his blood for the remission of sin achieved the forgiveness of sins completely and for all time. Only faith in him is needed and no prayer for the dead (or indulgences) can work to remit sin.

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)

I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church (Colossians 1:24)

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. (Hebrews 9:22)

And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:14)

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

...we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.....Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. (Hebrews 10:10-14, 18)

The Bible teaches that after death every believer is presented to God for judgment, and they are pure and undefiled by sin. There is no place called purgatory.

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27)

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight. (Colossians 1:18-22)

4. Mary

The false teaching:

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that Mary the mother of Jesus was without sin on her conception (The dogma of the "Immaculate Conception"), remained a perpetual virgin through her life, was bodily assumed taken into heaven ("The Assumption of Mary") and made a Queen there. It also teaches she is to be prayed to as a mediatrix with God.

What they say:

The second commandment *forbids the abuse of God's name*, i.e., every improper use of the names of God, Jesus Christ, but also of the Virgin Mary and all the saints. (CCC Ibid p. 559; para 2146)

Because she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, Jesus Christ the "new Adam," Mary is called the "new Eve," the "mother of the living" in the order of grace (CCC Ibid p.877-878; para 511).

499 The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man. In fact, Christ's birth "did not diminish his mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it." And so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as Aeiiparthenos, the "Ever-virgin." (CCC Ibid p.126; para 499)

“Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death. (CCC Ibid p.252; para 966)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION: The dogma proclaimed in Christian Tradition and defined in 1854, that from the first moment of her conception, Mary—by the singular grace of God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ—was preserved immune from original sin (CCC p.883).

ASSUMPTION: The dogma which recognizes the Blessed Virgin Mary’s singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection by which she was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when the course of her earthly life was finished (CCC Ibid p.867)

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that Mary is human and has sinned like any human being. She herself acknowledged her need of a Saviour. There is no Scriptural or historical basis for her “Immaculate Conception”, “Perpetual Virginity” or the claimed “Assumption of Mary”. She is honoured as the “mother of Jesus”, but to call her “Mother of God” or a “Queen” is to exalt her to a divine status she does not possess in the Bible. Praying to her instead of God is to reject the unique place of Christ in His sacrifice and His gift of salvation.

Everyone has sinned except Jesus Christ –

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ (Romans 3:23-24)

Eternal life is a gift through Jesus only –

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

Mary admits her need of a saviour from sin -

And Mary said: “My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name. (Luke 1:46-49)

Mary had children after Jesus and was not perpetually a virgin –

Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him. (Mark 6:3)

Jesus alone is our advocate –

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2 – and also see John 11:25; 14:6; Colossians 1:27)

5. Saints, statues and images

The false teaching:

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that it can make ‘saints’ by canonizing them; teaches that dead saints (including Mary) should be prayed to as mediators with God; and promotes the veneration of statues and images of Christ, Mary and saints.

What they say:

The Council of Trent (sess. xxv. De Invoc. Sanct.) teaches that *“the saints reigning with Christ offer their prayers for men to God; that it is good and useful to call upon them with supplication, and, in order to obtain benefits from God through Jesus Christ, who alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, to have recourse to their prayers, help, and aid.* (William E. Addis and Thomas Arnold, *A Catholic Dictionary* (New York: The Catholic Publication Society Co., 1887), 740.

1014 The Church encourages us to prepare ourselves for the hour of our death. In the ancient litany of the saints, for instance, she has us pray: “From a sudden and unforeseen death, deliver us, O Lord”; to ask the Mother of God to intercede for us “at the hour of our death” in the Hail Mary; and to entrust ourselves to St. Joseph, the patron of a happy death. (CCC Ibid p.264; para 1014).

Following the divinely inspired teaching of our holy Fathers and the tradition of the Catholic Church (for we know that this tradition comes from the Holy Spirit who dwells in her) we rightly define with full certainty and correctness that, like the figure of the precious and life-giving cross, venerable and holy images of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ, our inviolate Lady, the holy Mother of God, and the venerated angels, all the saints and the just, whether painted or made of mosaic or another suitable material, are to be exhibited in the holy churches of God, on sacred vessels and vestments, walls and panels, in houses and on streets. (CCC Ibid p.300; 1161)

Sacred images in our churches and homes are intended to awaken and nourish our faith in the mystery of Christ. Through the icon of Christ and his works of salvation, it is he whom we adore. Through sacred images of the holy Mother of God, of the angels and of the saints, we venerate the persons represented. (CCC Ibid p.307; para 1192)

The truth – What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that ‘saint’ is not a title conferred by a church process, but every Christian believer in the New Testament is called a saint:

Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. (Matthew 27:52)

Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.(Acts 9:13)

I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison.. (Acts 26:9-10)

Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)

To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: (Romans 1:7- Note that six of the apostle Paul’s letters are addressed to the saints)

He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:27 – and see Romans 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15)

The Bible condemns attempting to speak to the dead and associates such actions with the sins of witchcraft, necromancy and divination:

‘A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them. (Leviticus 20:27)

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a

medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you. (Deuteronomy 18:10-13)

The Bible teaches that our prayer is made in the name of Jesus, who is our only mediator with God.

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (1Timothy 2:5-6)

The Bible teaches that God condemns venerating images and statues as idols. God alone is to be venerated and worshipped and also commands we are to make no images of Him.

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6)

Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. (Romans 1:22-23)

See also: Isaiah 44:9, 13; Isaiah 46:5-7; 44: 15-17; 1 Kings 19:18; Deuteronomy 4:23-24; 7:25-26; Ezekiel 16:17; Isaiah 40:18. Venerating them is a grievous sin – see Deuteronomy 4:15-19; John 4:24; Romans 1:22-27; 1 Corinthians 10:19-20.

6. Sacraments and the Mass

False teaching:

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that Baptism is necessary for salvation; that the bread and wine (the elements) are offered in the mass as part of a continual sacrifice of Christ and that these literally become the body and blood of Christ. They also teach that the consecrated bread is to be worshipped as Christ.

What they say:

1257 The Lord himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation. He also commands his disciples to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and to baptize them. Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament. (CCC Ibid p.320; para.1257)

Through the ministry of priests the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is completed in union with the sacrifice of Christ the only Mediator, which in the Eucharist is offered through the priests' hands in the name of the whole Church in an unbloody and sacramental manner until the Lord himself comes. (CCC Ibid p.345; para 1369)

“Remembering that the work of redemption is continually accomplished in the mystery of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, priests are to celebrate frequently, indeed daily celebration is strongly recommended, since even if the faithful cannot be present, it is the act of Christ and the Church in which priests fulfil their principal function” (Canon 904 of the revised Canon Law, 1984)

In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist “the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained. (Council of Trent (1551), DS 1651; CCC Ibid p.346; para 1374).

1378 Worship of the Eucharist. In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. “The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession. (CCC Ibid p.347; para 1378)

What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It is not acquired by good works, religious ritual, sacraments or water baptism:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ died at the cross once in a never to be repeated propitiary sacrifice for sin. It cannot be repeated or continued. At the Last Supper the Lord simply asked His followers to have a meal in commemoration of Him. The elements of that meal do not become Christ and (contrary to specific Roman Catholic teaching) on being ‘consecrated’ they cannot be worshipped as biblically that would be idolatry.

For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. (Romans 6:10)
we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:10)

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. (Hebrews 10:12)

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” (1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exod 20:4-6)

EASTERN ORTHODOX (225-300 million)

The Eastern Orthodox Church (known officially as the *Orthodox Catholic Church*) consists of fellowships of independent churches, often by country or ethnicity, including the Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox and the Orthodox Church in America. These are separate from the Oriental Orthodox Church (which includes the Egyptian Coptic Church, the

Ethiopian Orthodox Church and others). Teaching may vary, but common threads exist and the following seeks to reflect what is taught.

1. The Bible

The false teaching:

The Eastern Orthodox Church teaches **Tradition** (which includes the Bible plus every doctrine and creed taught by the church) has been preserved unadulterated and unchanging from the time of Christ and that it is divine truth. They use the Septuagint (and additional books) instead of the Hebrew Scriptures, claiming its inspiration which is not accepted by most Christian churches.

What they say:

"The Orthodox Church is distinguished from other Christian churches in that it has preserved unadulterated the first and most ancient ecclesiastical tradition and teaching, has avoided innovations and personal interpretations of the holy Scriptures and dogmas of the faith..." (Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, *Encountering the Mystery: Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today*, (The Doubleday Religious Publishing Group: New York), 2008, p. 31)

While the Bible is treasured as a valuable written record of God's revelation, it does not contain wholly that revelation. The Bible is viewed as only one expression of God's revelation in the ongoing life of His people. Scripture is part of the treasure of Faith which is known as Tradition. Tradition means that which is "handed on" from one generation to another. In addition to the witness of Faith in the Scripture, the Orthodox Christian Faith is celebrated in the Eucharist; taught by the Fathers; glorified by the Saints; expressed in prayers, hymns, and icons; defended by the seven Ecumenical Councils; embodied in the Nicene Creed; manifested in social concern; and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, it is lived in every local Orthodox parish. The life of the Holy Trinity is manifested in every aspect of the Church's life. Finally, the Church, as a whole, is the guardian of the authentic Christian Faith which bears witness to that Revelation. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: Rev Fr Thomas Fitzgerald "Teachings of the Orthodox Church" (June 11, 1990); <https://www.goarch.org/-/teachings-of-the-orthodox-church>)

"...just before the New Testament era, the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek at Alexandria, Egypt (the so-called Septuagint LXX). This translation included books and portions of books not found in the Hebrew Scriptures (the so-called Apocrypha or Deutero-canonical books). It is this later Greek (LXX) Scripture that is considered the official text for the Orthodox Churches." ("These truths we hold – The Holy Orthodox Church: Her Life and teachings", St Tikhon's Seminary Press, South Canaan, Pennsylvania 18459, United States (1986) - <https://www.stspress.com/shop/books/christianeducation-evangelism/these-truths-we-hold/>; Cited at https://www.stkatherineorthodoxchurch.org/about_orthodoxy2.html; St Katherine Orthodox Church, Carlsbad, CA 92010 United States.)

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that Scripture judges the church and there is no tradition passed on by apostolic succession. Jesus warned about man's tradition being used to set aside God's Word.

Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?..... Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. (Matthew 15:3, 6)

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. (Colossians 2:8)

For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. (Galatians 1:13-14)

2. Salvation

The false teaching:

The Eastern Orthodox Church has no concept of inherited sin (Original sin) only personal sin. It teaches that salvation is obtained only within their church, by good works, water baptism and through grace from its sacraments administered by a priest properly ordained through a claimed apostolic succession in that church. They teach the ultimate object of salvation is for man to be deified (apotheosis), to become as God.

What they say:

Constantine N. Tsirpanlis writes in presenting the Orthodox view, "Now, Adam's sin was a personal choice and act, not a collective guilt nor a 'sin of nature.' Hence, inherited guilt is impossible.... In other words, the posterity of Adam inherited the consequences of his sin, i.e., physical death and mortality, sickness of corruption, and obscurity or distortion of God's image, but not his personal guilt." (Tsirpanlis, *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought and Orthodox Theology*, 52 cited by Michael Horton, in "Three Views on Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism", ed. Stanley N. Gundry and James J. Stamoolis, 1st ed., Zondervan Counterpoints Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 130.

Salvation begins with these three "steps": 1) repent, 2) be baptized, and 3) receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. To repent means to change our mind about how we have been, turning from our sin and committing ourselves to Christ. To be baptized means to be born again by being joined into union with Christ. And to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit means to receive the Spirit who empowers us to enter a new life in Christ, be nurtured in the Church, and be conformed to God's image. (Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America - <http://antiochian.org/1123705533>)

NEW BIRTH is receiving new life and is the way we gain entrance into God's Kingdom and His Church. Jesus said, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). From the beginning the Church has taught that the "water" is the baptismal water and the "Spirit" is the Holy Spirit. The New Birth occurs in baptism, where we die with Christ, are buried with Him, and are raised with Him in the newness of His Resurrection, being joined into union with Him in His glorified humanity (Romans 6:3, 4). (Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America - <http://antiochian.org/1123705631>)

Only by belonging to the Church, or in other words, being in communion with the very essence of Christ through the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, can one attain salvation unto eternal life, thus we can answer the question, Who can be regarded as a member of the Church of Christ? by saying, All those who have been properly baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the true Son of God come in the flesh (1 John 4:2-3), and are united by the grace of the Sacraments in particular the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist administered by the Priesthood of Apostolic Succession. ("The truth we hold" Op.cit.)

The truth – What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that every man inherits the sin and condemnation that came from Adam. It is inherited in both its power and guilt:

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.... And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the

free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification.....For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:14, 16, 19)

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith (Romans 3:21-25)

The Bible teaches that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It is not acquired by church membership, good works, religious ritual, sacraments or water baptism:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)

the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ (Romans 3:22-24)

So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:31)

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:22)

And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. (1 John 3:23)

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

The Bible teaches that a saved believer will be progressively sanctified through their life to gradually become more like Christ. It does not teach that a believer must become like Christ to be saved. Jesus Himself is our sanctification.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God.. (Hebrews 6:1)

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)

3. Mary

The false teaching:

The Eastern Orthodox Church teaches that Mary is 'Mother of God', sinless in her life, perpetually a virgin and was assumed after death into heaven.

What they say:

Mary is called Theotokos, meaning "God-bearer" or "the Mother of God," because she bore the Son of God in her womb and from her He took His humanity. (Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America - <http://antiochian.org/1123706199>)

The Virgin Mary is honored because she is Theotokos the Mother of God not of His divinity, but of His humanity, yet of God in that Jesus Christ was, in the theology of the Church, both God and Man, at one and the same time, in the Incarnation. Therefore, the honor given Mary is due to her relationship to Christ. And this honor, rather than taking away from that due God, makes us more aware of God's majesty; for it is precisely on account of the Son (Himself God) that she is venerated. Of times, when men refuse to honor Mary, it is because they do not believe in the cause of her veneration the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity. We also speak of the Theotokos as being Ever-Virgin, which was officially proclaimed at the 5th Ecumenical Council (Constantinople 553; the dogma concerning Mary as being Theotokos was proclaimed in 431 at the 3rd Ecumenical Council in Ephesus). (*"These truths we hold – The Holy Orthodox Church: Her Life and teachings"*, St Tikhon's Seminary Press , South Canaan, Pennsylvania 18459, United States (1986) - <https://www.stspress.com/shop/books/christianeducation-evangelism/these-truths-we-hold/>; Cited at St Katherine Orthodox Church , Carlsbad, CA 92010 United States.) - https://www.stkatherineorthodoxchurch.org/about_orthodoxy2.html.

As All-Holy and Most-Pure, Mary was free from actual sin, but, in the opinion of most Orthodox theologians, although not dogmatized by the Church, she did fall under the curse of Original Sin as does all mankind. For this reason by virtue of her solidarity with all humanity the Theotokos died a bodily death. Yet, in her case, the resurrection of the body had been anticipated; and she was assumed body and soul into Heaven; and her tomb was found empty an event celebrated in the Feast of the Falling-Asleep (or Dormition) of the Most-Holy Theotokos (Aug. 15). (*"These truths we hold"* Ibid)

The truth – What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that Mary is human and has sinned like any human being. She herself acknowledges her need of a Saviour. There is no Scriptural or historical basis for her being sinless, a perpetual virgin or having been assumed into heaven. She is honoured as the "mother of Jesus", but to call her "Mother of God" or a "Queen" is to exalt her to a divine status which she does not possess in the Bible. Praying to her instead of God is to reject the unique place of Christ in His sacrifice and His gift of salvation.

Everyone has sinned except Jesus Christ –

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ (Romans 3:23-24)

Eternal life is a gift through Jesus only –

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

Mary admits her need of a saviour from sin -

And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name. (Luke 1:46-49)

Mary had children after Jesus and was not perpetually a virgin –

Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him. (Mark 6:3)

Jesus alone is our advocate –

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2 – and also see John 11:25; 14:6; Colossians 1:27)

4. Saints and images

The false teaching:

The Eastern Orthodox Church venerates images extensively arguing that these connect with Christ and the departed saints (including Mary). Prayer is said to be directed through them to the person depicted. (Note: This Church does not venerate statues which is the practice of the Roman Catholic Church)

What they say:

ICONS are images of Christ, of His angels, of His saints, and of events such as the Birth of Christ, His Transfiguration, His death on the Cross, and His Resurrection. Icons actually participate in and thus reveal the reality they express. In the image we see and experience the Prototype. An icon of Christ, for example, reveals something of Christ Himself to us. Icons are windows to heaven, not only revealing the glory of God, but becoming to the worshiper a passage into the Kingdom of God. The history of the use of icons goes back to the early Church-Tradition tells us Luke the Evangelist was the first iconographer. Orthodox Christians do not worship icons, but they honor them greatly because of their participation in heaven's reality. (Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America- <http://antiochian.org/1123706483>)

The Image (or Icon) not only does not contradict the essence of Christianity, but is unfailingly connected with it; and this is the foundation of the tradition that from the very beginning the Good News was brought to the world by the Church both in word and in image. This truth was so self-evident, that Icons found their natural place in the Church, despite the Old Testament prohibition against them and a certain amount of contemporary opposition. ("These truths we hold" Op. cit.)

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible condemns attempting to speak to the dead (by prayer or otherwise) and associates such actions with the sins of witchcraft, necromancy and divination (See Leviticus 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:10-13). Prayer is not made to or in the name of saints – but only to and in the name of Jesus Christ, who is our only mediator with God.

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

The Bible shows that God condemns venerating images and statues as idolatry. See Isaiah 44:9, 13; Isaiah 46:5-7; 44: 15-17; 1 Kings 19:18; Deuteronomy 4:23-24; 7:25-26; Ezekiel 16:17; Isaiah 40:18. Venerating them is a grievous sin – see also Deuteronomy 4:15-19; John 4:24; Romans 1:22-27; 1 Corinthians 10:19-20. God alone is to be venerated and worshipped and also commands we are to create no images of Him.

You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6)

Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. (Romans 1:22-23)

5. Sacraments

The false teaching:

The Eastern Orthodox Church considers their Eucharist as a sacrifice and the consuming of Christ's body and blood under the appearance of bread and wine. It is more than a memorial.

What they say:

EUCCHARIST means "thanksgiving" and early became a synonym for Holy Communion. The Eucharist is the center of worship in the Orthodox Church. Because Jesus said of the bread and wine at the Last Supper, "This is my body," "This ... is ... my blood," and "Do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19, 20), His followers believe-and do-nothing less. In the Eucharist, we partake mystically of Christ's Body and Blood, which impart His life and strength to us. The celebration of the Eucharist was a regular part of the Church's life from its beginning. Early Christians began calling the Eucharist "the medicine of immortality" because they recognized the great grace of God that was received in it. (Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America – <http://antiochian.org/1123705915>)

The Sacraments of the Orthodox Church, like the Church Herself, can be said to possess a double character, for they are at the same time inward and outward, visible and invisible. They combine in themselves both an outward visible sign with an inward spiritual grace. For example, in the Holy Eucharist, we eat the Body and Blood of Christ, although visibly they appear to be bread and wine. Likewise, in Holy Baptism there is an outward washing with water, but simultaneously an inward cleansing of sins. Thus, we often speak of the Sacraments as being mysteries, for, in the sense outlined above, what we see is not what we believe. ("These truths we hold" Op. cit.)

Orthodox Theology sees the Holy Eucharist as a sacrifice and this is affirmed in the words of the Priest, when he says, during the Eucharistic Canon, Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee on behalf of all and for all. The sacrifice offered at the Eucharist is Christ Himself, but He Who brings the sacrifice is also Christ. Christ is, at one and the same time, High Priest and Sacrifice..... According to the Orthodox Church, then, the Eucharist is not just a reminder of Christ's sacrifice or of its enactment, but it is a real sacrifice. On the other hand, however, it is not a new sacrifice, nor a repetition of the Sacrifice of the Cross upon Golgotha. The events of Christ's Sacrifice the Incarnation, the Institution of the Eucharist, the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, are not repeated during the Eucharist, yet they become a present reality. (These truths we hold" Op.cit.)

The truth – What the Bible says:

Jesus died at the cross once in a never to be repeated propitiary sacrifice for sin. There cannot be a continuation or reinstatement of that sacrifice nor is it a present reality in a ritual. At the Last Supper the Lord simply asked His followers to have a meal in commemoration of Him. The elements of that meal do not become Christ and they cannot be worshipped as biblically that would be idolatry.

For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. (Romans 6:10)

We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:10)

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. (Hebrews 10:2)

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6)

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS (25 million)

Seventh Day Adventism (SDA) began in the United States in the 19th century, developing from the Millerite Movement began by William Miller (1782-1849) who prophesied Christ's return in 1844. Later Joseph Bates' (1792-1872) writing "*The Seventh Day Sabbath, A Perpetual Sign*" developed Sabbatarian Adventism that led to SDA Church. Many beliefs of Seventh Day Adventism correspond with biblical Christianity, but some are contrary to the Bible.

1. The Bible

The false teaching:

While Seventh Day Adventists teach the Bible as being authoritative, the teaching by Ellen G. White (1825-1915) is accepted by many Adventists as normative and authoritative. She is claimed to be a prophet and interpreter of Scripture, though many of her prophecies failed and interpretations doubtful. Indeed, their acceptance of her writings amount to a challenge to the unique authority of Scripture.

What they say:

White told her followers in 1909, in her last address to the general session of the church body: "I commend to you this book [the Bible]!" But she then went on to comment: "I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several Testimonies for the Church, given for the people of God. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God's Word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies." (*What Seventh Day Adventists Believe* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1988), 227 cited in Larry A. Nichols, George A. Mather, and Alvin J. Schmidt, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Cults, Sects, and World Religions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 269.

In the last days, as in biblical times, the Holy Spirit has blessed God's people with the gift of prophecy. One who demonstrated this gift was Ellen G. White, a founder of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The Scriptures testify that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and we believe it was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. Her writings speak with prophetic authority and provide comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction to the church. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Seventh Day Adventist Church - <https://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/church/the-gift-of-prophecy/>)

It was seen, also, that while the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as a mediator, the scapegoat typified Satan, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed. When the high priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, removed the sins from the sanctuary, he placed them upon the scapegoat. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty. The scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, never to come again into the congregation of Israel. So will Satan be forever banished from the presence of God and His people, and he will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners. (Ellen G. White "The Great Controversy" (1911) at p.422 - <http://www.greatcontroversy.net/> (See also pp.485-6)

In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear, "without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life. As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away "unto a land not inhabited" (Leviticus 16:22); so Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. (Ellen G. White "The Great Controversy" (1911) at pp.485-486- <http://www.greatcontroversy.net/>)

The truth - What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ paid for our sins on the cross – not anyone else. There is no biblical evidence that the devil bears our sins.

Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)

For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:20)

The Bible teaches that the millennium period is one of peace, abundance and prosperity on the earth and the devil (Satan) is confined in a bottomless pit (not on the earth) for that period.

It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, Even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, The excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord,

The excellency of our God. (Isaiah 35:2)

So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited. (Ezekiel 36:35)

Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow with it. (Amos 9.13) (and see Joel 2:22 and Jeremiah 231:12)

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. (Revelation 20:1-3)

2. Salvation

The false teaching:

The Seventh Day Adventist Church teaches that Christ's atonement on the Cross was not fully completed, but another phase began in 1844 called his 'investigative judgment' (a teaching by Ellen G. White accepted as doctrine). This has no basis for this in the Bible. Some Adventists also teach that there is no assurance of salvation.

What they say:

In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry, which was typified by the work of the high priest in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Seventh Day Adventist Church - <https://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/restoration/christs-ministry-in-the-heavenly-sanctuary/>)

'Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or to feel that they are saved. This is misleading. Every one should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts us, we are not beyond the reach of temptation ... Only he who endures the trial will receive the crown of life.' (Ellen G. White – quoted in Adventist book by Francis D. Nichol, *Answers to Objections* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D.C.) at p. 402

The truth - What the Bible teaches:

There is no evidence for an "investigative judgement" in the Bible. The work of Christ was completed at the cross.

After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop,

and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. (John 19:28-30)

And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God..... or by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. (Hebrews 10:11-12, 14)

The Bible teaches that you may know you are saved and you do not need to 'endure to the end' to know it:

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:13)

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end.. (Hebrews 6:11)

..let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:22)

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

3. After death

The false teaching:

The Seventh Day Adventist church teaches that at death all people remain unconscious (soul sleep) and believers are not with the Lord nor are unbelievers in the torment of hell immediately when they die.

What they say:

The unconscious nothingness of death separates us from the God of life, yet Jesus' defeat of death means the saved can look forward to resurrection and living forever. The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Seventh Day Adventist Church - <https://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/restoration/death-and-resurrection/>)

The truth - What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that when someone dies they are immediately and consciously either with the Lord (believer) or suffering torment in hell. There is no soul sleep.

So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' (Luke 16:19-24)

4. Sabbath

The false teaching:

Seventh Day Adventists teach that the Sabbath (Saturday) is mandatory for Christian worship and even for salvation.

What they say:

The Sabbath is God's gift to us, a time for rest and restoration of our connection to God and others. It reminds us of God's creation and Jesus' grace. The gracious Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. (Seventh Day Adventist Church - <https://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/living/the-sabbath/>)

The truth - What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus did not require Sabbath observance of his disciples. The apostle Paul taught that a Christian may worship God on any day:

Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. And the Pharisees said to Him, "Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" But He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?" And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:23-28)

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ (Colossians 2:16-17)

5. Millennium

The false teaching:

The Seventh Day Adventists teach that the earth will not be occupied by the saints with Christ during the millennium. The unsaved dead are destroyed and not cast into the lake of fire for eternal torment.

What they say:

While the saved reconnect with God, Satan and his followers are trapped on Earth by themselves. After a thousand years God will resurrect the lost for the final judgment before destroying sin and sinners. The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close, Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever. (Seventh Day Adventist Church - <https://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/restoration/the-millennium-and-the-end-of-sin/>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Christ will personally reign on earth from Jerusalem. The saved will reign with him during the 1000 years of the millennium.

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:2-3).

Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jeremiah 23:5-6)

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. (Revelation 20:6)

The Bible teaches that ultimately the unsaved are thrown into the lake of fire and suffer eternal torment. They are not annihilated:

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:10-15)

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' (Mark 9:43-48)

And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)

As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (Jude 7)

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE LATTER DAY SAINTS (15.8 million)

The Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter Day Saints (LDS) is founded on the teaching of Joseph Smith (1805-1844) who claimed to be a visionary and successors such as Brigham young (1801-1877), the latter founding Salt Lake City, Utah where the LDS predominated. Several LDS religious groups exist claiming continuation of Smith's teaching including 'The Community of Christ'. *The Book of Mormon* claimed to have been given to Smith by an angel gives the LDS its name, **Mormon** and its theology, **Mormonism**. The LDS self-identifies as Christian, but many of its teachings are contrary to the Bible and Christian orthodoxy.

1. The Bible

The false teaching:

The Mormons teach that the writing of its founder Joseph Smith including the *Book of Mormon* and other texts are divine revelation and that their President and hierarchy are divinely inspired. In this way they invest such writings and church officials with an authority equal to or greater than the Bible.

What they say:

Latter-day Saints believe that God still speaks to humankind, that He has called new apostles and prophets and that revelation flows today as it did anciently. Further, many of those revelations have been formally incorporated into new volumes of scripture. These include the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ; the Doctrine and Covenants, a collection of revelations to Joseph Smith and subsequent presidents of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and the Pearl of Great Price, which includes the writings of Moses and Abraham as well as modern writings of Joseph Smith. (<https://www.mormonnewsroom.org/topic/core-beliefs>)

The Bible isn't the only book of scripture. Learn what the prophets in the Book of Mormon had to say. (<https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/bible-prophecies#section1>)

That the Bible and Book of Mormon are both divinely revealed scripture. (Articles of faith (1842) by Joseph Smith for the Mormon Church - <https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/articles-of-faith>)

Today, as prophet, seer, and revelator, the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holds all of the priesthood keys to prayerfully discern and reveal God's words. This is how God leads and directs His children—through divine guidance. Many spiritual gifts are given to others as well, at all levels of Christ's Church—from the individual to his or her own family to those in senior leadership roles. Members of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Seventy, and stake presidents and bishops each receive inspiration appropriate for their "stewardship," or for the people they lead. Understanding the current needs of the Church membership is an ongoing process, and from worldwide general conferences to meetings of local congregations, inspired leaders seek God's inspiration at every step. They search the foundational revelations that are found in ancient and modern scriptures, they discuss important matters in councils, and they prayerfully seek confirmation from God through the Holy Ghost as they govern and guide. (<https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/divine-guidance>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches the sufficiency of Scripture for us:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and (2 Peter 1:2-3)

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Corinthians 2:12-13)

The Bible warns against adding or subtracting to Scripture – which includes relying on other texts as if they are God's truth.

You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. (Deuteronomy 4:2)

Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar. (Proverbs 30:5-6)

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19)

2. God

The false teaching:

The Mormons teach that God was once a mortal man living on earth and evolved to be God. Man in the same way can become God. Man's goal is to be God. They also teach a plurality of gods – rejecting that there is only one God and also rejecting the Christian teaching of the Trinity.

What they say:

"God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make himself visible—I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with Him, as one man talks and communes with another. (Joseph Smith, "King Follett Discourse" (1844) - <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1971/04/the-king-follett-sermon?lang=eng>

"We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see.....(Joseph Smith, "King Follett Discourse" (1844) - <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1971/04/the-king-follett-sermon?lang=eng>

"How consoling to the mourners when they are called to part with a husband, wife, father, mother, child, or dear relative, to know that, although the earthly tabernacle is laid down and dissolved, they shall rise again to dwell in everlasting burnings in immortal glory, not to sorrow, suffer, or die any more, but they shall be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What is it? To inherit the same power, the same glory and the same exaltation, until you arrive at the station of a god, and ascend the throne of eternal power, the same as those who have gone

before.” (Joseph Smith, “King Follett Discourse” (1844) - <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1971/04/the-king-follett-sermon?lang=eng>

“I will preach the plurality of Gods, ... I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit.” (Joseph Smith, The Christian Godhead—Plurality of Gods,” a sermon preached on June 16, 1844; quoted in Anthony Hoekema, The Four Major Cults (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 35.)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that God has always existed and transcends Creation which He made; He is spirit and never changes as He is perfect. Man cannot evolve into or in any way become God.

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1)

For I am the Lord, I do not change. (Malachi 3:6).

The Father....., with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (James 1:17)

Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God (Psalm 90:2)

God is not a man (Numbers 23:19)

For I am God, and not man (Hosea 11:9)

The Bible teaches there is only one God and He does not share His divinity with any created being or thing. He alone must be worshipped.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! (Deuteronomy 6:4)

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.....“You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20 2-6)

3. Jesus

The false teaching:

Mormons teach that Jesus Christ was a created being, a spirit child of a physical heavenly Father with an unnamed wife. Also, that Lucifer is the spirit-brother of Jesus. Mormons claim that Jesus Christ progressed by obedience until he became a god. They deny his unique deity, His sinlessness and His supernatural conception by the Holy Ghost. In the past they have also claimed He was begotten physically (sexually) by the Father.

What they say:

"Elohim is literally the Father of the spirit of Jesus Christ and also of the body in which Jesus Christ performed His mission in the flesh..." (First Presidency and Council of the Twelve, "God the Father," compiled by Gordon Allred, (1916), 150.)

"A plan of salvation was needed for the people of earth so Jesus offered a plan to the Father and Satan offered a plan to the father but Jesus' plan was accepted. In effect the Devil wanted to be the Savior of all Mankind and to 'deny men their agency and to dethrone god,'" ... "Jesus Christ, Lucifer, and all of us were spirit children of God in the pre-mortal world" (Bruce R. McConkie (LDS 'General Authority') Mormon Doctrine (1958), 193, 278.)

Bruce R. McConkie (LDS 'General Authority'): "The appointment of Jesus to be the Savior of the worlds was contested by one of the other sons of God. He was called Lucifer, son of the morning. Haughty, ambitious, and covetous of power and glory, this spirit-brother of Jesus desperately tried to become the savior of mankind." [Bruce R. McConkie (LDS 'General Authority') Mormon Doctrine, 193.]

"Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in heaven" (John A. Widstoe, ed., Discourses of Brigham Young (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1954); from Young's Journal of Discourses (1901), 1:50-51)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that God the Father does not have a physical body. He is spirit, transcending creation and is omnipresent. He is invisible, but can make Himself visible at His will. It follows that the Mormon claim that the Father has a physical body is untrue.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead (Romans 1:20)

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:17)

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. (Hebrews 11:27)

Jesus Christ is God incarnate, the second person of the Godhead (see 'Trinity') and the Creator of all things. He was never an angel or a created being. He was conceived supernaturally by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary who was a virgin at that time.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)
Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

[Jesus]... is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:15-17)

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." (Matthew 1:18-23)

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God (Luke 1:31-35)

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

4. Trinity

The false teaching:

The Mormons teach that the trinity of Father, Son and Spirit are three separate Gods. They reject the biblical and historic Christian teaching on the Trinity.

What they say:

We believe in God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. We believe that They are separate beings but share the same purpose. We believe that we are all God’s spirit children. The purpose and desire of each member of the Godhead is to follow the Father’s plan in helping us all become like Them and enjoy eternal life. We worship Jesus Christ as our Savior and Redeemer. Like us, Jesus was created in the image of God, the Father, and They both have perfected bodies of flesh and bone. <https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/godhead>

The Trinity of traditional Christianity is referred to as the Godhead by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon). Like other Christians, Latter-day Saints believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost). Yet, Church teachings about the Godhead differ from those of traditional Christianity. For example, while some believe the three members of the Trinity are of one substance, Latter-day Saints believe they are three physically separate beings, but fully one in love, purpose and will. <https://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/the-godhead>

God is often referred to in the Church as Heavenly Father, because He is the Father of all human spirits and they are created in His image (Genesis 1:27). It is an appropriate term for a God who is kind and just, all wise and all powerful. Mormons believe He has a human-like body but is immortal and perfected. <https://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/the-godhead>

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches the existence of a Trinity within the Godhead – three persons coequal in authority and substance, being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although the word ‘Trinity’ is not in the Bible, the teaching is present.

And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”(Mark 1:10-11)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

“...we worship one God in three persons and three persons in one God, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one. (Excerpt from the Athanasian Creed)

5. Salvation

The false teaching:

The Mormons teach that every person is a spirit child, the progeny of God the Father and one of his spirit-wives. Salvation is returning to heaven from which mankind originally came. They reject the biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone in Christ alone, but teach the requirement of good works, water baptism for salvation and obedience to church teaching as necessary for ‘exaltation’ the highest level of heaven in their teaching.

What they say:

God is not only our Ruler and Creator; He is also our Heavenly Father. All men and women are literally the sons and daughters of God. “Man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal [physical] body” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith [1998], 335). (<https://www.lds.org/topics/spirit-children-of-heavenly-parents?lang=eng>)

“We were first begotten as spirit babies in heaven and then born naturally on earth” [Joseph Smith, Journal of Discourses, vol. 4, 218.]

Baptism is necessary to receive eternal life, so Jesus charged His Apostles to “teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19). (<https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/what-is-baptism>)

“Men [and women] should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life . . . they should . . . be restored unto that which is good. And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil” ([Alma 41:3–4](#)). Jesus Christ taught that to qualify for all that Heavenly Father has, you must “[do] the will of my Father which is in heaven” ([Matthew 7:21](#)). Your eternal reward will be the result of Jesus Christ’s Atonement coupled with your willingness to live His doctrine and receive His saving ordinances such as baptism. <https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/your-eternal-reward>

“*We are not saved by grace alone*” (Boyd K. Packer, acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Brigham Young University Address on February 1, 1998).

Joseph Smith had prayed to know which of all of the churches was true. In answer, Jesus Christ and God the Father appeared to him and spoke directly to him, telling him that none of the churches had the fulness of the gospel. They told Joseph that he would be the instrument to reestablish Christ’s Church as it had been organized during Jesus’s earthly ministry. By Christ’s authority, twelve Apostles were again called to lead that Church and receive direct revelation. This direct communication with the Savior continues today, and He is at the head of and directs the work of His Church. <https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/jesus-christs-church>

Some gifts coming from the Atonement are universal, infinite, and unconditional. These include His ransom for Adam’s original transgression so that no member of the human family is held responsible for that sin. Another universal gift is the Resurrection from the dead of every man, woman, and child who lives, has ever lived, or ever will live on earth. Other aspects of Christ’s atoning gift are conditional. They depend on one’s diligence in keeping God’s commandments. For example, while all members of the human family are freely given a reprieve from Adam’s sin through no effort of their own, they are not given a reprieve from their own sins unless they pledge faith in Christ, repent of those sins, are baptized in His name, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and confirmation into Christ’s Church, and press forward in faithful endurance the remainder of life’s journey. (<http://jesuschrist.lds.org/his-life-and-teachings/articles/the-atonement-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible does not teach that we are spirit-children of God, but that we come into existence by conception and then physical birth into this world. We have life because of our spirit within us.

For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. (Psalm 139:13-16)

Thus says God the Lord Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it. (Isaiah 42:5)

The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him (Zechariah 12:1)

The Bible teaches salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It is not acquired by good works, religious ritual, sacraments or water baptism:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)

Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:22-24)

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household. (Acts 16:31)

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:22)

And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. (1 John 3:23)

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

6. After death

The false teaching:

The teaching that in the afterlife, faithful Mormons will be in the highest level of three kingdoms with sins forgiven (celestial kingdom) The second level is for moral non-Mormons and less than faithful Mormons (terrestrial kingdom). The lowest is for the carnal and sinful in life (telestial kingdom). They claim that Zion will be established during the millennium in America.

What they say:

At death, our spirit leaves our deceased body. While our bodies remain on the earth, our spirits will reside in a state of rest or in a state of learning until the day of resurrection and judgment. These states have been called respectively “spirit paradise” and “spirit prison”; in the latter, those who never learned about Christ’s teachings or received His ordinances will have the opportunity to do so. At the time of resurrection, all mankind will be restored to their physically perfected forms..... Building upon the Apostle Paul’s teachings to the Corinthians, Latter-day Saint doctrine teaches that there are three degrees of glory: the celestial, terrestrial and telestial. While all human beings will receive the gift of eternal life, or an eternal union of the body and spirit, God desires for us to live in such a way that we also receive the gift of exaltation — eternal life with our families in God’s presence in the celestial kingdom. (<https://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/plan-of-salvation>)

Mormon scripture describes the three corresponding states of postmortal existence as the celestial kingdom, the terrestrial kingdom and the telestial kingdom. Though all three are understood to be degrees of glory, Mormons believe the highest state — the celestial kingdom — to be where God is (or, as those of other faiths understand it, heaven).(<https://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/heaven>)

In the literal gathering of Israel and the restoration of the ten tribes, and that Zion will be built on the American continent when Christ reigns on the earth. (Articles of Faith (1842) by Joseph Smith for the Mormon Church - (<https://www.mormon.org/beliefs/articles-of-faith>))

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that when someone dies they are immediately and consciously either with the Lord (believer) in heaven or suffering torment in hell. There is no post-death state of ‘rest’ or ‘learning’ (**soul sleep**) until the resurrection.

So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (Luke 16:19-24)

The Bible does not teach that Zion will be established on the American continent. That continent is also not mentioned in the Bible.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES (8.3 million)

The Jehovah's Witnesses (also called 'Watchtower Society') arose from the teaching of Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) who founded 'Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society' in Pennsylvania in 1879. His writings and those of his successors emphasised that the Watchtower Society alone could properly interpret Scripture. Watchtower members became known as Jehovah's Witnesses under the presidency of Judge Rutherford (1869-1942). Jehovah's Witness teachings are controversial and many are contrary to the Bible and orthodox Christianity.

1. Jesus

The false teaching:

The Jehovah Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ is not God, but simply a created being and so there was no incarnation. They say that when Jesus died He was not physically resurrected, but was recreated into a spiritual body.

What they say:

"..we have learned from the Bible that Jesus is not Almighty God and that there is no Scriptural basis for the Trinity doctrine." - John 14:28 (<https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/jehovah-witness-beliefs/>)

Jesus' early followers did not view him as being equal to Almighty God. For example, the apostle Paul wrote that after Jesus was resurrected, God "exalted him [Jesus] to a superior position." Obviously, Paul did not believe that Jesus was Almighty God. Otherwise, how could God exalt Jesus to a superior position?

(<https://www.jw.org/en/bible-teachings/questions/is-jesus-almighty/>)

In the New World Translation, the verse is rendered: "In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **a god**." (John 1:1) (<https://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/wp20081101/was-the-word-god/>)

Jehovah's Witnesses distinguish between three states of Christ's person: a pre-human, human, and post-human state. Before Jesus was born of Mary, he existed as the living Word of God. He was created by or born of God, but he was not God, who by definition had no beginning. In this position, he enjoyed a superiority to all other creatures. As a point of fact, Jesus existed in this pre-human state as Michael the Archangel. (*New Heavens and a New Earth* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1953), 28–30.)

So the evidence indicates that the Son of God was known as Michael before he came to earth and is known also by that name since his return to heaven where he resides as the glorified spirit Son of God. (*Reasoning From the Scriptures* 1989 p. 218).

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Christ is God, who being supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit was born of Mary at Bethlehem. Jesus said He was God and this is recognised in the Scriptures. He was never an angel or any created being, but eternally God. The early church recognised and accepted the divinity of Christ from the time of the apostles.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. (John 1:1)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

[Jesus]... He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:15-17)

Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. (John 5:18)

*Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM. (John 8:58)
I and My Father are one. (John 10:30)*

*Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:11)
For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Colossians 2:9)*

*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory. (1 Timothy 3:16)*

And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. (1 John 5:20)

The Bible is the Word of God, but unfortunately the Jehovah's Witnesses have created their own version, called the 'New World Translation' which they have amended to suit their false doctrine. For comments by various scholars:

'Scholars comments on the New World Translation' in John Ankerberg and John Weldon Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions (Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon, 1999) at pp. 162-173)

'Is the New World translation a valid version of the Bible?' in Got Questions Ministries, *Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered.* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002–2013).

'The New World Translation and the Bible' in Walter Martin *The Kingdom of the cults* (Bethany House Publishers, Minnesota, 2003) at pp. 92-106.

The Bible teaches that Jesus died and physically resurrected from the dead. After His resurrection, Jesus could be touched and ate and drank with His disciples.

Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:24-29)

Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"— knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead. (John 21:12-14)

Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the

Scriptures to us?" So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" (Luke 24:30-34)

2. Salvation

The false teaching:

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that salvation is found only among the Jehovah's Witnesses, and it requires good works and baptism. They argue that some such as wilful murderers cannot be saved. Further, that salvation is only available for distinct classes of humanity if they are resurrected for the millennium (See later), but even then continuing eternal life may depend on performance and passing tests.

What they say:

Salvation. Deliverance from sin and death is possible through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus. (Matthew 20:28; Acts 4:12) To benefit from that sacrifice, people must not only exercise faith in Jesus but also change their course of life and get baptized. (Matthew 28:19, 20; John 3:16; Acts 3:19, 20) A person's works prove that his faith is alive. (James 2:24, 26) However, salvation cannot be earned—it comes through "the undeserved kindness of God."—Galatians 2:16, 21. (<https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/jehovah-witness-belief>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches salvation is available for all of humanity when by grace alone they possess faith in Christ alone. Every human being is a sinner who can become saved by Christ. Salvation is not gained by good works, the approval of religious authorities or water baptism:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)

Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:22-24)

So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:31)

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:22)

And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. (1 John 3:23)

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

3. Death, heaven and hell

The false teaching:

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that at death the soul of a person ceases to exist so God recreates it for the final resurrection (**soul sleep**). Heaven is not open to all humanity on faith in Christ, but there are three classes (a) Heaven for presently 'justified' 144,000 faithful ('Anointed class') Jehovah's Witnesses; (b) Earth for the rest ('Earthly class') of their group if they remain faithful throughout the millennium; and (c) Any saved humanity will live on earth during the millennium but must pass tests or lose their eternal life and be annihilated. Any unsaved will be annihilated at death and not resurrected.

What they say:

Death. People who die pass out of existence. They do not suffer in a fiery hell of torment. God will bring billions back from death by means of a resurrection. However, those who refuse to learn God's ways after being raised to life will be destroyed forever with no hope of a resurrection. (<https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/jehovah-witness-beliefs/>)

Does God torment people with fire after death? Since the Bible shows that the dead are unconscious, hellfire is clearly a false teaching that slanders God. The very idea of tormenting people with fire disgusts him. (<https://www.jw.org/en/publications/books/good-news-from-god/what-hope-for-the-dead/>)

Heaven. Jehovah God, Jesus Christ, and the faithful angels reside in the spirit realm. A relatively small number of people—144,000—will be resurrected to life in heaven to rule with Jesus in the Kingdom. (<https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/jehovah-witness-beliefs/>)

Jesus is the King of God's Kingdom in heaven. He began ruling in 1914. (<https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/jehovah-witness-beliefs/>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that when someone dies they are immediately and consciously either with the Lord (believer) enjoying heaven or suffering torment in hell. There is no post-death state of 'rest' or 'learning' (**soul sleep**) until the resurrection.

So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. "Then he

cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (Luke 16:19-24)

The Bible teaches that anyone accepting Christ by faith in this life enters immediately and forever into Christ's kingdom and there is no opportunity for salvation beyond the grave. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name (John 1:12)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16)

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (John 5:24)

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:9-10, 13)

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' (Luke 16:19-31)

It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27)

The Bible teaches that hell is a place of eternal separation from God. Once there, an unsaved person (unbelievers in Christ) consciously suffers everlasting torment. There is no annihilation of the unsaved as taught by the Jehovah's Witnesses.

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matthew 25:46)

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.' (Mark 9:43-48)

As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (Jude 7)

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever. (Revelation 14:9-11)

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

The Bible teaches that all the saved (believers in Christ) have God's promise of a home in heaven, a place of eternal joy. They go there instantly after physical death. Every believer will stand before God in heaven and they will return with Christ to the earth at His Second Coming.

We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:8)

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:1-3)

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. (Revelation 19:11-14)

ONENESS PENTECOSTALISM (4 million)

Oneness Pentecostalism derived originally from the mainstream Pentecostal movement, but differed from them on issues such as the Trinity and on Baptism. Connected organisations include the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW), United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI) and the Apostolic World Christian Fellowship (AWCF).

1. Jesus and the Trinity

The false teaching:

The Oneness Pentecostals accept the deity of Jesus Christ, but reject the biblical teaching of the Trinity, that there is one God of three persons. They claim that Jesus is at the same time each of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In teaching that Jesus pre-existed his birth as the Father, they deny the pre-existence of the Word as the Son.

What they say:

There is one God, who has revealed Himself as our Father, in His Son Jesus Christ, and as the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is God manifested in flesh. He is both God and man. (<https://www.upci.org/about/our-beliefs>)

The beautiful message of Scripture is that our Creator became our Savior. The God against whom we sinned is the One who forgives us. God loved us so much that He came in flesh to save us. He gave of Himself; He did not send someone else. Moreover, our Creator-Savior is also the indwelling Spirit who is ever-present to help us. (<https://www.upci.org/about/about-oneness-pentecostalism>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ embodied fully the divine nature and that God is fully revealed in Him. It teaches that the Father and Son love each other, know and talk to each other, so they cannot be the same person.

“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:16-17; See also Matthew 17:5 and 2 Peter 1:17)

The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. (John 3:35)

For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. (John 5:20)

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.” (John 11:41-42; and see John 17:1-26)

Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, saying, “I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.” (John 12:28)

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. (Matthew 11:27-28; and see Luke 10:22, John 7:29)

The Bible teaches the Trinitarian concept that the Holy Spirit is a divine person within the godhead of one nature with and coequal to the Father and the Son.

For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. (Luke 12:12)

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of (John 15:26)

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. (Acts 13:2-4)

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30)

The Bible teaches that the authority of the one God is incorporated in the three persons of the godhead: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live. (1 Corinthians 8:6)

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. (1 Peter 1:1-2)

2. Salvation

The false teaching:

The Oneness Pentecostals teach that there are conditions on salvation beyond faith in Christ alone, for example they assert the necessity of baptism by full immersion in the name of Jesus only; the baptism of the Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking in tongues and obedience to the holiness code in their movement. The implication is that only Oneness Pentecostals can be saved.

What they say:

The saving gospel is the good news that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. We obey the gospel (II Thessalonians 1:8; I Peter 4:17) by repentance (death to sin), water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ (burial), and the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial sign of speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance (resurrection). (<https://www.upci.org/about/our-beliefs>)

As Christians we are to love God and others. We should live a holy life inwardly and outwardly, and worship God joyfully. The supernatural gifts of the Spirit, including healing, are for the church today. (<https://www.upci.org/about/our-beliefs>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. It is not acquired by good works, religious practice, attempting to live a holy life or water baptism.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:31)

Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" (Romans 3:22-24)

So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:31)

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:9-10)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16-17).

The Bible teaches baptism is conducted after a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ, i.e., after they have received salvation. Jesus told His disciples to be baptised as an act of existing faith. Baptism is also a symbol of the believer's identification with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The call to be baptised at Acts 2:38 must be read in context and in the light of the command of Jesus at Matthew 28:19 that baptism be conducted in the triune name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. (Matthew 28:19-20)

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. (Mark 16:15-16)

Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. (Romans 6:3-5)

The Bible teaches that speaking in tongues may be given as a gift of the Holy Spirit, but as this or another gift may be given at any time to a believer, speaking in tongues itself cannot be taken alone as a sign of salvation.

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:4-13)

And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? (1 Corinthians 12:28-30)

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. (1 John 4:14-16)

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY (1.5 million)

The 'Unity School of Christianity', also informally known as "Unity Church" ('**Unity**'), was originally founded by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore in Kansas, United States, spreading to many countries. Its beliefs are eclectic and taken from a variety of religious faiths that includes New Thought, Theosophy, Spiritism, New Age and Eastern Mysticism. Fundamentally, it is not Christianity as it denies virtually every biblical doctrine of the Christian faith. Only a selection of its many false teachings is outlined here.

1. God

The False teaching:

Unity teaches that God is not a person, but spiritual energy manifest in nature (animate and inanimate) as well as being every human being's 'higher self'. He is therefore a force that cannot be distinguished from human beings. Similarly, they teach that the Holy Spirit is not a person, but a power.

What they say:

God is not a person who has set creation in motion and gone away and left it to run down like a clock. God is Spirit, infinite Mind, the immanent force and intelligence everywhere manifest in nature. (Charles Fillmore, *Talks on Truth* (1926) page 9 at paragraph 6 -

http://newthoughtlibrary.com/fillmoreCharles/talks/talks_009.htm#TopOfText)

"..each rock, tree, animal, everything visible, is a manifestation of the one spirit-god, differing only in degree of manifestation." (Charles Fillmore cited in Emilie Cady, *Lessons in Truth* (Lees Summit: Unity, 1962), pp. 8-9)

The Father is Principle, the Son is that Principle revealed in creative plan, the Holy Spirit is the executive power of both Father and Son carrying out the creative plan.” (Charles Fillmore, *The Metaphysical Dictionary* (Lees Summit: Unity, 1962), p. 629.

We believe that divine intelligence is present in every atom of man and matter, and that the more abundant life, which Jesus promised, is flooding the world and quickening the minds and the bodies of men everywhere. (Charles Fillmore, Unity Statement of Faith - <https://www.truthunity.net/statement-of-faith>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that God is not an impersonal force, but a very personal God who created all things and exists apart from His creation. You can talk to God, share your feelings with Him and He will respond. He is a loving Father who has compassion and comforts us.

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:4-5)

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Hebrews 1:1-3)

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” (Romans 8:15)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

The Bible teaches that mankind is not divine, but fallen and in need of salvation due to our sin nature. God became man in Jesus Christ to take away our sins and to bring the hope of salvation (see later).

But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away. (Isaiah 64:6)

The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

For you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:3)

Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. (1 John 3:4-5)

2. Jesus

The false teaching:

Unity teaches that Jesus was only a man who gained a “Christ consciousness” (a state of perfection) after many reincarnations in which he sought ‘salvation’. Unity rejects the biblical

teaching that Jesus died as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind, denies he was resurrected or that he will return to earth again. The Jesus Christ of the Unity Church is certainly not that of the Bible.

What they say:

The difference between Jesus and us is not one of inherent spiritual capacity, but in difference of demonstration of it. Jesus was potentially perfect, and He expressed that perfection; we are potentially perfect, [but] we have not yet expressed it....Jesus attained a divine awareness and unfoldment without parallel in this period of the world's history. (Turner, Elizabeth Sand. What Unity Teaches. Lees Summit, MO: Unity School of Christianity, 1952 at page 3)

Unity's Teachings cover a broad spectrum of Spiritual ideas, concepts and laws all inspired in part by the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Although we believe Jesus was a master teacher of all the spiritual traditions of his time, which include Mystical Judaism, Taoism, Buddhism, and the Vedic Teachings of Hinduism, we believe that there are many wayshowers along the path. (Unity Spiritual Life Centre - <http://www.unitychurch.org/we-believe>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, God manifested in human form, being fully divine while fully human. He is unique and no human being can become divine.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it....And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-5, 14)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. (John 5:18)

Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:10-12)

[Christ Jesus].. who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:6-11)

Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And

He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:12-18)

3. Salvation

The false teaching:

Unity teaches that salvation is gained by recognising each person is innately divine and as much a Son of God as Jesus. No evil, sin, devil or poverty exists and a person is reincarnated until he learns this truth and is perfected.

What they say:

We believe that the dissolution of spirit, soul, and body, caused by death, is annulled by rebirth of the same spirit and soul in another body here on earth. We believe the repeated incarnations of man to be a merciful provision of our loving Father to the end that all may have opportunity to attain immortality through regeneration, as did Jesus. "This corruptible must put on incorruption." (Charles Fillmore, Unity Statement of Faith – <https://www.truthunity.net/statement-of-faith>).

We believe that the blood of Jesus represents eternal life; that the body of Jesus represents incorruptible substance. We believe that these are original elements in Being and that they can be appropriated by all who, through faith and understanding, attain the Christ standard of spirituality. (Charles Fillmore, Unity Statement of Faith – <https://www.truthunity.net/statement-of-faith>).

We believe that the Word of God is the thought of God expressed in creative ideas and that these ideas are the primal attributes of all enduring entities in the universe, visible and invisible. The Logos of the first chapter of the Gospel of John is the God idea or Christ that produced Jesus, the perfect man. We believe that the Scriptures are the testimonials of men who have, in a measure, apprehended the divine Logos, but that their writings should not be taken as final. (Charles Fillmore, Unity Statement of Faith – <https://www.truthunity.net/statement-of-faith>).

We believe it's time to wake up, and that this was the essence of Jesus' Message. We believe Jesus was the individual who most clearly demonstrates this Divine Spark, and his purpose was to show us how to express ours. In Unity we use the term "Christ" to refer to this Divine Spark. Salvation then is the expanding of our awareness to embrace and demonstrated our own innate Divinity. We see Jesus as a Master Teacher of Universal Truths and an incredible example of the Christ in Expression. (Unity Spiritual life Centre – <http://www.unitychurch.org/we-believe>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God (see previous) came into the world to be the unique sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins and our salvation. Man cannot by esoteric knowledge or awareness or any form of 'self-improvement' become 'saved'. Every person must have faith in Jesus Christ alone to receive salvation.

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

*For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11)
And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:2)*

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Rom 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)

Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:22-24)

So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:31)

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Rom 1:16–17).

The Bible teaches that a person physically dies once. The believer's spirit then enters the presence of God in heaven, but the unbeliever goes to a place of suffering. After death there is no second chance. There is no reincarnation.

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27)

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (Philippians 1:21)

Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Corinthians 2:9)

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matthew 25:46)

UNIFICATION CHURCH (over 1 million)

The Reverend Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012) started the "Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity", later also called the "Family Federation for World Peace and Unification" (shortened to Unification Church) in South Korea in 1954. Its members are commonly called "Moonies". His teaching centered on himself, claiming to be 'God-incarnate' and providing claimed

new 'revelation' in his book '*The Divine Principle*' (1967) and published sermons. His stated goal was a one world religion and one world government under his control. The teaching of Moon and the Unification Church is contrary to the Bible in many respects.

1. Bible

The false teaching:

The Unification Church (UC) teaches that Moon's "The Divine Principle" and his claimed 'revelations' take precedence over the Bible. The UC claims Moon is divine and communicates 'new truth'.

What they say:

The Old and New Testament scriptures are a record of God's progressive revelation to humankind. The Bible is not the truth itself, but a textbook teaching truth, and its purpose is to bring us to Christ, who is himself the living truth.... Truth is unique, eternal, and unchanging, so any new message from God will be in conformity with the Bible and will only illuminate it more deeply. In these last days, God will speak anew in order that humanity may accomplish what is yet undone. (*People Serving People*, 13)

The Holy Scriptures is a set of three volumes of True Parents' messages—the Cheon Seong Gyeong, the Pyeong Hwa Gyeong and the Cham Bumo Gyeong—the Cham Bumo Gyeong being the latest volume now available for purchase. The Cheon Seong Gyeong is a collection of internal guidance given by True Parents. The Pyeong Hwa Gyeong is a compilation of True Parents' messages on world peace given around the globe throughout their ministry. The Cham Bumo Gyeong details True Parents' life course in their own words, going deeper into the meaning of True Parents' work and vision. (From the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, USA website – see <https://hsabooks.com/collections/the-eight-textbooks>)

The Divine Principle is an unprecedented new worldview, new cosmology, new view of life, new view of providence, and new view of history. It is an integrated principle that embraces all religions, doctrines and philosophical tenets into one, while preserving the unique characteristics of each ((From the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, USA website – see <http://dplife.info/>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches the sufficiency of Scripture for us. It is inspired by Almighty God and is complete and so no 'new truth' can come into existence.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and (2 Peter 1:2-3)

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Corinthians 2:12-13)

The Bible warns against adding or subtracting to Scripture:

You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. (Deuteronomy 4:2)

Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar. (Proverbs 30:5-6)

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19)

The Bible teaches that we should follow the commandment of God and not the ideas, philosophies or traditions of men:

He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? (Matthew 15:3)

Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' " (Matthew 15:7-9; and see Mark 7:8-9, 13)

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. (Colossians 2:8)

2. God

The false teaching:

The UC teaches that Moon is the incarnation of God on earth, that he is greater than Jesus Christ (see later) and is the Messiah. Moon also claimed to be the 'Spirit of Truth' and that it is destined that a future physical trinity will involve God, Moon and Moon's wife. The teaching does not recognise a Trinity involving Father, Son and Holy Spirit as in biblical Christianity. The UC view of God is of a perpetual energy with masculine and feminine characteristics and a positive and negative as in Taoism.

What they say:

"I am the incarnation of God, the whole world is in my hands, and I will conquer and subjugate the world. God is now throwing Christianity away and is now establishing a new religion, and this new religion is the Unification Church. All the Christians in the world are destined to be absorbed by our movement.

There have been saints, prophets, many religious leaders in past human history. But Master Moon here, is more than any of those people, and greater than Jesus himself....I am a thinker, I am your brain. When you join the effort with me, you can do everything in utter obedience to me, because what I am doing is not done at random, but what I am doing is under God's command." (Sun Myung Moon quoted in *Time Magazine* June 14, 1976)

"Many Christians seem to worship three Gods: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.... Christians are not monotheists in faith and practice." (Young Oon Kim, *Speeches on Unification Teaching* (Barrytown, NY, 1986), 4)

God is one person only, with dual characteristics (positive/negative; male/female). He is not omniscient. God is the author of all religions; each one is a part of His attempt at restoration." If you want to understand what God is you have only to investigate Father [Moon] to find what God is ... Father is visible God" (*The 120 Day Training Manual*).

It is a miracle of miracles that for the first time in history a man has succeeded in attaining the position of Adam. He has secured the status of the owner of true love and received God's anointing as the True Parent of humanity. It is an amazing fact that his lifetime coincides with yours, and that you and he breathe the same air. He is the horizontal True Parent, who comes to rescue fallen humanity. I, Reverend Moon, gained victory in that position. And on that foundation, on January 13, 2001, I dedicated to Heaven the "Coronation Ceremony of God's Kingship." By that ceremony I liberated and released God, the vertical True Parent who has taken responsibility for the Providence of Restoration. In all of history, this was the highest and greatest blessing humanity has ever received. This victory was absolute, unique, unchanging and eternal. Through this absolute providential victory, God's body and mind are completely liberated! (Sun Myung Moon, (Speech) *Declaration Rally for the Era of the Kingdom of Peace in Heaven and Earth: God's Ideal Family and the kingdom of the Peaceful Ideal World* (March 25-April 3, 2006 - http://www.unification.net/2006/20060202_1.html)

An object is the full reflection of the subject. So man is the visible form of God, and God is the invisible form of man. Subject and object are one in essence. God and man are one. Man is incarnate God. (Sun Myung Moon, *God's will and the world: God's hope for man* (Speech) October 20, 1973, Washington, DC - <http://www.unification.net/gww/gww-13.html>)

Originating in Reverend Moon's teachings, Unification Thought is a philosophy and ideology based on theism and the universal values common to all the world's major religions. (http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org/rev_moon_teaching.html)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that anyone who claims to be Jesus Christ (who is the true incarnation of God) or the Messiah, claims His status or authority or perverts the teaching of the Bible is a false teacher. On this basis, Moon is a false teacher and a false Christ.

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. (2 Peter 2:1-3)

If anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. 'Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. (Matthew 24:23-26 – and see Mark 13:22)

The Bible teaches (contrary to UC teaching) that God is not energy or an impersonal force, but a very personal God who created all things and exists apart from His creation. You can talk to God, share your feelings with Him and He will respond. He is a loving Father who has compassion and comforts us.

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:4-5)

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Hebrews 1:1-3)

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

The Bible teaches the existence of a Trinity within the Godhead i.e., as one God. This comprises three persons coequal in authority and substance, being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although the word 'Trinity' is not in the Bible, the teaching is present. The UC teaching on the Trinity is a distortion.

And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."(Mark 1:10-11)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

"...we worship one God in three persons and three persons in one God, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one. (Excerpt from the Athanasian Creed)

3. Jesus

The false teaching:

The UC teaches that Jesus Christ is not an eternal deity, but only a man. They claim his mission was to restore the relationship between God and man by marriage, but he died prematurely. They reject the Bible teaching that Christ died for all men and also the physical resurrection of Christ. Moon claimed that his teaching developed through spirit guides and that he came in a 'Second Advent' as another redeemer to complete Jesus' mission.

What they say:

At age fifteen, while deep in prayer he had a vision of Jesus Christ who called him to dedicate his life to God and the salvation of humankind. Despite his youth and the seeming impossibility of the mission, he accepted God's call. But he knew he could not succeed in his task without a profound understanding of the Creator, His creation and His plan for man. He intensified his quest for the truth, spending days and nights in passionate prayer, rigorous fasting and study. His method was to posit specific questions, research answers in the physical and spiritual worlds, and then seek confirmation for those answers through prayer. On several occasions he was guided directly by Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and other saints and sages of all faiths, who met him in spirit and contributed to his understanding of God and the complex history of God's relationship with humankind. (http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org/rev_moon_teaching.html)

"One of my most important revelations is that Jesus Christ did not come to die" Moon quoted in interview in F. Sontag, *Sun Myung Moon and the Unification Church* at 154)

The Christian world must confront the fact that the Messiah's second advent took place at the end of World War II, in an obscure setting. As did Jesus, he met with countless difficulties, including accusation and rejection. Bearing every cross, he -- the Reverend Sun Myung Moon -- took responsibility for the failure of this generation of Christians, and he stands today as the historical victor with a worldwide following. (Sun Myung Moon, *Proclamation of the Messiah* (Preface) <http://www.unification.net/pr-mes/pr-mes-0.html>)

Jesus was not accepted by his people. Instead of welcome, he met rejection at every level. Jesus was denied the opportunity to take a bride in the position of restored Eve, and to establish the first God-centered heavenly

family. (Sun Myung Moon, *God's will and the world: God's hope for Man* (Speech) October 20, 1973, Washington, DC - <http://www.unification.net/gww/gww-13.html>)

Jesus did not come to die. Jesus Christ was murdered. Let me repeat: Jesus Christ was murdered, and his own people had him killed. Even the Roman governor Pilate wanted to release Jesus. He did not find any fault with Jesus. But Christ's own people rejected him and forced Pilate to release Barabbas instead. . (Sun Myung Moon, *God's will and the world: God's hope for Man* (Speech) October 20, 1973, Washington, DC - <http://www.unification.net/gww/gww-13.html>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is Yahweh (Almighty God) and He alone is the Creator and Saviour of mankind. He is the Messiah (Christ) who willingly laid down his life for the forgiveness of sins and to reconcile man to God. By His death and physical resurrection Jesus demonstrated who He was and is. He ascended to heaven and will physically return one day (Second Coming).

I, even I, am the Lord, And besides Me there is no savior. (Isaiah 43:11)

..looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. (Titus 2:13-14)

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: "I am the Lord, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself (Isaiah 44:24)

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (John 1:3)

For by Him [Jesus] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:16-17)

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Matthew 26:26-28)

[Jesus said:]..the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28)

[Jesus] ..who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3)

[Jesus said:]...My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. (John 10:17-18)

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. (Romans 5:8-11)

4. Salvation

The false teaching:

The UC teach that salvation is gained by obedience to the “True Parents” (Moon and his wife) which will eliminate sin and bring perfection. Moon claimed to be ‘Lord of the Second Advent’ and to bring full salvation, physically and spiritually.

What they say:

Even if you believe in True Parents, you still have to go the way of ‘substantial restoration through indemnity.’ You can get into the conditional heaven, but it is not so easy to get into the substantial heaven. Without believing and serving the True Parents as your substantial parents, even if you believe and follow, without achieving the perfection of attendance, you cannot do well in the substantial heaven.

Only on that foundation can God bless the descendants of the archangel. What then, should you do? Once you believe and follow me, you cannot become one with True Parents substantially. So you have to go the way of substantial indemnity, by servicing and attending True Parents 100%. Therefore Jesus said you have to leave your parents, brothers and sisters, and give all the wealth you have. Otherwise you cannot open the door of heaven.

You American members, what is your attitude in following me? Never look back on your life. How can you liberate hell? Only focus on your mission, nothing else. Then you can inherit True Parents’ power and open the way to heaven. There is no owner of Korea, Japan, or America. Who could be the owner to construct God’s nation? Only True Parents. Therefore, as disciples of True Parents, you have to resemble True Parents. So don’t expect to get salvation just by making a condition. You have to form a substantial foundation to get into heaven, centering on True Parents’ teaching and experience.

(Sun Myung Moon, Hoon Dok Hae, November 24, 2002, Tarrytown, New York.)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ completed the work of redemption at the cross. He fully paid the price of our redemption and nothing more is needed. Through His death we are made holy and our sins forgiven. Only by faith in Christ alone can a person be saved. Jesus Himself will return to earth in glory at His Second Coming. The UC teaching is false and contrary to the Bible.

So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. (John 19:30)

He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:3-5)

“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. (Zechariah 12:10)

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

... we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:10)

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. (Romans 5:8-11)

5. Heaven and hell

The false teaching:

The UC teaches that on death a person enters the spirit world for which there are different levels of achievement. Spirits are to assist people on earth fulfil God's will and to empower them. Essentially hell exists on earth and ultimately it will be abolished and transformed into heaven. All humanity will be saved (universalism). Even Satan (the devil) will be saved.

What they say:

"..hell on earth will one day be transformed to the kingdom of heaven on earth." (Sun Myung Moon, Divine Principle, 111–12)

How do spirits help people on earth fulfill the Will of God? When people become receptive to spirits through prayer or other spiritual activities, the spirits descend to them to form a common base with their spirit selves and work with them. Spirits perform various works. For example, they pour spiritual fire on earthly people and give them the power to heal diseases. They help people enter states of trance and perceive the realities of the spirit world. They give people revelations and the gift of prophecy. They can also give deep inspiration to the soul. In these various works, spirits act on behalf of the Holy Spirit, guiding people on the earth to accomplish the Will of God. (Sun Myung Moon, The Providence of Resurrection of Spirits, para 2.3.1 – in the 'Exposition of the Divine Principle' (1996 translation), Chapter 5: Resurrection - <http://www.unification.net/dp96/dp96-1-5.html#Chap5>)

The ultimate purpose of God's providence of restoration is to save all of humanity. Therefore, God intends to abolish hell completely after the passage of time necessary for each individual to make restitution for his sin. If hell were to remain eternally in the world where God's purpose of goodness is fulfilled, it would contradict the perfection of God, His ideal, and His providence of restoration. (Sun Myung Moon, The Unification of Non-Religious People through Returning Resurrection - in the 'Exposition of the Divine Principle' (1996 translation), Chapter 5: Resurrection, para 3.3 - <http://www.unification.net/dp96/dp96-1-5.html#Chap5>)

...sooner or later each believer will be guided by the spirits from Paradise to go before Christ at the Second Advent and devote their lives for the sake of God's Will. For this reason, Christianity is destined to be united. (Sun Myung Moon, The Unification of Christianity through Returning Resurrection, para 3.1 – in the 'Exposition of the Divine Principle' (1996 translation), Chapter 5: Resurrection - <http://www.unification.net/dp96/dp96-1-5.html#Chap5>)

Christianity does not exist for its own sake, but has as its final mission the fulfillment of the purposes of all the religions in human history. Christ at the Second Advent, who is to come as the center of Christianity, is the person of the Maitreya Buddha who is to return according to the teachings of Buddhism, the True Man who is awaited in the Chinese religious tradition, and the Chongdoryong for whom many Koreans yearn. He is the central figure whose advent is expected in other religions as well. (Sun Myung Moon, The Unification of All Other Religions through Returning Resurrection, para 3.2 - in the 'Exposition of the Divine Principle' (1996 translation), Chapter 5: Resurrection - <http://www.unification.net/dp96/dp96-1-5.html#Chap5>)

The truth – What the Bible says

The Bible teaches that all those who put their faith and trust in Christ alone have their sins washed away and immediately at death will be destined for heaven to be with God for eternity. Hell is a real place (distinct from heaven and earth) of everlasting suffering and separation from God and will be the destination of those who refuse faith in Christ and so die in their sins.

“And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:46)

“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’ “Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’ ” (Luke 16:19-31)

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.” (Revelation 14:9-11)

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

[Jesus said:] “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:1-3)

So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:11-16)

The Bible condemns attempting to speak to the dead or to communicate with spirits and associates such actions with the sins of witchcraft, necromancy and divination:

‘A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them. (Leviticus 20:27)

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you. (Deuteronomy 18:10-13)

The Bible teaches that there is only one Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is revealed to be Almighty God, born on earth to live sinlessly and to die as a sacrifice for sin and enable our redemption. He died and physically rose from the dead for us. There is no comparison with Maitreya Buddha, Mohammed, Sun Myung Moon or any other figure of history - who are only men, cannot save and remain subject to the grave. The revelation of the Bible (including the teaching of Jesus) is from God, unlike the manmade teachings, philosophies and religions of this world which are false and deceptive:

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. (John 11:25)

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6)

...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

..at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10-11)

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.. (1 Timothy 2:5)

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE (85,000)

Christian Science (or formally "The Church of Christ, Scientist") was founded by Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910) who developed an approach to healing after coming under the influence of Phineas Quimby (1802-1866) who believed that sin, sickness, disease and death exist only in the mind. Her primary work *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (1875) was based on Quimby's ideas, though she claimed metaphysical revelation. Christian Science essentially holds to metaphysical philosophies contrary to the Bible and is neither Christian nor scientific.

1. Bible

The false teaching:

Christian Science claims to accept the Bible as inspired, but interprets it esoterically, seeking hidden meaning especially by using Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* as a guide. This denies the sufficiency of Scripture by using another text to interpret it. Such interpretation places the real authority in the interpreter (not Scripture), fails to seek the biblical author's intended meaning or have proper regard to grammar, history and culture.

What they say:

Mary Baker Eddy, who discovered and founded Christian Science, wanted her Church's Pastor to be as pure, constant, and powerful as God's Word itself. To this end, in 1895 she ordained as Pastor both the Bible and her book, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, which opens up the Bible in its application to all human needs. Together, these two books are a mentor, spiritual resource, and timeless guide open to all—a Pastor for the world. ('The Christian Science Pastor' - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor>)

The truth – What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that Scripture should be handled rightly and not distorted. Reliance is given to the Holy Spirit to assist interpretation.

..since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Corinthians 4:1-2)

[Jesus said:] "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you. (John 16:12-15)

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. (1 Corinthians 2:9-12)

2. God

The false teaching:

Christian Science denies the existence of material truth, teaches pantheism (that all things are God) and that God is the only true reality, an impersonal principle and all matter is an illusion. It also denies the Trinitarian Godhead as taught in the Bible.

What they say:

The divine Principle of the universe must interpret the universe. God is the divine Principle of all that represents Him and of all that really exists. Christian Science, as demonstrated by Jesus, alone reveals the natural, divine Principle of Science. Matter and its claims of sin, sickness, and death are contrary to God, and cannot emanate from Him. There is no material truth. (Mary Baker Eddy 'Science and Health' (Chapter 10: Science and Being) - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-x-science-of-being?citation=SH 271:7-271:10>)

In the words of St. John: "He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." This Comforter I understand to be Divine Science. (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health* (Chapter 2: Atonement and Eucharist) - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-ii-atonement-and-eucharist?citation=SH 55:27-55:29>)

Jesus instructed his disciples whereby to heal the sick through Mind instead of matter. He knew that the philosophy, Science, and proof of Christianity were in Truth, casting out all inharmony. (Mary Baker Eddy

'Science and Health' (Chapter 10: Science and Being) - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-x-science-of-being?citation=SH 271:7-271:10>)

Here let me give what I understand to be the spiritual sense of the Lord's Prayer: Our Father which art in heaven, Our Father-Mother God, all-harmonious. (Mary Baker Eddy 'Science and Health' (Chapter 1 – Prayer) para 16:24-27 - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-i-prayer>)

"The theory of three persons in one God (that is, a personal Trinity or tri-unity) suggests polytheism, rather than the one ever-present I Am." (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health (Chapter 9: Creation) at page 256 - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-ix-creation?citation=SH 256:9-256:12>)

The truth – What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches (contrary to Christian Science teaching) that God is not energy or an impersonal force (pantheism) or an abstract principle, but a very personal God who created all things and exists apart from His creation. Our God is a loving Father who has compassion on us and with whom you can share your feelings.

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:4-5)

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Hebrews 1:1-3)

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us (Acts 17:24-27)

The Bible teaches the existence of a Trinity within the Godhead i.e., as one God. This comprises three persons coequal in authority and substance, being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although the word 'Trinity' is not in the Bible, the teaching is present. The Christian Science teaching on the Trinity is a distortion.

And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mark 1:10-11)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

"...we worship one God in three persons and three persons in one God, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one. (Excerpt from the Athanasian Creed)

The Bible teaches that matter is not an illusion, but exists and was created by God and pronounced good.

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. (Genesis 1:31-2:1)

3. Jesus

The false teaching:

Christian Science teaches that Jesus is not divine nor the Saviour, but only a human being sent to show that sin, sickness and death are illusions (see later). They deny Jesus Christ suffered and died for sins, claim he did not die on the cross nor was physically resurrected.

What they say:

Through all the disciples experienced, they became more spiritual and understood better what the Master had taught. His resurrection was also their resurrection. It helped them to raise themselves and others from spiritual dullness and blind belief in God into the perception of infinite possibilities. They needed this quickening, for soon their dear Master would rise again in the spiritual realm of reality, and ascend far above their apprehension. As the reward for his faithfulness, he would disappear to material sense in that change which has since been called the ascension. (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health (Chapter 2: Atonement and Eucharist) - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-ii-atonement-and-eucharist?citation=SH 34:18-34:28>)

"The spiritual Christ was infallible; Jesus as material manhood was not Christ" (Mary Baker Eddy, Miscellaneous Writings at 84).

"The Christ is incorporeal, spiritual"... while... "The corporeal [physical] man Jesus was human only." (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health (Chapter 10: Science of Being) 332 - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-x-science-of-being?citation=SH 332:9-332:18>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ was and is God-incarnate who suffered, died and physically rose from the dead so that by faith in Him man might receive the gift of salvation and the forgiveness of sins. He is the only Saviour.

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption (1 Cor 1:30)

I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas,

then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. 1 Cor 15:1-8)

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 6:23)

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

4. Salvation

The false teaching:

Christian Science teaches that sin, evil, sickness and death are illusions. It teaches that individuals save themselves from sin through sufficient suffering and receive healing by reliance on Christian Science 'Truth'. It rejects the necessity of Christ's redemptive death on the cross as the only means of addressing sin.

What they say:

Wisdom and Love may require many sacrifices of self to save us from sin. One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin. The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part. That God's wrath should be vented upon His beloved Son, is divinely unnatural. Such a theory is man-made. The atonement is a hard problem in theology, but its scientific explanation is, that suffering is an error of sinful sense which Truth destroys, and that eventually both sin and suffering will fall at the feet of everlasting Love. (Mary Baker Eddy – Science and Health (Chapter 2 – Atonement and Eucharist) -

<https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-ii-atonement-and-eucharist?citation=SH 22:30-23:11>)

The material blood of Jesus was no more efficacious to cleanse from sin when it was shed upon "the accursed tree," than when it was flowing in his veins as he went daily about his Father's business. (Mary Baker Eddy – Science and Health (Chapter 2 – Atonement and Eucharist) - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-ii-atonement-and-eucharist?citation=SH 22:30-23:11>)

Divine Science reveals the necessity of sufficient suffering, either before or after death, to quench the love of sin. To remit the penalty due for sin, would be for Truth to pardon error. (Mary Baker Eddy – Science and Health (Chapter 2: Atonement and Eucharist) - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-ii-atonement-and-eucharist?citation=SH 35:30-36:9>)

We acknowledge God's forgiveness of sin in the destruction of sin and the spiritual understanding that casts out evil as unreal. But the belief in sin is punished so long as the belief lasts. (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health at pages 496-497 - <https://www.christianscience.com/what-is-christian-science/beliefs-and-teachings>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that sin, evil, sickness and death are real and originally come from the Fall of mankind. Mankind is evil, sinful and utterly lost and needs to repent before our holy God. No human being can save themselves or overcome sin by 'spiritual understanding' as Christian Science teaches. Only by faith in Jesus Christ alone as Lord and Saviour and in His complete atoning sacrifice is a person forgiven sin and after death enter heaven.

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13)

[Jesus said:] "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man." (Mark 7:20-23)

Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:9-10)

Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. (John 3:18-21)

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned. (Romans 5:12)

[Jesus:].. humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10-11)

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all... (1Timothy 2:4)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

5. After death - Heaven and hell

The false teaching:

Christian Science teaches that humanity is already saved (universalism) because nothing really exists except God. Heaven and hell are states of mind, the former being 'harmony' and the latter its absence. They claim that there is no final judgment before God.

What they say:

There is but one way to heaven, harmony, and Christ in divine Science shows us this way. (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health (Chapter 8: Footsteps of Truth) at 242 - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-viii-footsteps-of-truth?citation=SH 242:9-242:14>)

Universal salvation rests on progression and probation, and is unattainable without them. Heaven is not a locality, but a divine state of Mind in which all the manifestations of Mind are harmonious and immortal, because sin is not there and man is found having no righteousness of his own, but in possession of "the mind of the Lord," as the Scripture says. "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." So we read in Ecclesiastes. (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health (Chapter 10: Science of Being) at 291 - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-x-science-of-being>)

No final judgment awaits mortals, for the judgment-day of wisdom comes hourly and continually, even the judgment by which mortal man is divested of all material error. As for spiritual error there is none. (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health (Chapter 10: Science of Being) at 291 - <https://www.christianscience.com/the-christian-science-pastor/science-and-health/chapter-x-science-of-being?citation=SH 291:28-291:32>)

The truth – What the Bible teaches:

The Bible teaches that every person will face judgement after death. Believers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and gain or lose rewards according to their faithfulness, though their salvation is assured. Unbelievers will face a separate great white throne judgment at the end of the millennial kingdom which will confirm their destination in the lake of fire.

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (Romans 14:10)

Also to You, O Lord, belongs mercy; For You render to each one according to his work. (Psalms 62:12)

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20: 11-15)

The Bible teaches that those who in this life put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone have their sins forgiven and are destined for heaven. Those who refuse Jesus Christ will suffer everlasting torment in hell. The judgment, heaven and hell are real.

“And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:46)

“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’ “Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’ ” (Luke 16:19-31)

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.” (Revelation 14:9-11)

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

[Jesus said:] "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:1-3)

So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

CHRISTADELPHIANS (50,000)

The Christadelphian movement was founded in the United States by John Thomas (1805-1871), who considered all Christian denominations in apostasy from the truth. Originally called 'Thomasites', the movement became called 'Christadelphian' (meaning 'Brothers of Christ') around 1864. In the 1890s the group split over whether there would be a general resurrection of the dead at the final judgment or not. Local congregations are relatively independent and located in many countries. The group claims to accept the Bible as the final authority in faith and practice, but holds to doctrines that in effect amount to a rejection of biblical teaching and orthodox Christianity.

1. God

The false teaching:

The Christadelphians reject the biblical teaching of the Trinity (God as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, co-eternal and coequal as God) or that Jesus is God-incarnate as orthodox Christianity teaches. They also claim the Holy Spirit is a power or force and not a person.

What they say:

The Christadelphians believe that the God of the Bible is one, the Father alone (1 Cor. 8:6). God stands alone and unrivaled in the universe, the source of all good and evil (Is. 45:5-7). We reject the idea that the devil is one of Gods' angels that was permitted to rebel in the very heavens (thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven) and now wrestles with God for control of the world. We likewise reject the idea of a God with multiple independent personalities as not being in harmony with the teachings of scripture. Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/belief.php#5>

We believe the trinity ideology is actually an insult to both God and Jesus. To say that God could be reduced to a form that could walk among us is to completely ignore the shear magnitude of God's power. This idea makes God small, capable of being touched by sinful human hands. To say that Jesus had a part of him that was immortal and could not sin is to disparage the magnitude of his accomplishment, overcoming the power of sin. God is bigger and Jesus' accomplishment was greater than the trinity doctrine allows. Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/belief.php#5>

*We reject the doctrine - that God is three persons.
We reject the doctrine - that the Son of God was co-eternal with the Father.
We reject the doctrine - that the Holy Spirit is a person distinct from the Father.*

Source:

<http://www.christadelphia.org/reject.php>

The truth – What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches the existence of a Trinity within the Godhead – three persons coequal in authority and substance, being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although the word ‘Trinity’ is not in the Bible, the teaching is present.

And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”(Mark 1:10-11)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

“...we worship one God in three persons and three persons in one God, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one. (Excerpt from the Athanasian Creed)

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person, having mind, emotions and will. Jesus affirmed that the Holy Spirit will teach believers and testify of him. While the Holy Spirit may exercise power, he is not a force or energy, but a person. He has full deity and is sometimes called the Spirit of God.

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (Romans 8:26)

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

..the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. (1 Corinthians 12:11)

..the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. (John 14:26)

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. (John 15:26)

Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and overtake this chariot.” (Acts 8:29)

“Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. (Matthew 12:31-32)

By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. (1 John 4:2)

2. Jesus

The false teaching:

The Christadelphians teach that Jesus was not God-incarnate but only a human being who did not exist before his birth at Bethlehem and became Christ at his baptism in the river Jordon. They claim Jesus was not sinless and needed redemption.

What they say:

We believe that the Bible is quite clear in its presentation that Christ is a man. The Son of God, but certainly not God Himself. The bulk of mainstream Christianity has staked its life on the assertion that Jesus is God. Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/belief.php#5>

*We reject the doctrine - that Christ was born with a "free life."
We reject the doctrine - that Christ's nature was immaculate.
Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/reject.php>*

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ was and is God incarnate, the second person of the Godhead (see later). He was never an angel or a created being. He pre-existed his miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit at Bethlehem.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

[Jesus]... is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:15-17)

Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." (John 8:58)

[Jesus said:] O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. (John 17:25)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 3:16-17)

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." (Matthew 1:18-23 - and see Luke 1:31-35)

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ was without sin throughout his life on earth and so did not need redemption for himself:

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. (Hebrews 7:26-27)

"Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth" (1 Peter 2:22)

...you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5)

3. Salvation

The false teaching:

The Christadelphians teach that Jesus Christ did not achieve complete salvation for humanity at the cross and that he did not die in the place (substitution) of sinful man. They believe salvation is a process and is attained from church membership, obedience and water baptism.

What they say:

The Christadelphians believe that salvation is attained through faith in Christ. It is through faith that we are baptized into Christ for forgiveness of sins, and thereby participate in the promises to Abraham: to inherit the earth forever. Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/belief.php#5>

Doctrinally, the Christadelphians are unique in Christendom in our understanding of the nature of Christ, and the way in which we are redeemed by his death. We reject as unbiblical the idea that Christ could die as a replacement sacrifice for us, thus covering all our sins forever with that one act. Certainly it is through his sacrifice that we may be forgiven, but only if we walk the path of self-denial that he marked out for us. Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/belief.php#5>

We reject the doctrine - that the Gospel alone will save, without obedience to Christ's commandments.

We reject the doctrine - that baptism is not necessary to salvation.

Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/reject.php>

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ fully completed the work of redemption at the Cross.

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

[Jesus said:]... "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. (John 19:30)

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

..we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:10)

when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Hebrews 1:3)

The Bible teaches that God sent his own Son as an atoning sacrifice to die in the place of sinful men, so that they might by faith in Him gain the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18)

The Bible teaches that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It cannot be acquired by good works, church membership, obedience or water baptism.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16–17).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8)

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)

the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ (Romans 3:22-24)

So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:31)

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:22)

And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. (1 John 3:23)

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

The Bible teaches we can have full assurance (confidence, security and certainty) of salvation:

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end (Hebrews 6:11)

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:22)

that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:2-3)

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:1)

4. After death: Heaven and Hell

The false teaching:

The Christadelphians teach that when a person dies they remain in the grave (soul sleep) and do not come into the presence of God until the physical resurrection. They believe hell is not eternal as eventually the wicked will be annihilated. Satan is a principle of evil and not a real person.

What they say:

We reject the doctrine - that man has an immortal soul.

We reject the doctrine - that man consciously exists in death.

We reject the doctrine - that the wicked will suffer eternal torture in hell.

We reject the doctrine - that the devil is a supernatural being.

Source: <http://www.christadelphia.org/reject.php>

The truth - What the Bible says:

The Bible teaches that when someone dies they are immediately and consciously either with the Lord (believer) or suffering torment in hell (unbeliever). There is no soul sleep.

So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (Luke 16:19-24)

The Bible teaches that after death the destination of the unsaved is hell, a real place and distinct from ‘the grave’. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels and will at the end be cast into the lake of fire. There the unsaved will join them to suffer eternal torment. They are not annihilated:

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:10-15)

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where ‘Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.’ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having

two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—where ‘Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.’ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—where ‘Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.’ (Mark 9:43-48)

And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)

As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (Jude 7)

The Bible teaches that Satan (also called Lucifer, the devil, our adversary) is literally a living being, a corrupt and fallen angel. He is not an abstract principle of human evil, but a reality. Scripture generally and Jesus specifically speak to his existence. He will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity, together with his angels and the unsaved:

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. (Ezekiel 28:17)

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. (Isaiah 14:12-15)

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ (Matthew 4:1-4)

You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44)

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:11-12)

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ (Matthew 25:41-43)

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

FURTHER READING

The following are useful resources which may assist you further.

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