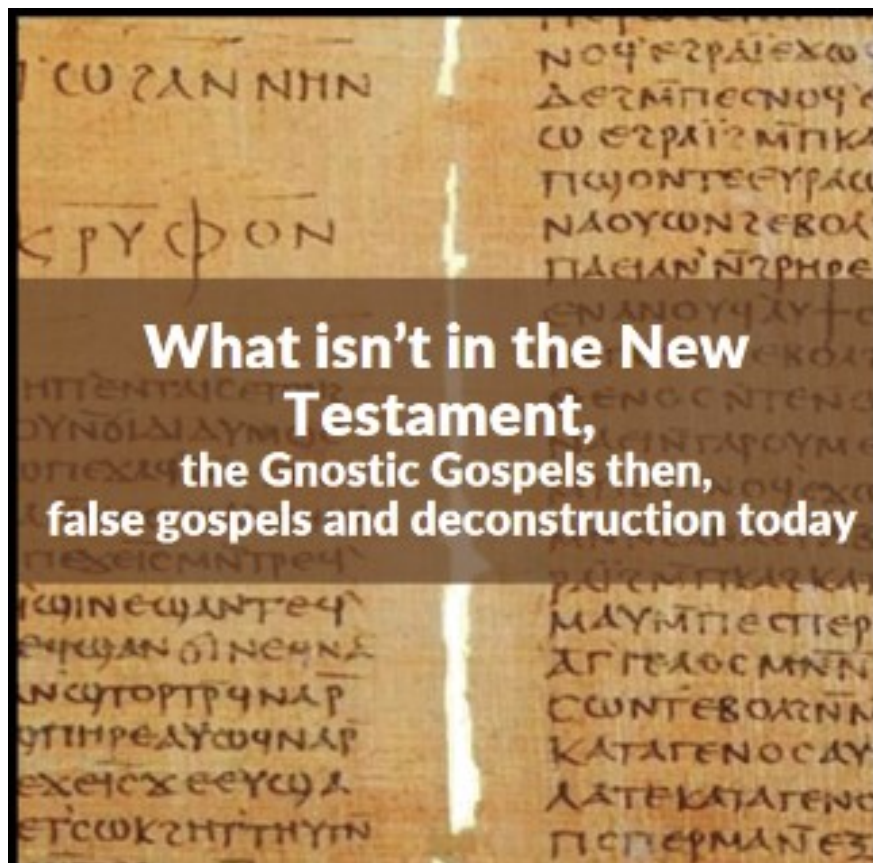


Handouts

Notes, Questions,
Infographics, PLUS text of
Gnostic Gospels



Do our Bibles leave out important writings about Jesus?

- **Why are some books included in the New Testament and others aren't?**
- **What is the Gospel of Thomas?**
- **What is Gnosticism and the Gnostic Gospels?**
- **These questions and more we'll answer in our lesson today.....**

What isn't in the New Testament, the Gnostic Gospels then, false gospels and deconstruction today

Teacher, Yvon Prehn

A primary criticism of the New Testament

- Is that critics say that Christians intentionally left out and/or suppressed certain writings, primarily what we call the Gnostic Gospels and that they should be part of our New Testament and aren't.
- We need to take their challenges seriously because our New Testament contains **both how to be saved by faith in Jesus AND how to live our lives after we accept Him as Savior in ways that are pleasing to Him.**
- But there are always alternative voices, ways to be saved, and live a "spiritual" life.
- The Gnostic Gospels are an ancient alternative what we are going to look at because...

It isn't just scholars who are influenced by them

- *"It seems to me that the only true Christians were the Gnostics, who believed in self-knowledge, i.e. becoming Christ themselves, reaching the Christ within, the light is the truth. Turn on the light."*
- John Lennon
- The idea of God within you (without Jesus) is very popular today in some of the philosophical heirs of it in various cults such as Scientology, modern church "progressive" movements and the challenges of "deconstruction."
- We'll get practical on all of these, but first let's look at what the Bible warned us about them.

Jesus warned us—

there will always be false prophets

- *"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.*
- *²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' Matt. 7:15-24*

- ²⁴ *“Therefore everyone who **hears these words of mine and puts them into practice** is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

What we see from this passage

- There are false prophets, and we should be able to identify them by “their fruits.”
- And Jesus goes on to state what fruit from a false prophet is—thinking that big, bragging actions, miracles even, are what makes you a Christian.
- ***And Jesus clearly says that isn’t it. It is KNOWING Him that makes an eternal, saving relationship.***
- And how to we do that? Answer is right here and is very simple: ***“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”***
- ***We must know what are HIS WORDS***—the true words of the Bible and what are not because it is in the Bible we get to know the REAL Jesus.

My plan for this lesson to help you do that, here’s how

- Review the foundation for it of why we have the documents we have in our New Testament.
- Brief summary of Gnosticism—*basically the idea that special knowledge is required for salvation*. Scientology is a contemporary example of this as well as spiritual influences of Progressive Christianity and the current trend of deconstructing one’s faith.
- How the Gnostic Gospels were found and an evaluation of them in the same way we evaluated the previous texts.
- **We will look at excerpts of the Gnostic gospels, and current similar thoughts, you’ll have copies in your notes.**
- We’ll then circle back to how similar ideas have entered in to current beliefs today and end with challenges on what to do about them.

In our last lesson

- We established the historical reliability of the New Testament documents—that they can be relied on to give us the true history of who Jesus was and what He did.
- We established the New Testament reliability from manuscript dating, eye-witness accounts, the accounts of those who were not Christians, historians, politicians, and critics who wrote at the same time and shortly after Jesus’ life on earth verifying the New Testament events.
- And we learned that the manuscript evidence was not only in a few fragments, but in ***thousands of them***.
- Please go back to the previous lesson for a review if you haven’t.
- This chart is available at www.Bible805.com and with the notes for this lesson.

Instead of simply accepting, or being fearful— check out competing claims

- Many things will appear credible if they are simply stated with authority— we will look at two examples in a minute.
- Don’t accept what doesn’t agree with what you have been taught.
- Ask questions—where is the evidence, the hard, factual evidence for claims?
- ***READ (which you will do) the competing documents—all available online for free. DON’T just read about them, read THEM.***
- They are invariably inferior, fanciful, without anchors to truth, and not what they claim to be.
- This includes not only the gnostic gospels we will be looking at but

source documents of other religions including the *Bhagavat Gita*, the *Book of Mormon*, and the *Koran* (see lessons on them).

- Because many people are not familiar with the originals, they fall for

Liberal Scholars & Popular Culture

- Most people never heard of the Gnostic Gospels or writings until:
- Elaine Pagel's *Gnostic Gospels*
- Dan Brown's *DaVinci Code*
- *Brought these manuscripts & beliefs into mainstream consciousness.*
- Basic idea in both is that these discoveries and particularly 3 manuscripts: the *Gospel of Mary*, the *Gospel of Judas*, and the *Gospel of Thomas* are Gnostic Gospels that tell the true story of the early church but were suppressed.
- Let's evaluate these claims.

The Gnostic Gospels, what they are

- Scholars have long known about them, and they were not suppressed.
- Primarily two groups of mostly poorly preserved fragments of manuscripts discovered during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by archaeologists at Oxyrhynchus and Nag Hammadi in Egypt. The manuscripts date from the 1st to the 6th century AD.
- These are the only places these are found—not copied and shared extensively as the NT documents were.
- Only 1-4 (Gospel of Thomas has 4) copies of each separate work exist.
- Various topics, some of the manuscripts tell a very different story about a different Jesus.
- Let's look at first where they were discovered and a little more about them, then at the documents themselves

Textual Comparisons Summary

What is their content?

- Not at all like the 4 Gospels we have in our Bibles.
- Did not have the name "Gospel" attached to them early on; were NEVER listed with the traditional 4 Gospels, never grouped with them, ***never included and then suppressed.***
- To call them "Gospels" are simply current (somewhat sensational) names given to them.
- ***They do not tell the story of Jesus as our 4 Gospels do; DO NOT cover his crucifixion, death, and resurrection.***
- Instead, primarily Gnostic stories and sayings. Which we will look at before the documents themselves.
- Prepare for a headache.....

What is Gnosticism?

- *Gnosticism was a kind of Christian mysticism in the early centuries of Christianity.*
- *Gnostics got their name from "gnosis" or knowledge, that they believed could be gained of spiritual realities beyond material existence.*
- *They believed because the material world was subject to decay and death—therefore material flesh was bad. They did not worship the same God as Jews and Christians but taught that He (the God of the Old Testament) was simply a lesser being, a corrupt and ignorant being trying to imitate higher, perfect beings who had created a higher, more perfect spiritual realm.*
- *Humans were conflicted and disordered because they had both spiritual and material realities conflicting inside them. Through gnosis, sacred*

understanding, human beings could transcend the flawed material universe and ascend to a spiritual realm. (my note: no divine redeemer or savior needed) <https://levelskip.com/rpgs/Gnosticism-in-Pokemon>

- **It then followed that a person needs a teacher or writings or a group that will give them the special secret knowledge they need to be enlightened and find the “god” within themselves.**

That “secret” special knowledge

- Is what makes up the core belief of Gnosticism—that there is some special secret, and the secret is that that you don’t need an outside Savior, that all you need is to discover the “god within you” and that you need to be taught that .
- However, certain enlightened individuals can know these secrets and pass them on and that is what Jesus did.
- ***“These are the hidden words that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas wrote them down”*** from the *Gospel of Thomas*
- We’ll look at it in more detail in a few minutes.
- THIS is the same claim of cults, new movements in the faith, that the Bible is not our sole source for faith and practice.
- Some look to a leader or guru—others just council people to “look within.”

Judge for yourself

- ***Let’s look at quotes from these books included in your notes. SEE HANDOUTS of them—don’t be afraid to read things like this.***
- ***And corresponding handouts of some contemporary quotes from Progressive Christianity and a deconstructing church.***
- Yes, they are confusing and don’t make logical sense.
- Even a casual reading shows an entirely different voice, underlying teaching, point of view.
- Jesus said (speaking of himself as the Shepherd), ***“the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”*** John 10:4b,5
- Jesus doesn’t play games or try to confuse us.

Gospel of Thomas

- After the Coptic version of the complete text was discovered in 1945 at Nag Hammadi, scholars soon realized that three different Greek text fragments previously found at Oxyrhynchus, (between 1897-1904) also in Egypt, were part of the Gospel of Thomas.
- 3 Greek and one Coptic Manuscript
- Manuscripts from 200s to 340
- Unknown author

Gospel of Mary

- Evaluated and dated in the same way that we did other New Testament documents.
- The ***Gospel of Mary*** discovered in 1896 in a 5th century papyrus codex.
- 3 fragments
- Written 120-180 AD
- Unknown author

Gospel of Judas—only 1 copy, recent, Big PR on it

Been around so long, Charles Spurgeon

- EVENING Devotions “Who of God is made unto us wisdom.1 Corinthians 1:30

- Man's intellect seeks after rest, and by nature seeks it apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. Men of education are apt, even when converted, to look upon the simplicities of the cross of Christ with an eye too little reverent and loving. They are snared in the old net in which the Grecians were taken, and have a hankering to mix philosophy with revelation. The temptation with a man of refined thought and high education is to depart from the simple truth of Christ crucified, and to invent, as the term is, a more intellectual doctrine. This led the early Christian churches into Gnosticism, and bewitched them with all sorts of heresies. This is the root of Neology, and the other fine things which in days gone by were so fashionable in Germany, and are now so ensnaring to certain classes of divines. Whoever you are, good reader, and whatever your education may be, if you be the Lord's, be assured you will find no rest in philosophizing divinity. You may receive this dogma of one great thinker, or that dream of another profound reasoner, but what the chaff is to the wheat, that will these be to the pure word of God. All that reason, when best guided, can find out is but the A B C of truth, and even that lacks certainty, while in Christ Jesus there is treasured up all the fulness of wisdom and knowledge. All attempts on the part of Christians to be content with systems such as Unitarian and Broad-church thinkers would approve of, must fail; true heirs of heaven must come back to the grandly simple reality which makes the ploughboy's eye flash with joy, and gladdens the pious pauper's heart--"Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Jesus satisfies the most elevated intellect when he is believably received, but apart from him the mind of the regenerate discovers no rest. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." "A good understanding have all they that do his commandments."

An insightful comment not only of this books, but many of the same school of thought

- *In one sense, I think the author's critique of conservatives who proclaim Christ's death but ignore the implications of Jesus' life as it relates to social justice issues is fair. But I think a focus on Jesus' life (as it relates to social justice) without an appropriate understanding of the eternal significance of Jesus' death leaves you with a lot of good works and nice feelings in this life, but, in my opinion, an eternity in Hell.*
- From a critique of Rachel Held Evans book, **Inspired**
- Identified as a "homeschooling mom, who also has an engineering PhD."
- Postscript note from Yvon: those who ignore social justice, do so with an incomplete grasp of scripture as from the earliest laws in the Old Testament to Jesus's description of the final judgment in Matthew 25, the true biblical attitude towards the poor and those less fortunate ought to be mercy, giving, and care. A critique of the lack of caring by "conservatives" is also often a straw man as the church of Jesus is the originator of many forms of social welfare, charities, hospitals and other forms of social services even today.

Summary Comparison NT and Gnostic writings

NT Gospels

- Based on OT Prophecy, Theology
- Consistent message
- Verified authors
- Eyewitness accounts

- Written soon after events
- Hundreds of manuscripts for each book
- Accepted by the church universally
- Reliable source for salvation and growth as a disciple

Gnostic Gospels

- Based on Gnostic belief system
- Inconsistent, scattered teachings
- False authors
- No eyewitness accounts
- Written 100 or more years after events
- 1-4 manuscripts per book
- Condemned by the church fathers
- Deceptive source of salvation and spiritual growth

Why so important to understand Gnostic thought & writing?

- The Gnostics preach and teach ***an entirely different Jesus and Gospel.***
- ***Obvious why not included in the canon, accepted books—not even around when the inspired books were accepted by the majority of the Christian church.***
- ***Teaching more in common with other religions, cults, aberrant forms of Christianity today (Progressive, deconstructed).***
- The idea that you don't need a Savior outside you—that "god" is within you and YOU have the power to tap into it has always been appealing since Satan told Eve she could "become like God" if she ate the forbidden fruit and it is still tempting today.

People think they are doing something new in "deconstructing"

- But it is primarily recycling old lies.
- 2 books I highly recommend:
 - ***Before You Lose Your Faith: Deconstructing Doubt in the Church***
 - ***Another Gospel?: A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity***
- Tried but true example—get to know the original so well, so you can spot counterfeit—Childers uses example of Brie cheese—that's a good one.

In contrast to the fanciful sayings of the Gnostic Gospels

- ***A correct New Testament teaches us how to be saved and how to live***
- ***Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:30,31***
- ***All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17***
- We won't believe, how to be sure of our eternal salvation, or know how to live if we don't have a correct text.
- ***But as I trust you can see from this lesson and the previous lesson, we DO have a historically verifiable, trustworthy text—our primary application is to READ IT and LIVE IT!***

Infographic--Manuscripts of the New Testament and Gnostic Gospels compared

The validity of any religion or belief system is only as secure as the documents upon which it is based. Particularly with issues as important as one's eternal destiny and how to live a fulfilling life, it only makes sense to base your belief system on a solid foundation. As this infographic shows, the New Testament gives us the historically valid history of Jesus, his life, death, and resurrection, and the history of the founding of the Christian Church and its doctrines rests on a solid textual history.

There is more and earlier documentary evidence for the reliability of the New Testament than for any other ancient document that supports the history we have of those times.

In addition, this infographic shows the contrasting poor documentary support for the Gnostic Gospels, few manuscripts, 1-4 as opposed to thousands, and late dating, hundreds of years after the events they purport to record as opposed to less than 100 years.

The lesson, [*Introduction to the New Testament, the critical importance of correct dating*](#), on the Bible805 website will give you a detailed discussion of this infographic and additional background on the New Testament from both favorable and antagonistic sources.

Author	Book	Date Written	Earliest Copies we have	Time Gap	Copies
Homer	Iliad	800 BC	c 400 BC	c 400 years	643
Herodotus	History	480-425 BC	c AD 900	c 1,350 years	8
Plato		400 BC	c AD 900	c.1,300 years	7
Caesar	Galic Wars	100-44 BC	c. A D 900	c.1,000 years	10
New Testament		AD 50-100	c.AD 114 (fragment) & earlier c. AD 200 (books) c. AD 250 (most of N.T.) c. AD 325 (complete N.T.)	+50 years 100years 150 years 225 years	5366 original lang plus 15,000- translations
Gnostic Gospels	Gospel of Judas Gospel of Thomas and, at the most, 10 others	AD 150-300	c.AD 200-300	+50 years	1-3

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What isn't in the New Testament, the Gnostic Gospels then, false gospels and deconstruction today

Important suggestions: be sure everyone in the group gets a chance to contribute—freely share YOUR thoughts, insights, questions—truly interact with each other and God's Word.

1. Have you ever heard of Gnosticism or the Gnostic Gospels? What about Progressive Christianity or “deconstructing” the Christian faith? What about Christian leaders who have decided they don't want to follow Jesus anymore? What did you hear?
2. How is the textual verification and history of the Gnostic Gospels different than that of the New Testament itself? Why is that important?
3. Have you seen the *DaVinci Code* movie or read the book? Or something similar that purported to be a new scholarly discovery about Jesus? What was your reaction?
4. Why is false teaching in popular culture so powerful? Why do you think Progressive Christianity appeals to people today?
5. How would you answer someone who said Jesus is primarily a great spiritual teacher that helps us find the god in us? Or repeated any of the similar teachings of the gnostic gospels that are repeated in Progressive Christianity? How would you answer someone who is struggling with questions about their faith?

John 1: Christian Bible

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome ^(a) it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

....John 14: Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

(not through any secret knowledge, but through Jesus alone)

COMMENTARY:

Following are some excerpts from the Gnostic Gospels—and even a casual reading shows they present a VERY different Jesus than the one presented in the orthodox Christian Bible and the Jesus of history.

Key applications:

Not everyone or every teaching that mentions Jesus is talking about the TRUE Jesus. Measure everything against the Bible. ***Don't be afraid when you hear or see on TV some "NEW" thing revealed. Go directly to the source and check it out. Most falsehood is obvious when compared with the TRUTH of God's Word.

Gospel of John, New Testament, chapter 14

¹"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God^[a]; trust also in me. ²In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴You know the way to the place where I am going.

⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you really knew me, you would know^[b] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

⁸Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

⁹Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. ¹²I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

¹⁵"If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ¹⁷the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be^[c] in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

²²Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

²³Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. ²⁵"All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

²⁸"You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. ³⁰I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, ³¹but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

"Come now; let us leave.

The Gospel of Thomas

These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas recorded.

1. And he said, "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."
2. Jesus said, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will reign over all. [And after they have reigned they will rest.]"
3. Jesus said, "If your leaders say to you, 'Look, the (Father's) kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the (Father's) kingdom is within you and it is outside you.

When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you live in poverty, and you are the poverty."

4. Jesus said, "The person old in days won't hesitate to ask a little child seven days old about the place of life, and that person will live.

For many of the first will be last, and will become a single one."

5. Jesus said, "Know what is in front of your face, and what is hidden from you will be disclosed to you.

For there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. [And there is nothing buried that will not be raised.]"

6. His disciples asked him and said to him, "Do you want us to fast? How should we pray? Should we give to charity? What diet should we observe?"

Jesus said, "Don't lie, and don't do what you hate, because all things are disclosed before heaven. After all, there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed, and there is nothing covered up that will remain undisclosed."

7. Jesus said, "Lucky is the lion that the human will eat, so that the lion becomes human. And foul is the human that the lion will eat, and the lion still will become human."

.....

12. The disciples said to Jesus, "We know that you are going to leave us. Who will be our leader?"

Jesus said to them, "No matter where you are you are to go to James the Just, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being."

13. Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to something and tell me what I am like."

Simon Peter said to him, "You are like a just messenger."

Matthew said to him, "You are like a wise philosopher."

Thomas said to him, "Teacher, my mouth is utterly unable to say what you are like."

Jesus said, "I am not your teacher. Because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring that I have tended."

And he took him, and withdrew, and spoke three sayings to him. When Thomas came back to his friends they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?"

Thomas said to them, "If I tell you one of the sayings he spoke to me, you will pick up rocks and stone me, and fire will come from the rocks and devour you."

14. Jesus said to them, "If you fast, you will bring sin upon yourselves, and if you pray, you will be condemned, and if you give to charity, you will harm your spirits.

Gospel according to Mary

Chapter 4

...Will matter then be destroyed or not?

22) The Saviour said, All nature, all formations, all creatures exist in and with one another, and they will be resolved again into their own roots.

23) For the nature of matter is resolved into the roots of its own nature alone.

24) He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

25) Peter said to him, Since you have explained everything to us, tell us this also: What is the sin of the world?

26) The Saviour said There is no sin, but it is you who make sin when you do the things that are like the nature of adultery, which is called sin.

27) That is why the Good came into your midst, to the essence of every nature in order to restore it to its root.

28) Then He continued and said, That is why you become sick and die, for you are deprived of the one who can heal you.

29) He who has a mind to understand, let him understand.

30) Matter gave birth to a passion that has no equal, which proceeded from something contrary to nature. Then there arises a disturbance in its whole body.

.....

Chapter 5.

4) When Mary said this, she turned their hearts to the Good, and they began to discuss the words of the Saviour.

5) Peter said to Mary, Sister we know that the Saviour loved you more than the rest of woman.

6) Tell us the words of the Saviour which you remember which you know, but we do not, nor have we heard them.

7) Mary answered and said, What is hidden from you I will proclaim to you.

8) And she began to speak to them these words: I, she said, I saw the Lord in a vision and I said to Him, Lord I saw you today in a vision. He answered and said to me,

9) Blessed are you that you did not waver at the sight of Me. For where the mind is there is the treasure.

10) I said to Him, Lord, how does he who sees the vision see it, through the soul or through the spirit?

11) The Saviour answered and said, He does not see through the soul nor through the spirit, but the mind that is between the two that is what sees the vision and it is [...]

(pp.11-14 missing)

Chapter 8:

23) In a aeon I was released from a world, and in a Type from a type, and from the fetter of oblivion which is transient.

24) From this time on will I attain to the rest of the time, of the season, of the aeon, in silence.

Chapter 9

1) When Mary had said this, she fell silent, since it was to this point that the Saviour had spoken with her.

2) But Andrew answered and said to the brethren, Say what you wish to say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Savior said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas.

3) Peter answered and spoke concerning these same things.

4) He questioned them about the Saviour: Did He really speak privately with a woman and not openly to us? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did He prefer her to us?

5) Then Mary wept and said to Peter, My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I have thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Saviour?

6) Levi answered and said to Peter, Peter you have always been hot tempered.

7) Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries.

8) But if the Saviour made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Saviour knows her very well.

9) That is why He loved her more than us. Rather let us be ashamed and put on the perfect Man, and separate as He commanded us and preach the gospel, not laying down any other rule or other law beyond what the Saviour said.

10) And when they heard this they began to go forth to proclaim and to preach.

Gospel of Judas

When Jesus appeared on earth, he performed miracles and great wonders for the salvation of humanity. And since some [walked] in the way of righteousness while others walked in their transgressions, the twelve disciples were called.

He began to speak with them about the mysteries beyond the world and what would take place at the end. Often he did not appear to his disciples as himself, but he was found among them as a child.

.....

When Jesus observed their lack of [understanding, he said] to them, "Why has this agitation led you to anger? Your god who is within you and [...] [35] have provoked you to anger [within] your souls. [Let] any one of you who is [strong enough] among human beings bring out the perfect human and stand before my face."

They all said, "We have the strength."

But their spirits did not dare to stand before [him], except for Judas Iscariot. He was able to stand before him, but he could not look him in the eyes, and he turned his face away.

Judas [said] to him, "I know who you are and where you have come from. You are from the immortal realm of Barbelo. And I am not worthy to utter the name of the one who has sent you."

JESUS SPEAKS TO JUDAS PRIVATELY

Knowing that Judas was reflecting upon something that was exalted, Jesus said to him, "Step away from the others and I shall tell you the mysteries of the kingdom. It is possible for you to reach it, but you will grieve a great deal. [36] For someone else will replace you, in order that the twelve [disciples] may again come to completion with their god."

Judas said to him, "When will you tell me these things, and [when] will the great day of light dawn for the generation?"

But when he said this, Jesus left him.

JESUS TEACHES JUDAS ABOUT COSMOLOGY: THE SPIRIT AND THE SELF-GENERATED

Jesus said, "[Come], that I may teach you about [secrets] no person [has] ever seen. For there exists a great and boundless realm, whose extent no generation of angels has seen, [in which] there is [a] great invisible [Spirit], *which no eye of an angel has ever seen, no thought of the heart has ever comprehended, and it was never called by any name.*

"And a luminous cloud appeared there. He said, 'Let an angel come into being as my attendant.'

"A great angel, the enlightened divine Self-Generated, emerged from the cloud.

Because of him, four other angels came into being from another cloud, and they became attendants for the angelic Self-Generated. The Self-Generated said, [48] 'Let [...] come into being [...],' and it came into being [...]. And he [created] the first luminary to reign over him. He said, 'Let angels come into being to serve [him],' and myriads without number came into being. He said, '[Let] an enlightened aeon come into being,' and he came into being. He created the second luminary [to] reign over him, together with myriads of angels without number, to offer service. That is how he created the rest of the enlightened aeons. He made them reign over them, and he created for them myriads of angels without number, to assist them.

ADAMAS AND THE LUMINARIES

"Adamas was in the first luminous cloud that no angel has ever seen among all those called 'God.' He [49] [...] that [...] the image [...] and after the likeness of [this] angel.

Contemporary descriptions of those involved in deconstruction, in Progressive Christianity

[describing his church as] Our own liminal space. The threshold between conformity and pursuit. Between blind faith and deeper faith. Liminal is not a place to just exist. Its nature is transitory and implies movement. For our body, that movement is toward the Divine. We are not called to be stagnant or comfortable. We are called to be love and to show love.

From the Liminal Church website, Ventura, CA

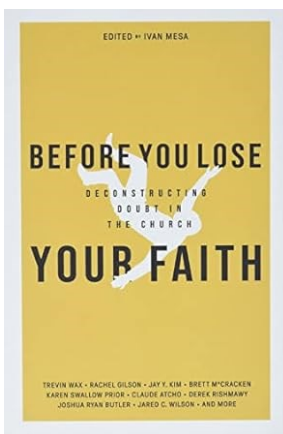
God is Love, and Jesus is Love enfleshed. For me, Love communicates most clearly in embodied form. Jesus shows us how to use our heads, hearts, and hands to build the Beloved Community. We follow Jesus' example to live in active, transformative love.

Yet all faiths are Love languages. I agree that "the Spirit moves in beneficial ways in many faith traditions." Love has moved through the world from the beginning, carried in every heart, uniting all creation. Whenever and wherever people have come through suspicion into trust, conflict into cooperation, ignorance into understanding, and enmity into empathy, Love has guided. Love finds expression in every faith, even as human limitation also finds expression in every religion.

When Jesus says "No one comes to the Father except through me," I take that to mean that no one can come to Love without embodying love. We commune with Love by loving others, no matter how we label ourselves. And we learn how to love one another better by listening to and honoring each other's faiths, perspectives, and worldviews.

From <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/faithfulpeacemaking/2022/10/the-8-points-of-progressive-christianity-have-changed-heres-what-they-are-now/>

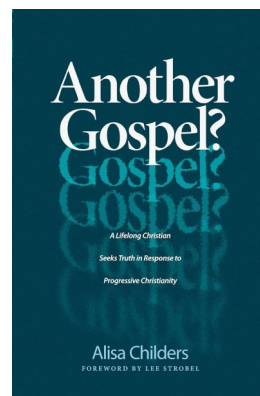
Two highly recommended books to understand what is happening and how to respond



Before You Lose Your Faith: Deconstructing Doubt in the Church

An **ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL BOOK** to read to understand the current trend of "deconstructing" the faith.

Edited by the Gospel Coalition, the collection of essays are all by incredibly good writers who speak to various areas of questioning in the church along and respond with Biblically solid and thoughtful answers. I cannot recommend this enough for anyone concerned about what is happening in the church today regarding many who are walking away from their faith.



Another Gospel?: A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity

Popular, chatty writing style but a very good explanation of many of the dangerous contemporary trends in the church and solid responses to them.