

Global Watch Weekly Report

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March 9th, 2012

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Matthew 7:15

THE SYSTEM
THE CONDITION
THE CULTURE
THE FAILURE

THE TRANSITION

From writer and director Peter Joseph

ZEITGEIST

III

MOVING FORWARD

January 19th 2011 7:00 PM

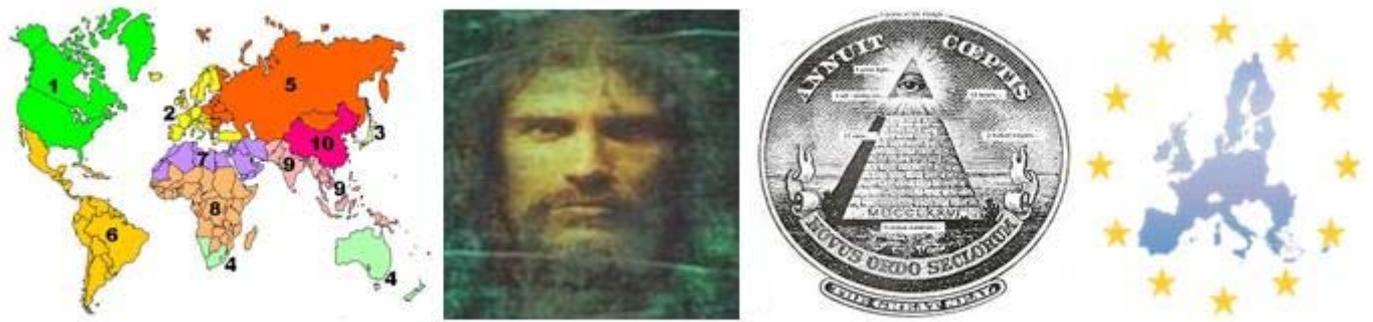
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Global Watch Weekly Report



“The Number one weekly report which provides concrete evidence of a New World Order & One World Government agenda”

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Global Watch Weekly Report

Welcome to the Global Watch Weekly Report

One of the most bizarre facts about exposing the agenda of the new world order is that there are thousands of other groups doing the same yet within this movement of people across the world wanting to enlighten the masses about the true political and economic agenda there are some very serious differences of opinion about faith.

Imagine you are invited to a presentation which takes place on Saturday afternoon at 7pm. The title of the presentation is "Exposing the New World Order". Because you are in charge of bible study at church where you are focusing on the end times you decide to attend in order to get additional material and information which could possibly help you in your bible studies at church.

You attend the presentation and for the first 45 minutes its absolutely fantastic. The level of detail and revelation about the construct of the new world order is inspiring. Everything seems to be consistent with what you know about what the bible says about the end times but the presentation is providing you some great source material since in a critical age it helps to provide primary evidence to people you are teaching rather than just saying "because the bible says".

At the halfway break you decide to go for a toilet break and then grab a coffee before coming back for the beginning of the second half. When the second half begins you then pick up your pen to make notes but then something happens.....the pen drops out your hand as you then hear any one of the following

"For this part of the presentation we want to show you the clear evidence as to why Christianity as a religion originated from Paganism and Mystery Babylon and was a tool of the Illuminati to enslave mankind into a system of control" or you hear

"For this half we are going to show you exactly what the Koran says about these events which I have talked about earlier in the presentation and how Islam prophesies that the future will play out"

The above hypothetical situation is the actual reality of what is happening today. There are thousands of people who are waking up to the fact that the world is running according to an agenda not mentioned in the mainstream news but this does not mean that everyone of them believes the biblical context or Christianity for that matter. Therefore it is entirely possible that you could be listening to a group which provides incredible expose of freemasonry or the Bilderberg group or the cashless society who then in the very next breath turn you right off with what the say next.

Rema Marketing had that experience many years ago when we first came across Peter Joseph who heads the Zeitgeist Movement. After that experience there were two things we acknowledged when we started this ministry;

1. We will continue to seek truth where truth is even if the truth is coming from someone who is not of our faith
2. We would pray for guidance from God that he grants us the spirit of discernment to help separate truth from falsehood

This edition takes a look at the Zeitgeist Movement and provides a defense of the Christian Faith against some of the movements attacks on the validity of Christianity.

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THE ZEIGEIST MOVEMENT



Founded in 2008 by Peter Joseph, the Zeitgeist Movement promotes the ideas of Jacque Fresco's Venus Project (although both organizations no longer work together). The Zeitgeist Movement is also a Sustainability Advocacy Organization which conducts community based activism and awareness actions through a network of Global/Regional Chapters, Project Teams, Annual Events, Media and Charity Work.

The Movement's principle focus includes the recognition that the majority of the social problems which plague the human species at this time are not the sole result of some institutional corruption, scarcity, a political policy, a flaw of "human nature" or other commonly held assumptions of causality.

Rather, The Movement recognizes that issues such as poverty, corruption, collapse, homelessness, war, starvation and the like appear to be "Symptoms" born out of an outdated social structure. While intermediate Reform steps and temporal Community Support are of interest to The Movement, the defining goal here is the installation of a new socioeconomic model based upon technically responsible Resource Management, Allocation and Distribution through what would be considered The Scientific Method of reasoning problems and finding optimized solutions.

This "Resource-Based Economic Model" is about taking a direct technical approach to social management as opposed to a Monetary or even Political one. It is about updating the workings of society to the most advanced and proven methods Science has to offer, leaving behind the damaging consequences and limiting inhibitions which are generated by our current system of monetary exchange, profits, corporations and other structural and motivational components.

The Movement is loyal to a train of thought, not figures or institutions. In other words, the view held is that through the use of socially targeted research

and tested understandings in Science and Technology, we are now able to logically arrive at societal applications which could be profoundly more effective in meeting the needs of the human population. In fact, so much so, that there is little reason to assume war, poverty, most crimes and many other money-based scarcity effects common in our current model cannot be resolved over time.

The range of The Movement's Activism & Awareness Campaigns extend from short to long term, with the model based explicitly on Non-Violent methods of communication. The long term view, which is the transition into a Resource-Based Economic Model, is a constant pursuit and expression, as stated before. However, in the path to get there, The Movement also recognizes the need for transitional Reform techniques, along with direct Community Support.



For instance, while "Monetary Reform" itself is not an end solution proposed by The Movement, the merit of such legislative approaches are still considered valid in the context of transition and temporal integrity. Likewise, while food and clothes drives and other supportive projects to help those in need today are also not considered a long term solution, it is still considered valid in the context of helping others in a time of need, while also drawing awareness to the principle goal.

The Zeitgeist Movement also has no allegiance to a country or traditional political platforms. It views the world as a single system and the human species as a single family and recognizes that all countries must disarm and learn to share resources and ideas if we expect to survive in the long run. Hence, the solutions arrived at and promoted are in the interest to help everyone on the planet Earth, not a select group.

THE TRANSHUMANIST AGENDA



As mentioned, Peter Joseph was a student of Jaqcue Fresco's Venus Project until their acrimonious split in early 2011. Mr. Fresco's background includes industrial design and social engineering, as well as being a forerunner in the field of Human Factors. Mr. Fresco has worked

as both designer and inventor in a wide range of fields spanning from biomedical innovations to totally integrated social systems.

The Venus Project reflects the culmination of Mr Fresco's life work: the integration of the best of science and technology into a comprehensive plan for a new society based on human and environmental concern. It is a global vision of hope for the future of humankind in our technological age

The Venus Project advocates an alternative vision for a sustainable new world civilization unlike any socio-economic system that has gone before. It calls for a straightforward redesign of a culture, in which the age-old inadequacies of war, poverty, hunger, debt, and unnecessary human suffering are viewed not only as avoidable, but totally unacceptable.

The Venus Project is one of the major initiatives which are part of a wider umbrella known as Transhumanism.

“Transhumanism is the ultimate goal of Technocracy ... a meta-movement: the idea that the works of Man’s hands can save Humanity—hence, technology and science forms the basis of a Technocratic society. Transhumanism takes this to its ultimate conclusion: The development of the post-human or neo-human.....“Based on the premise that evolution is true, Transhumanism looks to shape the human species through the direct application of science. In other words, by employing technology we can take hold of the evolutionary process and change it as we desire, thus becoming the masters of our future. To this end, advocates of Transhumanism ascribe to a multitude of possible options.”

Expressing an unshakable faith in the continued and rapid advance of human technology, transhumanists look to the future with what can only be described as

a religious fervor.

Many of this movement’s adherents point to the singularity (an exponential increase in technological advancement so rapid the unaided human mind is unable to grasp its implications) as the climax of human civilization. Believing this event will usher in a new era for the human race in which limited mortals transcend their biological bodies and set out to conquer the universe, transhumanist anticipation of the singularity is comparable to Christian anticipation of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Ironically, the bible points out that in the time just prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ the world will be characterized by unparalleled human arrogance. Led by the Antichrist, the human race will not only launch a spiritual rebellion against God, but an actual physical confrontation between themselves and the King of kings, Jesus Christ.

The motive for this great rebellion will be predicated on lies. The bible predicts that deception will be rampant in the end times. And just as God hardened the heart of Pharaoh for putting faith in his own power, He will do the same to the inhabitants of the earth who will become drunk with their own power:

“So God will send great deception upon them, and they will believe all these lies.” 2 Thessalonians 2:11 (NLT)

Paul makes it clear that these people will be deluded into believing “the lies.” But what exactly are the “lies” to which he refers? A cursory examination of the first book of the Bible reveals a quote from the originator of lies. In fact, it’s the very first lie referenced in the bible:

“‘You won’t die!’ the serpent hissed. ‘God knows that your eyes will be opened when you eat it. You will become just like God, knowing everything, both good and evil.’” Genesis 3:4-5 (NLT)

Humanity will come full circle. In the last days, the same construction projects envisioned by the Tower of Babel architects will result in mankind achieving a level of technological sophistication so advanced that “nothing will be impossible for them.” The human race will come to believe the great lies of the serpent.

ZEITGEIST THE MOVIE



Zeitgeist: The Movie is a 2007 documentary film by Peter Joseph. It asserts a number of conspiracy theory-based ideas, including alternative theories for the parties responsible for the September 11 attacks in 2001 and that bankers manipulate the international monetary system and the media in order to consolidate power. The documentary is divided into three parts but what is quite interesting is its stinging attack on the Christian faith.

PART I: THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

Part I questions religions as being god-given stories, arguing that the Christian religion specifically is mainly derived from other religions, astronomical assertions, astrological myths and traditions, which in turn were derived from or shared elements with others. In furtherance of the Jesus myth hypothesis, this part argues that the historical Jesus is a literary and astrological hybrid, nurtured politically. The work of Acharya S, author of *The Christ Conspiracy: The Greatest Story Ever Sold*, was used extensively in part I of the movie. She also acted as consultant for part I of the movie.

PART II: ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Part II uses integral footage of several 9/11 conspiracy theory films to claim that the September 11 attacks were either orchestrated or allowed to happen by elements within the United States government in order to generate mass fear, initiate and justify the War on Terror, provide a pretext for the curtailment of civil liberties, and produce

economic gain.

These claims include that the US government had advance knowledge of the attacks, that the military deliberately allowed the planes to reach their targets, and that World Trade Center buildings 1, 2, and 7 underwent a controlled demolition. In a March 17, 2009, New York Times article, Alan Feuer reported that Peter Joseph had indicated that he had "moved away from" his opinion on whether the September 11 attacks were an inside job perpetrated by the U.S. government, but a later clarification on the Zeitgeist Movement website clarified that Joseph was shifting his focus, not retracting his views.

The United States Government's income tax is claimed to be unconstitutional.

PART III: DON'T MIND THE MEN BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Part III argues that three wars of the United States during the twentieth century were waged purely for economic gain by what the film refers to as "international bankers".

The film alleges that certain events were engineered as excuses to enter into war including the sinking of the RMS Lusitania, the attack on Pearl Harbor, and the Gulf of Tonkin Incident.

According to the film, the US was forced by the Federal Reserve Bank to become embroiled in these wars, not with a view to win but to sustain the conflict, as this forces the US government to borrow money from the bank, allegedly increasing the profits of the "international bankers". The film then goes on to claim that the Federal Income Tax is illegal.

This section also claims the existence of a secret agreement to merge the United States, Canada and Mexico into a "North American Union". The creation of this North American Union is then alleged to be a step towards the creation of "One World Government."

The film speculates that under such a government, every human could be implanted with an RFID chip to monitor individuals and suppress dissent.

FOUR POINTS OF VIEW

The Zeitgeist movement is part of a wider movement known as the Truth Movement. People in the Truth Movement are known as "Truthers". The term originated with the dissatisfaction over the explanations about the 911 attacks and that there was an underlining belief that the event was staged to justify specific political ambitions regarding the increase of electronic surveillance, the abolition of privacy and control and influence within the middle east.

It is at this point that we would like to make a point that there are four main groups of views that are vocally resistant to the establishment of a new world order and produce significant amounts of documentation to support their view that there is a major conspiracy to enslave mankind. Because of this common denominator all four groups do overlap to some extent but then in other areas all four groups are significantly at opposite ends of the spectrum.

THE ZEITGEIST PHILOSOPHY

The Zeitgeist movement as we have seen is a movement which clearly believes that there is a conspiracy to establish a one world government. And that there are specific groups involved such as the illuminati and Bilderbergers although not believing in a personal Antichrist. However Peter Joseph comes from an atheistic background in which he believes that to prevent mankind descending into a new world order of slavery it is up to mankind to save himself and open up the opportunity for a golden era. Adherents of Peter Joseph believe that all the worlds major religions are false religions that were instituted by the Illuminati to keep men in bondage. Obviously Peter Joseph is one of the main supporters of this philosophy. This view also tends to be one which fits the transhumanist agenda.

THE ALIEN GODS PHILOSOPHY

The second movement seen with the truth movement are those who believe that there is a conspiracy to establish a one world government. However this movement rather than being atheistic and believing there is no intelligence outside of mankind actually believes that humans are the result of a genetic experiment which was triggered thousands of year ago by the arrival on earth of extra terrestrials known as the anunnaki. The movement thus believes that the highest level of authority and power in various governments are in league with extra-terrestrials. There are varying differences in this philosophy in regards to the nature and purpose of extra-terrestrials. Some believe that there are good and bad extra-terrestrials with man caught in the middle as a pawn. Others believe that extra terrestrials all are inherently evil and possibly demonic but still not fully accepting the Christian view of the universe.

David Icke would be an example of someone representing this viewpoint.

ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

The third group which is very vocal in this area is Islam. Islam believes that the Illuminati and Freemasonry are inherently movements heavily influenced by the Jews in which the ultimate aim is the destruction of Islam and the ultimate control of the Middle East and Jerusalem. Islam teaches that the Antichrist system is specifically related to those involved in freemasonry, and kabbalah and they are also fixated on the Illuminati controlled rothschilds and european monarchies as being part of the Antichrist system. Islam teaches that ultimately the one world government will be overthrown by the coming of the Al Madhi whose appearance will unite Islam in a coming war in which Islam will be victorious and in which Islam will be established as the true religion on earth.

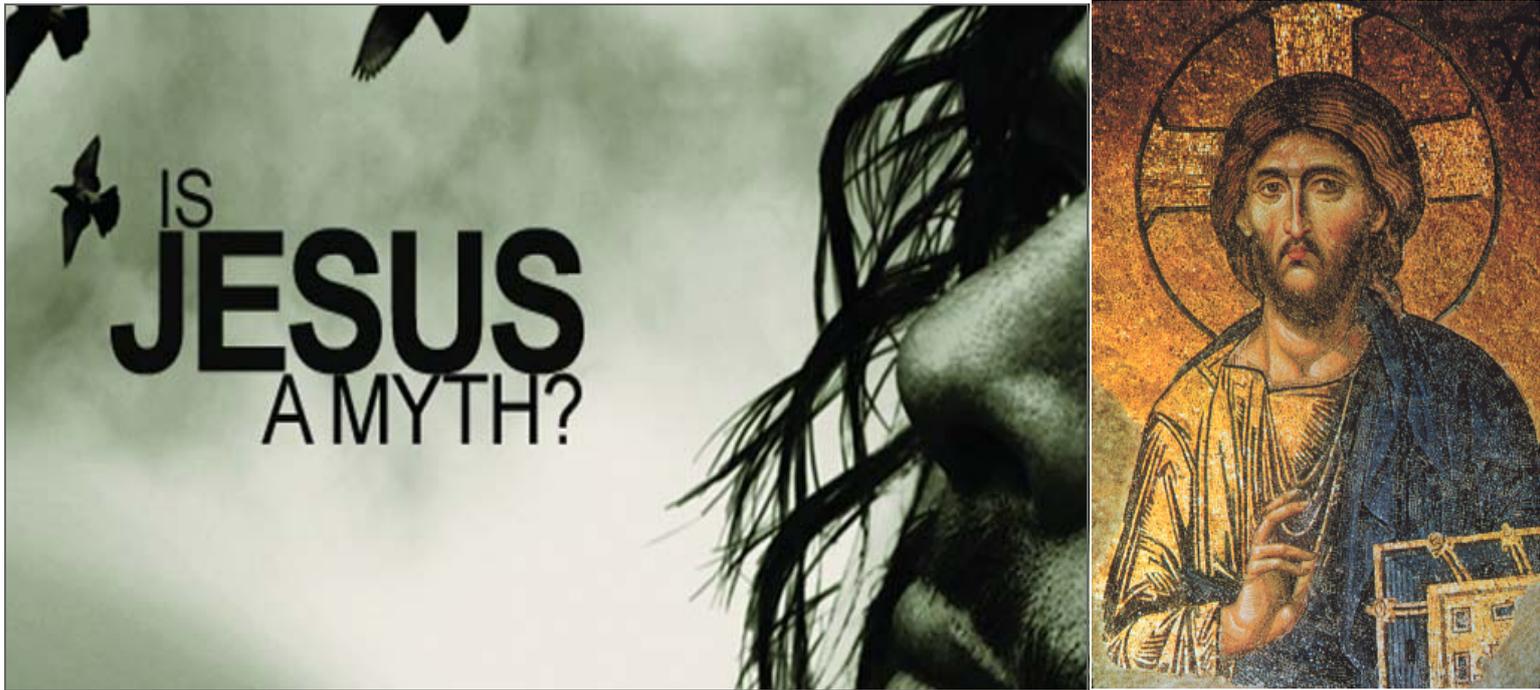
CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

The fourth group which focuses on the end times and new world order are Christians. Generally bible Christians who believe in a futurist end time model believe that the establishment of a new world order is a fulfilment of prophecies in the Bible such as those in Daniel, Ezekiel and Revelation. This group believes that it is not the responsibility of mankind to rise up in arms against the new world order because the overthrow of the kingdom of the Antichrist will happen at the time of the Second coming of Christ who as part of the Godhead was involved in the original creation of mankind. Chuck Missler is an example.

However within this group is also a secondary group known as the Christian Patriots. This groups whilst believing in the central premise of Christian Faith either see their role as taking up arms to fight against the new world order or separate themselves in isolation and defend themselves should they be in any way threatened or bullied by the those who work for the global elite. Some are known to be over zealous militia with a forced and incorrect interpretation of the Bible to suit their political and social ideals which can ultimately end up with them becoming heretics and extremists.

Because of these four groups it means as Christians we need to ensure that when we are researching themes associated with the end times and seeking both Christian and non Christian sources, that a level of diligence and discernment is also in hand to ensure we can digest that which is good but resist that which we know is against the premise of our faith. For the most dangerous form of heresy is that which is mixed with truth.

IN DEFENSE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH



Zeitgeist (a German phrase that means "the spirit of the age") is the name of an online video (first released in June 2007) that is making quite an impact on its viewers. In the second and third part of his film we are impressed by the content he provides in regards to the political and economical aims to establish a totalitarian world order. Most of his views here we would support however it is his views on Christianity in the first part of the film which gave cause for concern.

Peter Joseph, the writer and director, seeks to persuade his viewers that the authors of the New Testament borrowed the idea of Jesus' virgin birth, December 25th birth date, twelve disciples, miracles, crucifixion, and resurrection from astrological sources and ancient pagan mystery religions that were around long before the time of Christ. The video even goes so far as to claim that Jesus never existed. Well, these claims are so outrageous, we're glad you've taken the time to investigate them for, as you will see shortly, there is an abundance of evidence that Peter Joseph has greatly erred in his claims.

Below you'll find some of the claims in the video followed by helpful responses and quotations by scholars, historians, world religion experts, Christian apologists and others, as well as additional references that offer a much more thorough refutation of many of the errors in the first part of the film.

CLAIM 1: THE RESURRECTION ACCOUNT WAS STOLEN FROM EARLIER SOURCES

RESPONSE:

Charlie Campbell, Director of the Always Be Ready Apologetics Ministry, says, "Many of the charges put forth in Zeitgeist are based on outdated, disproved ideas that were in circulation at the beginning of the last century. Here is one example. Zeitgeist states that Attis (a Roman deity) was crucified, dead for three days and then resurrected. This is absolutely not true to the mythological account. In the mythological story, Attis was unfaithful to his goddess lover, and in a jealous rage she made him insane. In that insanity, Attis castrated himself and fled into the forest, where he bled to death. As J. Gresham Machen points out, "The myth contains no account of a resurrection; all that Cybele [the Great Mother goddess] is able to obtain is that the body of Attis should be preserved, that his hair should continue to grow, and that his little finger should move." Zeitgeist's claims that Attis was crucified and resurrected are not only inaccurate but very misleading. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. The alleged resurrection of Attis isn't even mentioned until after 150 A.D., long after the time of Jesus."

IN DEFENSE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Dr. Gary Habermas and Dr. J.P. Moreland write, "Not one clear case of any alleged resurrection teaching appears in any pagan text before the late second century A.D., almost one hundred years after the New Testament was written." (Cited by Dan Story in *The Christian Combat Manual: Helps for Defending your Faith: A Handbook for Practical Apologetics*, 2007, p. 206).

Dr. Norman Geisler, author of more than 70 books, writes, "The first real parallel of a dying and rising god does not appear until A.D. 150, more than a hundred years after the origin of Christianity. So if there was any influence of one on the other, it was the influence of the historical event of the New Testament [resurrection] on mythology, not the reverse. The only known account of a god surviving death that predates Christianity is the Egyptian cult god Osiris. In this myth, Osiris is cut into fourteen pieces, scattered around Egypt, then reassembled and brought back to life by the goddess Isis. However, Osiris does not actually come back to physical life but becomes a member of a shadowy underworld...This is far different than Jesus' resurrection account where he was the gloriously risen Prince of life who was seen by others on earth before his ascension into heaven....even if there are myths about dying and rising gods prior to Christianity, that doesn't mean the New Testaments writers copied from them. The fictional TV show *Star Trek* preceded the U.S. Space Shuttle program, but that doesn't mean that newspaper reports of space shuttle missions are influenced by *Star Trek* episodes!" (*I Don't Have Enough Faith to be An Atheist*, 2004, p. 312).

Dr. Alister McGrath, Professor of Historical Theology at Oxford University, says, "Parallels between the pagan myths of dying and rising gods and the New Testament accounts of the resurrection of Jesus are now regarded as remote, to say the least...If anyone borrowed any ideas from anyone, it seems it was the gnostics who took up Christian ideas." (*Intellectuals Don't Need God and Other Modern Myths*, 1993, p. 121).

Charlie Campbell says, "Zeitgeist claims that Mithra, a mythological Persian deity, was dead for three days and then resurrected. I am no scholar on ancient Mithraism, but nowhere in any of the reading I've done on the topic has Mithra's death even been discussed, let alone Zeitgeist's story about three days in a grave and a resurrection. Edwin Yamauchi, a historian and author of the 578 page *Persia and the Bible* concurs. He says, 'We don't know anything about the death of Mithras' (*The Case for the Real Jesus*, p. 172)."

Dr. William Lane Craig, says, "(W)e find almost no trace of cults of dying and rising gods in first century Palestine. Moreover, as Hans Grass observes, it would be "unthinkable" in any case that the original disciples would come sincerely to believe that God had raised Jesus from the dead just because they had heard myths about Osiris!" (Dr. William Lane Craig, "Reply to Evan Fales: On the Empty Tomb of Jesus," 2001).

Dr. Ronald Nash, the author of many books including *The Meaning of History and The Gospel and the Greeks: Did the New Testament Borrow from Pagan Thought?* writes, "Which mystery gods actually experienced a resurrection from the dead? Certainly no early texts refer to any resurrection of Attis. Attempts to link the worship of Adonis to a resurrection are equally weak. Nor is the case for a resurrection of Osiris any stronger. After Isis gathered together the pieces of Osiris's dismembered body, he became "Lord of the Underworld."....And of course no claim can be made that Mithras was a dying and rising god. French scholar Andre Boulanger concludes: "The conception that the god dies and is resurrected in order to lead his faithful to eternal life is represented in no Hellenistic mystery religion." (*The Gospel and the Greeks: Did the New Testament Borrow from Pagan Thought?*, p. 161-162)

H. Wayne House writes, "Various mystery religions did exist from early times in Greece; however, it only after the first century A.D. that we begin to have much data on them. It is more likely, therefore, that the mystery religions, observing the success of orthodox Christianity, began to mimic its beliefs and practices, rather than the other way around." (Cited by Dan Story in *The Christian Combat Manual: Helps for Defending your Faith: A Handbook for Practical Apologetics*, 2007, p. 207).

IN DEFENSE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Dr. Ben Witherington, an eminent New Testament scholar and author of more than 30 books, writes, "Here's the big point: Joseph [the producer of Zeitgeist] reads the story of Jesus back into these other mythological stories, and then claims—shazam—the story of Jesus comes from these other stories, which he has anachronistically read in light of the Jesus story. This is both bad history and bad religious analysis. To my knowledge there is no story that dates from before the time of Jesus that has most of the specific elements listed in the film as distinguishing the Jesus story. For example the story of a virginal conception, crucifixion, or bodily resurrection of a divine son of God." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

CLAIM 2: THE ACCOUNT OF THE THREE KINGS WAS STOLEN

RESPONSE:

Charlie Campbell says, "The claim in the movie Zeitgeist that Christianity borrowed the idea of "three kings" for its nativity story from ancient religions is ludicrous. The Bible knows nothing of "three kings" showing up after Jesus' birth. Three kings is an idea that occasionally appears on some poorly researched Christmas cards, but not in the Bible. Matthew's gospel simply says, "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem" (Matt. 2:1). The magi were known as wise men, not kings. During the Middle Ages legend did develop that the magi were kings and that they were three in number, but this is purely legend, not something taught in the Scriptures. Zeitgeist's deceptive attack on the credibility of the Gospel accounts only reveals its lack of credibility when it comes to scholarly research."

Joel McDurmon writes, "Zeitgeist informs us that the "three kings" are the three brightest stars in the constellation Orion's belt, which align with Sirius (the Star in the East) to point to the place of the sunrise (Birth of the Sun). The movie assures us that, "These 3 bright stars are called today what they were called in ancient times: The Three Kings." Same old problem, however: no sources except for their pet nineteenth-century authors; nothing before 1822." (Zeitgeist The Movie Exposed: Is Jesus an Astrological Myth?, p. 42).

CLAIM 3: JESUS NEVER EXISTED

RESPONSE:

Charlie Campbell says, "To insist that Jesus Christ is a myth—that He never existed—as the Zeitgeist movie does, is foolish. Beside the twenty seven New Testament documents that verify He lived, there are thirty nine sources outside of the Bible, written within 150 years of Jesus life that mention Him. These sources include the Jewish Talmud, the Roman historian Tacitus, the Didache, Flavius Josephus, Pliny the Younger, Suetonius, the Gnostic gospels (e.g., the gospel of Thomas), etc. These extra biblical sources reveal to us more than 100 facts about His life, teaching, death and even resurrection. The Encyclopaedia Britannica, fifteenth edition, devotes 20,000 words to the person of Jesus Christ and never once hints that He didn't exist. Don't be fooled by Zeitgeist, "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh" (2 John 7)."

Ben Witherington says, "Both Jewish historians like Josephus, and Roman ones like Tacitus and later Suetonius are perfectly clear Jesus actually existed, and Tacitus tells us he died on a cross, being executed under Pilate. Apparently, Mr. Joseph [producer of Zeitgeist] couldn't even give this one fact straight. There is more historical evidence for the existence of Jesus than there is for the historical existence of Julius Caesar for example....The only persons who doubt the existence of Jesus of Nazareth are those who either hate Christianity and so want it to disappear, or those who have not bothered to do the proper historical homework." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

IN DEFENSE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

For additional help on this issue, read: "Did Jesus Really Exist?" by Dr. Paul L. Maier or "Ancient Non Christian Sources for the Life of Christ" by Dr. Gary Habermas

CLAIM 4: THE DECEMBER 25 DATE WAS STOLEN

RESPONSE:

Charlie Campbell says, "Another pitiful criticism put forth in the movie Zeitgeist is that the authors of the New Testament borrowed the December 25th date for Jesus' birth from ancient pagan sources. This is ridiculous. Have the producers of Zeitgeist even read the New Testament? Where in the New Testament do we read of any date associated with the birth of Jesus? Nowhere! We have no idea when Jesus was born. The December 25 date originated long after the Gospels were written. Edwin Yamauchi, an author, professor, first rate historian and authority on the world of the first Christians, says that it was not until about 336 A.D. that the December 25 date became the official date to celebrate Jesus' birth. The sheer absence of any date in the New Testament documents is sufficient enough to overturn Zeitgeist's claim; Yamauchi's word on the matter is another nail in the coffin."

Dr. Ben Witherington says, "The Bible says nothing about the specific date or time of Jesus' birth. Most scholars think it was in the spring due to the description of the shepherds being in the fields with their sheep." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

CLAIM 5: THE ACCOUNT OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH WAS STOLEN

RESPONSE:

Daniel B. Wallace writes, "The virgin birth of the pagan god Dionysus is attested only in post-Christian sources...several centuries after Christ." (Reinventing Jesus, p. 242).

Edwin Yamauchi says, "There's no evidence of a virgin birth for Dionysus. As the story goes, Zeus, disguised as a human, fell in love with the princess Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, and she became pregnant. Hera, who was Zeus's queen, arranged to have her burned to a crisp, but Zeus rescued the fetus and sewed him into his own thigh until Dionysus was born. So this is not a virgin birth in any sense." (The Case for the Real Jesus, p. 180).

Edwin Yamauchi says, "Despite the claims of obvious and profound parallels between Christianity and Mithraism, when one looks at the evidence an entirely different picture emerges. First, Mithra was not thought of as virgin born in the most ancient myths; rather, he arose spontaneously from a rock in a cave." (Cited in Reinventing Jesus, p. 242). Lee Strobel adds, "Unless the rock is considered a virgin, this parallel with Jesus evaporates." (The Case for the Real Jesus, p. 171).

Charlie Campbell says, "The virgin birth of the Messiah spoken about in Matthew and Luke was not lifted from pagan religions. It was the fulfillment of a prophecy given in the Old Testament book of Isaiah (7:14) six or seven hundred years before Jesus' birth. And many Bible commentators also believe Genesis 3:15 prophesies the virgin birth seeing that the Messiah would be born solely of the woman's seed."

Charlie Campbell says, "The Zeitgeist movie says that Krishna, a supposed incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu, was born of a virgin. Edwin Yamauchi says, "That's not accurate. Krishna was born to a mother who already had seven previous sons, as even his followers concede." (Quoted by Lee Strobel in The Case for the Real Jesus, p. 182).

IN DEFENSE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

CLAIM 6: THE TIME OF JESUS' BIRTH IS CONNECTED WITH THE ASTROLOGICAL CYCLE

Ben Witherington writes, "Much is made by Mr. Joseph [producer of Zeitgeist] about how in 1 A.D. a new 'age' or astrological cycle begins, after the age of the Ram. Unfortunately for Mr. Joseph, Jesus was born somewhere between 2-6 B.C. He was not born in 1 A.D. How do we know this? Because Jesus was born whilst Herod the Great was still king of the Holy land, and the records are clear that Herod died about 2 B.C. ergo Jesus had to be born before then (see my articles on these matters in the Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels). How then do we have our modern calendar? Well it was set by a gentleman named Dionysius the short...who had too much time on his hands, and estimated the turn of the era to be at the juncture we now have it, based on when he thought Jesus was born. He was off by four or so years. In any case, the birth of Jesus transpires before the supposed turn of the ages in the astrological schema touted by Mr. Joseph. Jesus' birth certainly did not usher in the age of Pisces or the fish. The fish symbol comes into Christianity from the gematric value of the Greek word ICHTHUS—with each letter standing for a word, in this case Iesus, Christos, theos, uios and soter—Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior. It would be nice as well if at least he could get the astrology and symbology part right—but alas, abandon hope, he hasn't even properly done his homework on that subject either." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

CLAIM 7: JESUS' LIFE STORY WAS STOLEN FROM MITHRAISM

RESPONSE:

Charlie Campbell writes, "Zeitgeist claims that the events surrounding Mithra's life were stolen by the New Testament authors. These claims are not credible. Even the Encyclopaedia Britannica concedes that Mithraism (the religion associated with Mithra) could not have influenced the Gospel writers. It states, "There is little notice of the Persian god [Mithra] in the Roman world until the beginning of the 2nd century, but, from the year AD 136 onward, there are hundreds of dedicatory inscriptions to Mithra. This renewal of interest is not easily explained. The most plausible hypothesis seems to be that Roman Mithraism was practically a new creation, wrought by a religious genius who may have lived as late as c. AD 100 and who gave the old traditional Persian ceremonies a new Platonic interpretation that enabled Mithraism to become acceptable to the Roman world" (Article entry: Mithraism 2004 edition). The four Gospels were done well before the close of the first century. If Mithraism wasn't even known in the Roman world in the first century, as the Encyclopaedia Britannica says, then it is misguided to suggest that teachings regarding Mithra influenced the Gospel writers."

Ron Nash writes, "Allegations of an early Christian dependence on Mithraism have been rejected on many grounds. Mithraism had no concept of the death and resurrection of its god and no place for any concept of rebirth—at least during its early stages.... During the early stages of the cult, the notion of rebirth would have been foreign to its basic outlook....Moreover, Mithraism was basically a military cult. Therefore, one must be skeptical about suggestions that it appealed to non military people like the early Christians." (Christianity and the Hellenistic World, p. 144).

Ben Witherington writes, "We really do not have ancient sources on Mithra, comparable to what we have on Moses and the Israelites. Most of what we know about Mithraism comes from the NT era and later. There is no good historical reason to think Mithraism is the origins of either Judaism or Christianity." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

The apostle Peter wrote, "We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with Him on the sacred mountain" (2 Peter 1:16-18).

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CLAIM 8: THE CRUCIFIXION STORY WAS STOLEN

RESPONSE:

Dr. Edwin Bryant, is Professor of Hinduism at Rutgers University and a scholar on Hinduism. He translated the Bhagavata-Purana (life of Krishna) for Peguine World Classics and is the author of Krishna: A Sourcebook. When asked about the claim that Krishna [a Hindu god] had been crucified, he replied, "That is absolute and complete non-sense. There is absolutely no mention anywhere which alludes to a crucifixion." He added that Krishna was killed by an arrow from a hunter who accidentally shot him in the heel. He died and ascended. It was not a resurrection. (Cited in "A Refutation of Acharya S's book, The Christ Conspiracy" by Mike Licona. The Christ Conspiracy is the source for many of the claims in Zeitgeist).

Edwin Yamauchi says, "All of these myths are repetitive, symbolic representations of the death and rebirth of vegetation. These are not historical figures, and none of their deaths were intended to provide salvation. In the case of Jesus, even non-Christian authorities, like Josephus and Tacitus, report that he died under Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius. The reports of his resurrection are quite early and are rooted in eyewitness accounts. They have the ring of reality, not the ethereal qualities of myth." (Quoted by Lee Strobel in The Case for the Real Jesus, p. 178).

CLAIM 9: THE IDEA FOR TWELVE DISCIPLES WAS TAKEN FROM THE 12 CONSTELLATIONS OF THE ZODIAC



Joel McDurmon writes, "Zeitgeist goes on to claim that "probably the most obvious of all the astrological symbolism around Jesus regards the 12 disciples," which, the movie states, are "the 12 constellations of the Zodiac, which Jesus, being the Sun, travels about with." Why anyone would consider this "the most obvious" of such evidence I don't know—I've never heard it until now. Were it so obvious you would expect it to be widely claimed. Further, what makes it so "obvious"? The only similarity between the two is the number twelve, for which examples can be found anywhere. The most "obvious" of these, to any "real" researcher is the twelve tribes of Israel. Since Jesus was fulfilling the Old Covenant, and was instituting the New Covenant, He was choosing the "New" twelve tribes. Jesus himself said that the disciples would sit as judges over the twelve tribes (Matt. 19:28). This is a genuine historical parallel which is reinforced in the book of Revelation, when these two twelves are joined together in New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:12–14). Why stretch for such wild parallels in the stars when the Bible is self-consistent in its symbolism? Biblical theology needs no help from the astrologers that it despises anyway. The movie even notices that "the number 12 is replete throughout the bible," but then misses the impact of that fact and concludes arbitrarily, "This text has more to do with astrology than anything else." If the Bible contains the number twelve throughout, why go outside the Bible to interpret what

significance "12 disciples" may have? To do so betrays a desire to impose a non-Biblical meaning onto the Biblical text." (Zeitgeist The Movie Exposed: Is Jesus an Astrological Myth?, p. 56).

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Dr. Ben Witherington says, "What about the claim that the twelve disciples represent the 12 constellations of the Zodiac? Well once again, Mr. Joseph [the producer of Zeitgeist] has not bothered to do his homework. There was this little entity called the 12 tribes of Israel, going back to Jacob and his 12 sons. Those stories in Genesis are not astrological in character at all, but rather are explanations of a historical origins of a people. The 12 disciples are chosen by Jesus, not because he was a stargazer, but because he was attempting to reform, and indeed re-form Israel. The twelve disciples represent the 12 tribes of Israel, and you will remember that Jesus promised that at the eschaton [Jesus' coming kingdom] they will be sitting on 12 thrones, judging those 12 tribes [see Matthew 19:28]. Once more, this is a sort of historical and eschatological thinking, not a sort of astrological thinking, and the claim that the Bible has more to do with astrology than anything else, can only be called a category mistake. Clearly, Mr. Joseph has done no work whatsoever in the study of the various genre of Biblical literature which he could have gotten from any standard introduction to the Bible, even those written by agnostics and skeptics." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

CLAIM 10: HORUS WAS BORN OF A VIRGIN ON DECEMBER 25th, RESURRECTED, ETC.

Dr. Ben Witherington says, "Unfortunately it [Zeitgeist] gets most of the story of Horus wrong. He claims the Horus myth says he was born on Dec. 25th, born of a virgin, star in the east, worshipped by kings, and was a teacher by 12. This he claims was the original form of the myth in 3000 B.C. It would be nice to know how Mr. Joseph learned this, since we don't have any ancient Egyptians texts that go back that far on this matter. Furthermore this disinformation he gives in the film is refuted by numerous analysis of the proper sources....again not only is Mr. Joseph guilty of falsely blending together various different religions which developed largely regionally and independently of each other, he is actually guilty of falsifying some of the claims made in the Egyptian myths...Ironically he does a disservice to all the religions he discusses....I could go on about the egregious errors in his presentation of Horus, who was not called the lamb of God, and was not crucified and resurrected, even in the myth. The story of Horus is of course the story of the rebirth of the sun in east, and it is based on the cycles of nature, not on any sort of historical claims at all, unlike the story of Jesus. But more to the point the story of Horus does not include many of the elements that Joseph claims it does—shame on him for not doing his homework properly even on Egyptology." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

Dr. Ben Witherington says, "There was no such thing as the concept of bodily resurrection in Egyptian religion, and certainly not of a mythological deity, Horus, was not believed to have a human body. Sometimes commentators will use the term resurrection to speak loosely about an afterlife in another world, not a bodily return to this world." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

CLAIM 11: THE SYMBOL OF THE CROSS WAS STOLEN FROM A CROSS IN THE ZODIAC

Dr. Ben Witherington says, "Mr. Joseph [producer of Zeitgeist] thinks it [the origin of the symbol of the cross] derives from the cross in the Zodiac imposed on the circle of the 12 astrological signs of the Zodiac. There are various problems with this theory. First of all consider the most basic ancient zodiac pattern we have-- for example in the floor of the synagogue at Sepphoris. Jews, like every other group of agrarian peoples were interested in the weather and the seasons. Do we find a cross pattern? [See the picture of the Zodiac to left]....My point is symbol. Mr. Joseph has done no first hand historical work on ancient Zodiac symbols, he has simply believed the pablum he has imbibed from various of his out-dated, and inaccurate sources. The origin of the symbol of the cross of course derives from the Roman practice of crucifixion, not from some supposed astrological pattern. Jesus died in 30 A.D. on a cross outside of Jerusalem, a victim of Roman injustice as even the Romans admitted." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

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CLAIM 12: THE WORKS OF JOSEPHUS ARE KNOWINGLY FRAUDULENT AND THEREFORE NOT GOOD EXTRABIBLICAL EVIDENCE OF JESUS' EXISTENCE

Dr. Ben Witherington says, "The works of Josephus are certainly not fraudulent. As is typical of Mr. Joseph [producer of Zeitgeist] he may have heard there are probably some Christian interpolations in the later editions of Josephus, since Christians loved and used the work, but all of the Josephus scholars I know in the guild, and there are some good ones (Greg Sterling and Steve Mason come to mind) are quite clear that these are genuine works from Josephus. The important point for our purposes is that no Josephus scholar, known to me, including Jewish ones, thinks that the passages in his works about John the Baptizer and Jesus are all later interpolations." ("The Zeitgeist of the 'Zeitgeist Movie'")

Louis Feldman, the prominent Josephus scholar and author, who is not a Christian, said, "My guess is that the ratio of those [scholars] who in some manner accept the Testimonium [to those who reject all of it as an interpolation] would be at least 3 to 1. I would not be surprised if it would be as much as 5 to 1." (In an email to New Testament scholar Mike Licona)

CLAIM 13: THE STORY OF NOAH'S FLOOD IS PLAGIARIZED FROM OTHER SOURCES

Joel McDurmon writes, "Zeitgeist tells us that the story of Noah's Ark and the Flood is not unique: The concept of a Great Flood is ubiquitous throughout the ancient world, with over 200 different cited claims in different periods and times." It is nice to see the Zeitgeist gang finally catching up to Christian scholars on an issue. We have been pointing out the world-wide phenomenon of flood stories for decades now, trying to make people realize that the flood actually happened! Now Zeitgeist comes along and tries to use this fact against us? These guys are so eager to find parallels that they haven't stopped to think: sometimes parallels may actually work in support of the Bible, not against it. After all, if there really was a world-wide flood thousands of years ago, finding multiple traditions of the same story all over the world is exactly what we should expect. This is what we do find. Almost all these flood traditions record a universal flood in which only a tiny remnant of the population is saved. Some add the building of an ark and saving of the animals. Some recall the ark landing on a mountain; some the sending out of birds, etc. It only stands to reason that a few older legends, especially ones that remained geographically close to and close in language, might just have a similar tradition to that of the Bible. (Zeitgeist The Movie Exposed: Is Jesus an Astrological Myth?, p. 61-62)."

A SUMMARY OF SEVEN ARGUMENTS AGAINST CHRISTIAN DEPENDENCE ON MYSTERY RELIGIONS BY RON NASH:

(1) Arguments offered to "prove" a Christian dependence on the mysteries illustrate the logical fallacy of false cause. This fallacy is committed whenever someone reasons that just because two things exist side by side, one of them must have caused the other. As we all should know, mere coincidence does not prove causal connection. Nor does similarity prove dependence.

(2) Many alleged similarities between Christianity and the mysteries are either greatly exaggerated or fabricated. Scholars often describe pagan rituals in language they borrow from Christianity. The careless use of language could lead one to speak of a "Last Supper" in Mithraism or a "baptism" in the cult of Isis. It is inexcusable nonsense to take the word "savior" with all of its New Testament connotations and apply it to Osiris or Attis as though they were savior-gods in any similar sense.

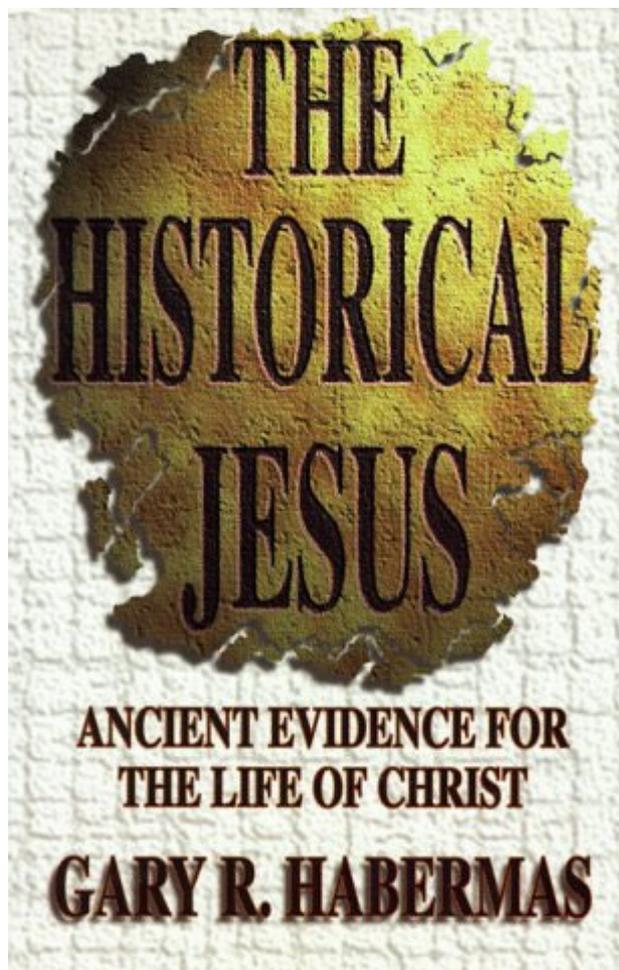
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(3) The chronology is all wrong. Almost all of our sources of information about the pagan religions alleged to have influenced early Christianity are dated very late. We frequently find writers quoting from documents written 300 years later than Paul in efforts to produce ideas that allegedly influenced Paul. We must reject the assumption that just because a cult had a certain belief or practice in the third or fourth century after Christ, it therefore had the same belief or practice in the first century.

(4) Paul would never have consciously borrowed from the pagan religions. All of our information about him makes it highly unlikely that he was in any sense influenced by pagan sources. He placed great emphasis on his early training in a strict form of Judaism (Phil. 3:5). He warned the Colossians against the very sort of influence that advocates of Christian syncretism have attributed to him, namely, letting their minds be captured by alien speculations (Col. 2:8).

(5) Early Christianity was an exclusivistic faith. As J. Machen explains, the mystery cults were nonexclusive. "A man could become initiated into the mysteries of Isis or Mithras without at all giving up his former beliefs; but if he were to be received into the Church, according to the preaching of Paul, he must forsake all other Saviors for the Lord Jesus Christ....Amid the prevailing syncretism of the Greco-Roman world, the religion of Paul, with the religion of Israel, stands absolutely alone." This Christian exclusivism should be a starting point for all reflection about the possible relations between Christianity and its pagan competitors. Any hint of syncretism in the New Testament would have caused immediate controversy.

(6) Unlike the mysteries, the religion of Paul was grounded on events that actually happened in history. The mysticism of the mystery cults was essentially non historical. Their myths were dramas, or pictures, of what the initiate went through, not real historical events, as Paul regarded Christ's death and resurrection to be. The Christian affirmation that the death and resurrection of Christ happened to a historical person at a particular time and place has absolutely no parallel in any pagan mystery religion.



(7) What few parallels may still remain may reflect a Christian influence on the pagan systems. As Bruce Metzger has argued, "It must not be uncritically assumed that the Mysteries always influenced Christianity, for it is not only possible but probable that in certain cases, the influence moved in the opposite direction." [22] It should not be surprising that leaders of cults that were being successfully challenged by Christianity should do something to counter the challenge. What better way to do this than by offering a pagan substitute? Pagan attempts to counter the growing influence of Christianity by imitating it are clearly apparent in measures instituted by Julian the Apostate, who was the Roman emperor from A.D. 361 to 363. (Excerpted from his article "Was the New Testament Influenced by Pagan Religions" that first appeared in the Christian Research Journal, Winter, 1994).

