

The Christian Arsenal

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Who is your Jesus?

It has been asked, "Why are there so many different churches and so many different denominations?" and even "Why are there such differences within a denomination?". These are very good questions. There are a multitude of answers to apply to these questions that may very well explain some of the different churches and variations in them. There are cultural differences, social differences, economic differences, doctrinal and theological differences, and the list could go on and on. Granted, some differences are important. For example, a church being based on sound Biblical doctrine instead of popular opinion and political correctness would be an important difference. Still, many churches claim to be biblically based but are so different in some respects to one another. Why is this? There is one reason that can account for many of these differences. You can tell a lot from a church when you begin digging into the heart of their reason for existing. Simply ask..... "Who is your Jesus?". Any organization will directly reflect their thoughts and sentiments about their founder and their leadership.

If you listen to preaching coming from the pulpits of the churches in America today, you might come up with the conclusion that there is more than one Jesus. A denomination or church's doctrine and practices can be directly linked to their perception of who they believe Jesus is. Many churches present a Jesus by their preaching, teaching, and actions that cannot be found anywhere in the pages of the Bible. As a matter of fact, it can be seen that many have conveniently ignored what the Bible has said and made up their own version of Jesus to fit and justify their own agendas. To get a Biblical definition of who Jesus "is" and "is not", see the section titled "[Fallacies about Jesus](#)".

Let's take a look at Jesus as He is being interpreted by the church today:

Click to see the different types of "Jesus"

[Tolerant Jesus](#) | [Social Action Jesus](#) | [Mythological Jesus](#) | [Political Activist Jesus](#)
[Magical Jesus](#) | [Politically Correct Jesus](#) | [Cultural Heritage Jesus](#) | [Big Money Jesus](#)
[Good Ole Boy Jesus](#) | [Jesus of the Bible](#)

Tolerant Jesus

There is the "Tolerant Jesus" that many churches have developed as their own special brand of Jesus. This is the Jesus who sees no wrong and who condemns no one for anything! This Jesus is easy to get along with. He never, ever mentions "Sin". As a matter of fact, the only thing that He doesn't like is when other people mention sin. That's right, Tolerant Jesus and the churches that made him up can not and do not tolerate the truth of the Bible. All you really have to do is just try to behave appropriately or to put it another popular way... "make good choices". Tolerant Jesus doesn't even care if you believe in Him or if you just think he is a myth. He is also equally as happy if you just want to deny God altogether and be like a Taoist or an Agnostic. Yes, Tolerant Jesus is a real easygoing guy with just two small drawbacks. First, Tolerant Jesus is found nowhere in the Bible. Second, Tolerant Jesus is found nowhere in the Bible. Now, we realize that point one and two are the same, but it is such an important point that we felt it merited being mentioned twice.

[Back to Top](#)

Social Action Jesus

There is "Social Action Jesus" that is coming to a society near you! This Jesus was developed when the church found that it was easy for people to soothe their consciences by doing good works and trying to make things better. This helps people to get rid of those nagging feelings of guilt and sin. (It is kind of a trade off type of concept. It goes something like this, "If I do good on Saturday morning maybe God will ignore the bad I do on Saturday night.") It is to be noted that many worthwhile, necessary and Biblically mandated ministries are done under the umbrella of social ministries. However, this does not address human kind's real need. Various churches proclaiming this Jesus send people into society to try to correct all of the world's problems by changing society's programs, practices, procedures, perceptions and ways of doing things. Society and the environment a person grows up in are seen as the problem. "If we can put people

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in a perfect world, then we eliminate all of mankind's problems." Among the many problems with view this is that Adam and Eve were in a perfect world (the Garden of Eden) and look what happened! The problem here again is that the condition of the sinful human heart and the need of God's forgiveness is very seldom dealt with.

[Back to Top](#)

Mythological Jesus

There is "Mythological Jesus". Mythological Jesus churches have a predisposition to not believe in miracles or the supernatural. This Jesus is much easier for them to deal with. (It is also interesting to note that many of these type of people readily accept the existence of Aliens and UFO's.) Mythological Jesus churches teach that Jesus was a great teacher and moral example and that is all. Jesus was not divine so they say and all of the supernatural elements of what we know about Jesus in the Bible have been edited out so they can know exactly what they should pay attention to. In a Mythological Jesus church, the main emphasis seems to be whatever the liberal trend in society or philosophy is at the time. There is no mention of the gospel except that "we all are going to heaven regardless of what we do or how we believe that is if there is a heaven." This type of church produces nothing that remotely resembles a disciple of Jesus as defined by the Bible.

[Back to Top](#)

Political Activist Jesus

There is "Political Activist Jesus" whose churches preach and teach politics and political issues first and foremost from the pulpit. This Jesus is seen as a rebel fighting against the established system and as a leader for the politically oppressed. Political Activist Jesus doesn't mind sharing the spotlight in the pulpit with other political figures. As a matter of fact, Political Activist Jesus apparently accepts it when the writings and words of other political activists are known better by the church members than the Word of God. Political Activist Jesus is seemingly satisfied when the church and it's members are politically outspoken, but their Christian witness is strangely silent or in shambles. In a Political Activist Jesus church, lack of morals and sin are really not a problem and are overlooked most of the time. The important thing to do is to find a cause that will benefit you and be politically active in it. This is a convenient Jesus for those who are ambitious and have their own personal agenda to advance. Politically Active Jesus evangelists attempt to always get into the spotlight. They take every opportunity to speak out about everything except Jesus. However, they are strangely silent when they refuse to use their political influence to speak out about the murdering of Christians in foreign countries because of taking money from anti-Christian groups to further their political prominence. The problem with this Jesus again is that he is found nowhere in the Bible. A study of the Gospels and the book of Acts finds no platform or mandate for the church to be involved in political organizing, just organizing to preach Jesus, His death on the Cross, His resurrection, and man's need for the salvation that His blood supplied.

[Back to Top](#)

Magical Jesus

Magical Jesus is in vogue in some of the churches who are involved in the "Hyper Faith" movement. In these churches the Bible is seen by some as almost book of incantations or spells. This Jesus is a weak faith being who has to use faith to do anything. This Jesus is not the object of faith, He was merely a master at demonstrating what faith can do. This magical Jesus is called on to do the bidding of the user to bring things into being such Rolex watches, Rolls Royces, Mercedes, Diamonds, Jewels, and a big bank rolls. This "genie in a bottle" version of Jesus is seen as someone who has given his word that he will do whatever you want, when ever you want it. They stand courageously on Matthew 7:7-8, but do not take in the whole counsel of God in the matter by ignoring James 4:3. The cry goes out for claiming your riches according to Ephesians 4:16a "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory," I guess some get so excited

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they forget to read the the rest of the verse..."16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, **to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man**; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. It sounds like the riches God really wants us to have is the fullness of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ

Sadly this has produced some believers whose effectiveness in the world is all but neutralized. The movements who created this Jesus have destroyed the lives of many people. Magical Jesus seems to be in short supply of Rolls Royces, Diamonds, and the things which satisfy human greed from time to time. The Real Jesus never runs short of what men really need. While God blesses people with wealth and will make some to prosper there is nowhere that He promises to make everyone a millionaire dripping with gold and jewelry while driving a limousine. He has promised us the riches in Christ Jesus and an eternal home that puts to shame anything this earth has to offer. 1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

[Back to Top](#)

Politically Correct Jesus

There is "Politically Correct Jesus." The proponents and churches of Politically Correct Jesus take great pains in trying not offending anyone. They redefine, rename, and reclassify in an ongoing mission to make sure that all things are labeled in a user friendly, non-offensive way. Their mission is to first find groups and teach them to be offended by something. Second, give them a new name or designation in order to help the group get over their newly found state of being offended. You can't discuss sin, repentance or living a Godly life in one of these churches. However, Politically Correct Jesus churches are great for building self-esteem and having great social activities. The truth of the Gospel is so well hidden that is rarely sees the light of day in these churches.

[Back to Top](#)

Cultural Heritage Jesus

There is "Cultural Heritage Jesus" that has been created by some churches to substitute for the real issues addressed in the Bible. Cultural Heritage Jesus churches are more concerned with the preservation of the culture and history of people rather than the making of disciples and the proclamation of the gospel. You will find Cultural Heritage Jesus churches doing more to focus on it's own people than on God. This in turn produces very self-centered churches as well as members that think that his or her cultural heritage is more a part of their identity than being a Christian. The Gospel is smothered in these churches among the cries for cultural heritage and special attention instead of a spiritual heritage. This concept finds no support in the New Testament.

[Back to Top](#)

Big Money Jesus

There is "Big Money Jesus" that finds his home many times on the television sets of millions of people around the world. Big Money Jesus, so goes the story, was a very wealthy individual that was dripping with money, gold, jewelry and wore designer clothes. Jesus is made out to be very wealthy man. Participants in Big Money Jesus denominations are called on to help Televangelists as well as some Pastors and Evangelists to be "like Jesus." (It is strange to listen to the Big Money Preachers talk about giving. For some reason it is always give to them and never to a local church, a poor person, a widows or an orphan.) Big Money Jesus was created to help believers to get rid of all of their excess cash, furs, jewelry, stocks, bonds, real estate and other worldly possessions. These preachers bravely volunteer to help you with the problems of all that old dirty money and all those possessions bring by taking it and dealing with those problems themselves. Talk about self sacrifice. This does not resemble it at all. In these churches, the

The Christian Arsenal

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message of salvation may be preached, but it definitely takes a back seat to prosperity theology and taking up the offering.

[Back to Top](#)

Good Ole Boy Jesus

There is "Good Ole Boy Jesus" that some churches talk about. Good Ole Boy Jesus is a real likeable character. He comes strolling out of the a few pages of the Bible and is coming to a fellowship dinner near you! He said a lot in the Bible but he really doesn't expect you to pay attention to all of it. (That would mean you would actually have to read the Bible and pay attention to it and pray too. Let's face it, that's just too much to expect from a person! Besides, your family has been in the church for generations, your grandpa was a deacon and that makes you special.) This Jesus doesn't really care a lot about what you believe, just as long as you behave your self and go to church a few times a year. He doesn't even mind if you go bass fishing on Sunday morning. He realizes that you can worship God just as good in your bass boat, in a deer stand or on the golf course as you can sitting in church on Sunday. Good Ole Boy Jesus churches are very good about pointing out faults of others especially if they are members of other churches. (They are however, somewhat blind when it comes to their own faults.) These churches do preach the Gospel from time to time. Discipleship and spiritual growth happen more or less by accident. Unfortunately for these churches, it is difficult to find evidence to support the existence of this Jesus. (The main reason being is that there is none.)

[Back to Top](#)

Jesus of the Bible

Finally, there is the Jesus of the Bible. There are volumes of evidence for proof of the life and ministry of this Jesus. This is the Jesus who in His own words came to preach the gospel to the world and to give his life so that all people who believe in Him and repent can be saved. This is the Jesus who told his disciples to go into the entire world to make disciples. This is the Jesus who suffered crucifixion willingly because He loved us. This is the Jesus who condemned sin and warned of judgment and Hell if we did not repent. This is the Jesus who is the Son of God, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Creator of the universe, and the only way by which man must be saved! Jesus came to this world because we could not save ourselves. Our #1 problem is sin. That was what he was concerned with because it carried severe eternal consequences. The only answer for the problems of the world is the Jesus of the Bible. He is going to be the one to fix all that is wrong, unjust and broken with the world. Revelation 21:5 - 22:21. He gave us what we are supposed to be about doing in Matthew 28:19-20.

The Churches who follow the Jesus of the Bible....Preach the Word of God! They expect their membership to follow the teachings of the Bible that are mandated by Jesus. (Yes that means spiritually, morally, socially, ethically, at work, at home, and on vacation!) These Churches put their emphasis on soul winning and on missions. They care about their community and others and are involved. They are civic minded citizens. They help clothe the needy and feed the hungry. They win new converts and disciple them. God and His word are honored first and foremost in their services.

The Churches who follow the Jesus of the Bible are different from all the churches who follow one of the above imitations. The Churches who follow the Jesus of the Bible have Jesus as their founder and their Lord. The churches who follow one of the above types of "man made Jesus" follow a Jesus that they created as a false idol. It can be summarized like this: You either serve a Jesus who is your Creator or you serve a Jesus who is your creation. If your Jesus is not the Jesus of the Bible then your Jesus is not only the wrong Jesus, but in reality you may have no Jesus at all. **No Jesus, No Peace....Know Jesus, Know Peace.** Acts 4:12 Romans 10:9-10 John 1:1-5 Colossians 1:15-20 Philipians 2:9-11

[Back to Top](#)

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