

# Christianity Hijacked

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One of the greatest deceptions foisted on mankind is the hijacking of Christianity that began shortly after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In fact, Christ and the apostle Paul warned that this would occur.

*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves* (Mt. 7:15; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise stated).

*For I (Paul) know this, that after my departure (death) savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup>Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse (misleading) things, to draw away disciples after themselves* (Ac. 20:29-30; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Just as Satan appeared as an "angel of light" to Adam and Eve; so these false religious teachers appear to be righteous in their demeanor and speech.

*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, **transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.** <sup>14</sup>And no wonder! For **Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.** <sup>15</sup>**Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works** (2Cor. 11:13-15; cf. Ps. 37:35; Jude 12; emphasis added).*

As we will see, it is through the deception of these human "ministers" that Satan is able to transfer the name "Christian" on to a sun-based system of pagan worship. In order not to be deceived, any and all religious doctrine must be examined closely. If it rejects or manipulates God's word in any way, especially regarding

obedience to His law and commandments, it is false.

***To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*** (Isa. 8:20; emphasis added).

The words and actions of false teachers can expose their vanity and self-serving agenda.

*But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries (religious garments) broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. <sup>6</sup>They love the best places (places of honor) at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, <sup>7</sup>greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi'* (Mt. 23:5-7; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Other titles are applied to these so-called servants of God in today's religious culture, and Christ prophesied that this would happen.

*Do not call anyone on earth father* (in a religious context); **for *One is your Father, He who is in heaven*** (Mt. 23:9; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Despite what Christ clearly commanded, there are religious organizations today that use terms like "Father", "Holy Father", "Vicar of Christ", "Reverend", etc. as titles for their clergy. This alone should be a "red flag", but when we are deceived we are not aware we are deceived (cf. Rev. 12:9). Once deceived, we blindly follow the religious leadership like sheep on their way to slaughter. This latter figurative language is used in scripture to describe false religious leaders and the havoc they cause their followers.

*Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds (religious leaders) ... and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds who feed themselves! Should*

*not the shepherds feed the flocks?<sup>3</sup>You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. <sup>4</sup>The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them”*(Eze. 34:2-4; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Although physical and emotional abuse can occur through the actions of religious organizations, greater spiritual damage is caused by their inaccurate and lawless teachings, which lead people to sin. But the question needs to be asked, “how did Christianity get hijacked?” and “don’t the teachings and practices of Christianity represent the teachings and actions of Jesus Christ and his apostles?” To answer these important questions a brief review of church history is important.

The process of hijacking Christianity was already underway when Christ’s apostles were still alive.

*I (Paul) marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of (forgiveness of sin provided by the sacrifice of) Christ, to a different gospel, <sup>7</sup>which is not (of the same kind), but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert (distort) the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-7; Ed. notes in parentheses).*

*As we have said before, so now I say again, **if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed** (Gal. 1:9; emphasis added).*

The false gospel that began to creep into the early church of God during the first century was antinomian. In other words, it taught that Christ’s death removed any requirement to obey every word of God, including His law and commandments (Mt. 4:4; 19:17 cf. Rev. 12:17).

*For **the mystery of lawlessness is already at work** (in the early church) ... (2Thes. 2:7a; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

This “mystery of lawlessness” has been preached from the beginning of man’s history. Satan convinced Adam and Eve that they did not need to trust and obey God’s word in order to inherit everlasting life. Instead, he argued that God’s word cannot always be trusted. Therefore, they should rely on their own intellect as directed, or influenced, by Satan’s interpretation of things. This approach was alluring and “desirable” because it flattered their ego. Also, as they had no conclusive proof that God’s word was reliable, what Satan told them seemed reasonable and “good”.

*So when the woman saw that the tree (representing Satan’s values) was “good” for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree “desirable” to make one wise, she took its fruit (took the bait) and ate (accepted Satan’s word) .... (Gen. 3:6a; Ed. notes in parentheses).*

Consequently, there have always been two choices based on two value systems. One trusts and obeys God’s word, while the other teaches “self-reliance” under the influence of a value system that appears attractive or reasonable, but ends in death.

***There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death** (Prov. 14:12; cf. 16:25; emphasis added).*

The reason man’s decisions end in death is because their main focus is not based on lawful behavior, and the penalty for breaking any of God’s law or commandments is everlasting death.

*For **the wages of sin is death**... (Rom. 6:23a; emphasis added).*

As mentioned previously, this process of lawlessness was occurring while Christ's apostles were still alive and, as we will see, it accelerated in the centuries following Christ's death and resurrection. One of the primary motives behind teaching a false gospel message is to draw disciples away from Christ in order to gain a following (cf. Ac. 20:30). Once a religious leader has followers, he/she has a ticket to power, prestige, and wealth. The most effective way to achieve these things is to teach a gospel message that is attractive to man's carnal nature,

*...this is a rebellious people, lying children, **children who will not hear the law of the Lord**; <sup>10</sup>Who say to the seers (leaders), "Do not see (God's truth accurately)," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; (instead) **speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits**. <sup>11</sup>Get out of the way, turn aside from the (right) path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us" (Isa. 30:9-11; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

In other words, teach us about "a god" who is less demanding, or harsh, because we cannot handle the truth about any consequences associated with disobeying the One True God's law and commandments.

*Because **the carnal mind is enmity** (hostile) **against God; for it is not subject to the law of God**, nor indeed can be (Rom. 8:7; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

So it became reasonable and justifiable for some leaders within the early church to "downplay" the need to trust and obey God's word. Instead, these same individuals began accommodating the customs of the pagan peoples, including many aspects of their sun worship system. For instance, before Christ was born, sun worship was an integral part of pagan practices. Therefore, it should be no surprise that Sunday

is now the chief day of religious worship in the Christian world, and that Easter (from the Akkadian goddess **Ishtar**, equivalent to the West Semitic goddess Astarte, and Egyptian Isis) observance includes facing the rising sun early in the morning,

*"Before the coming of Christ, all the Eastern nations performed divine worship with their faces turned to that part of the heavens where the sun displays his rising beams. This custom was founded upon a general opinion that God, whose essence they looked upon to be light, and whom they considered as being circumscribed within certain limits, dwelt in that part of the firmament from which he sends forth the sun, the bright image of his benignity and glory" (Institutes of Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern by Johann Lorenz Von Mosheim).*

So instead of observing the same weekly Sabbath that Jesus Christ observed (Friday night to Saturday night), and instead of observing the Passover as he also observed, the leaders who had taken control of what used to be the true church of God they syncretized integral aspects of paganism into a new religion calling itself "Christian",

*From Rome there came now another addition to the sun-worshipping apostasy. The first Christians continued to celebrate the Passover in remembrance of the death of Christ, the true Passover, and **this was continued among the Gentiles who had turned to Christ. Accordingly the celebration was always on the Passover day; the fourteenth of the first month (March/April). Rome, however, and from her all the West, adopted the day of the sun as the day of this celebration. According to the Eastern custom, the celebration, being on the fourteenth day of the month, would of course fall on different days of the week as the years revolved. (So) the***

*rule of Rome was that the celebration must always be on a Sunday; the Sunday nearest to the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish year. And if the fourteenth day of that month on the Jewish calendar fell on a Sunday, then the celebration was not be held on that day, but on the next Sunday. One reason for this was not only to be as like the heathen as possible, but also to be as unlike the Jews as possible. (And by so doing) facilitate the "conversion" of the heathen by conforming to their customs, and also pandering to their spirit of contempt and hatred of the Jews. We know not precisely when this began, but it was practiced in Rome as early as the time of Sixtus I, who was bishop of Rome AD 119-128 (Ancient Sun Worship and Its Impact on Christianity by A.T. Jones; Extract from "The Two Republics"; emphasis added).*

Other bishops of Rome continued this trend of altering "the times and seasons" that Almighty God appointed for His true servants to observe (Isa. 24:5 cf. Dan. 7:25). Consequently, a pagan festival associated with the Roman sun god Mithra was added to the so-called Christian calendar.

*The winter solstice occurs on December 25<sup>th</sup>; it is the time in the northern hemisphere when the days are shorter and the nights are longest. But from this moment the day begins to grow and the birthday of the unconquered sun is celebrated. That invincible sun is the god Mithra, whose worship and devotion competed with Christianity (History of Greece and Rome; Antonio Marco Matinez, December 26, 2014).*

So instead of rejecting the worship of this pagan god, the leaders of what used to be the true church of God simply incorporated it into all their other practices which are contrary to the will and word of Almighty God.

*While the Roman cult of Sol (Sun) had existed in Rome since the early Republic, it*

*was on December 25, 274 CE, the Roman emperor Aurelian made it an official cult alongside the traditional Roman cults ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity\\_and\\_paganism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_paganism)).*

And from the Abbott-Conant Dictionary of Religious Knowledge:

*"Christmas seems to have first appeared in the Roman Church after the middle of the fourth century. At a somewhat later period it spread unto Eastern Asia. **It was not received with equal readiness by all the churches. Some denounced it** as an innovation....it was not till the sixth century that anything like unanimity prevailed as to the day to be observed. The manner in which this festival came to be observed in the Roman Church, **and through it to the other churches**, is as follows: In this season of the year, as series of heathen festivals occurred, the celebration of which was in many ways closely interwoven with the whole civil and social life of the Romans. These festivals had an import which easily admitted of being spiritualized, **and transformed into a Christian sense**. First came the Saturnalia, which represented the Golden Age, and abolished for awhile the distinction of ranks. Then came the custom, peculiar to this season, of making presents, afterwards transferred to the Christmas festival. After the Saturnalia came the Festival of Infants (Juvenalia), at which the children were presented with images. Next came a festival still more analogous to Christmas, that of the shortest day (Brumalia), the Winter Solstice, the Birthday of the New Sun, about to return once more toward the earth.... hence the celebration of the Nativity of Christ was transferred to December 25. In the Roman Church, Christmas is a very high festival."*

Regarding the attitude of early Christians toward such things, Auld says:

*"As for the first believers, they had NOT THE SLIGHTEST INTEREST IN ANYTHING OF THE KIND. Hope in the Lord's imminent return from heaven in great power and glory was the flame that fired their devotion (Acts 1:9-11)."*

In the book, *The Customs of Mankind*, we read:

*"Christmas was originally a festival of the Winter Solstice. It was customary to hold great feasts in honor of the HEATHEN GODS. The early teachers of Christianity PROHIBITED THESE FESTIVALS as unsuited to the character of Christ. Yet the symbols and customs of these old festivals are adapted to the new, and so we find Christmas patterned with many customs of pagan origin. To the mind of Puritans, Christmas smelled to heaven of idolatry... **the Puritans abolished Christmas as a hateful relic of Popery.**"*

Crippen says:

*"At the time of persecution, Christians were detected by NOT decorating their houses at the Saturnalia."*

So the heathen practices associated with Christmas were "allowed" to enter into what was once the true temple of God (cf. 1Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Eph. 2:21). This happened under the leadership of someone who appeared to be Christ himself, sitting in the temple that was located in Rome,

*"The Vicar of Christ is a title used by the Pope, with reference to his claim to stand in the place of Jesus Christ and possess His authority in the church."*

(<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/vicar-of-christ>)

*Cardinal Sarto, who became Pope Pius X, said this: "The Pope represents Jesus Christ Himself..."*

*In 1512 Christopher Marcellus said this to Pope Julius II: "take care that we lose not that salvation, that life and breath which thou hast given us, for thou art our shepherd, thou art our physician, thou art our governor, thou are our husbandman, thou art finally another God on earth."*

Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the apostle Paul prophesied about the following scenario before it came to fruition, and this deception will continue until the time of Christ's return,

*Now brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him (ref. 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection; cf. 1Thes. 4:13-17), we ask you, <sup>2</sup>not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of the Lord had come. <sup>3</sup>Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the **falling away** (SGD 646; **defection; forsaking of the truth**) comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of **perdition** (SGD 684; **destruction, waste, death**), <sup>4</sup>who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits in the temple of God, **showing** (SGD 584; proving/demonstrating by arguments) **himself that he is God** (2Thes. 2:4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

By examining the highlighted sections in the above scripture, it can be seen that a "falling away" from God's truth was facilitated by a religious system that ended up with a series of human leaders who were, and still are, looked upon by their followers as "God on earth" or "God's only true representative". This is a lawless doctrine because it sets the stage for people to trust in the teachings of a human being, rather than what Christ actually taught. And this situation facilitates the transference of the name "Christian" to the old systems of sun-worship.

With all the power and wealth associated with being a Pope, God's laws can be altered, modified, or removed altogether, which not only occurred in the past, but will continue until this false system is removed at Christ's return. In the meantime, because of the historical influence of this false religious system, the majority of mankind is misled to one degree or another and, as a result, will continue to misunderstand God's truth. In reality, they are subject to "the son of perdition", who will keep them on a path to "destruction and death" because it is lawless at its foundation (Mt. 7:13 cf. 19:17).

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