

End-Times Gnosticism

By Scott Huckaby

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For Discussion: Gnosticism: The Ancient Lie Revived

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What is Gnosticism?

Gnosticism was perhaps the most dangerous heresy that threatened the early church during the first three centuries. Influenced by such philosophers as Plato, Gnosticism is based on two false premises...

- First, it espouses a dualism regarding spirit and matter. Gnostics assert that matter is inherently evil and spirit is good.
- Second, Gnostics claim to possess an elevated knowledge, a “higher truth” known only to a certain few. Gnosticism comes from the Greek word *gnosis* which means “to know.”

What is the problem with the idea that matter is evil and only that which is spiritual is good?

God created the physical world and declared it “*very good*” (Genesis 1:31).

- If the physical world is evil, then Jesus could not have truly come in the flesh or risen bodily from the dead.
- Also, Gnostics believe anything done in the body, even the grossest sin, has no meaning because real life exists in the spirit realm only.

What is the problem with the idea that Gnostics say they possess a “higher truth” known only to a few?

The Gnostic “higher knowledge” is not from the Bible, but acquired on some mystical higher plane of existence.

- Gnostics see themselves as a privileged class elevated above everybody else by their higher, deeper knowledge of God.

How does the Gnostic mindset manifest itself today?

The Gnostic belief system undermines essential Christian doctrines, especially the incarnation and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Gnostics reject the literal, physical return of Christ and deny a future, earthly Kingdom of God.
- Their claim of special enlightenment only available to a select few, leads to pride and division within the church.

- This secret knowledge contrasts sharply with the sufficiency of Scripture, which provides all that believers need for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3).

When did Gnosticism begin?

It originating in the very first lie whispered in Eden: “*You will be like God*” (Genesis 3:5).

- This was an appeal to have special knowledge that God had not revealed to people.

Where do we see Gnosticism today?

Today, the same ancient heresy is resurfacing under new labels—progressive Christianity, New Age mysticism, spiritual self-discovery—yet the essence remains unchanged.

- Gnosticism stands as a direct assault on biblical truth, the identity of Jesus Christ, and the hope of the Gospel.

What is the alternative “good news” to the true gospel claimed by Gnosticism?

Gnosticism teaches that salvation comes through a secret, esoteric knowledge (*gnosis*).

- Instead of sin being the problem and Christ the Savior, Gnosticism reframes the human condition as ignorance needing enlightenment.

How does Gnosticism regard the Bible?

This worldview treats biblical revelation as incomplete, flawed, or insufficient.

- Extra-biblical knowledge is necessary for salvation.
- Self becomes the redeemer.
- And the God of Scripture becomes a lesser deity; sometimes even portrayed as evil or unenlightened.

How do we know Gnosticism was a problem in the early church?

Nearly every New Testament epistle addresses some form of proto-gnostic teaching...

- John confronts those who denied the physical incarnation of Christ (1 John 4:2–3).
- Paul warns Timothy about “*false knowledge*” (1 Timothy 6:20).
- Jude exposes the dreamers who “*reject authority*” and corrupt the faith (Jude 4, 8).

The apostles recognized that Gnosticism undermined everything foundational to Christianity: creation, incarnation, redemption, and resurrection.

How is Gnosticism being revived in our day?

The modern world has embraced this ancient lie through the media, academia, and spirituality movements that promise inner light and hidden wisdom.

- The New Age emphasizes divine spark and cosmic consciousness.
- Progressive Christianity elevates personal revelation over Scripture.
- Self-help spirituality teaches that the ultimate truth lies within.

All of these echo Gnosticism's central lie—that man can ascend to God through secret insight rather than be saved by God through Christ.

What is the prophetic significance of today's revival of Gnosticism?

Scripture warns that the last days will be marked by deception, false teachers, and a form of godliness that denies its power (2 Timothy 3:1–5).

- Gnosticism fits this pattern perfectly: it wears the clothing of spirituality while denying the cross, the blood of Christ, and the authority of God's Word.
- It offers the promise of enlightenment, yet leads only to darkness.

What is the most egregious error of today's Gnosticism?

Gnosticism attacks the identity of Jesus Christ. Ancient forms denied His true humanity; modern forms deny His exclusivity.

- Instead of *"I am the way"* (John 14:6), Gnosticism whispers, "There are many paths."
- Instead of *"The Word became flesh"* (John 1:14), it claims Jesus was simply an enlightened teacher who discovered the divine within.
- Not recognizing who Jesus really is reveals the spirit of antichrist (1 John 2:22–23), not the Spirit of truth.

How does Gnosticism contribute to the growing apostasy in the church?

2 Timothy 4:3–4 – *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

End times professing Christians will prefer teachers who tell them what they want to hear. They will embrace fables rather than the truth of Scripture.

What are some of the fables being embraced by the apostate church today?

- That there are many ways to have eternal life – Universalism.
- That there is knowledge to be discovered that supersedes that of the Bible.
- That feelings from your inner self are superior to the written revelation of God.
- That God used evolution to create mankind – theistic evolution

Why is it important for Christians to recognize Gnosticism?

For the Watcher and Warrior, recognizing Gnosticism matters because it shapes the spiritual landscape of the end times.

- It prepares the world to embrace a counterfeit Christ.
- A leader who offers enlightenment without repentance, unity without truth, and divinity without the cross.

What should Christians do in light of today's growing Gnosticism?

Make every effort to remain grounded in the true, inspired, and sufficient Word of God.

Proverbs 30:5 – *Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

Knowing God and His Word is necessary to recognize false teachings.

- And holding firmly to the hope of Christ's bodily return and the future establishment of His literal Kingdom on earth helps us recognize the deceptions of today's world.
- Stay Awake! Keep Watch! The deception is deep, but the truth is deeper still.

The ancient serpent's lie has simply been repackaged for a modern world.

- But the answer remains unchanged: the Word of God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the discernment of the Holy Spirit.

What application comes to mind from this discussion?

The re-emergence of Gnosticism re-packaged for the modern world is just more evidence of the end of the Church Age.