

The *Masquerading* of Christianity



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The concept of "The Masquerading of Christianity" refers to situations where individuals or groups pretend to be or act as Christians, but their true intentions or actions are not in alignment with Christian teachings. This can involve hypocrisy, deception, or the use of religious language to manipulate or exploit others. It can also refer to the fusion of Christian beliefs with secular ideologies, leading to a distorted or watered-down version of Christianity.

Individuals may outwardly appear to be devout Christians but live a life that contradicts their faith. They might engage in religious rituals or performances without genuine spiritual conviction. This can be seen in false apostles or deceitful workers who use religious language to gain influence or power, as stated in **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**. It says, For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

Hypocrites pretend to be righteous while their hearts are filled with malice, as described in **Matthew 6:1-5**, which says, Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

There are secular ideologies disguised as Christianity. Some may attempt to combine Christian beliefs with worldly ideologies or political agendas. This can result in a form of Christianity that is not faithful to its original teachings.

Another problem we will touch on is lukewarmness and apathy. Some Christians may appear outwardly devout but lack genuine passion or commitment to their faith. They might be lukewarm in their devotion, as seen in **Revelation 3:14-22**, when Jesus is talking about the church at Laodicea. This can be manifested in a lack of enthusiasm for evangelism or spiritual growth.

There is a importance of and in Discernment. It's crucial for individuals to discern between genuine Christian faith and false teachings or hypocritical behavior. This involves studying the Bible, seeking guidance from spiritual leaders, and paying attention to the fruits of someone's action. Jesus himself warned against false prophets and those who would masquerade as his followers, as seen in **Matthew 7:15-20**. It says, Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good

tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

So we must see the Real Through the Masquerade.

In **2 Corinthians 11:5-15** Paul said, I do not think I am in the least inferior to those “super-apostles.” I may indeed be untrained as a speaker, but I do have knowledge. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way. Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so. As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine. Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

Throughout every period of history error rises like a beast from the sea with seven heads, and attacks the church of Jesus Christ. There has never been a golden age in which the church had no need to watch and be on its guard. At the time of the apostles themselves the mighty church of Ephesus was told by Paul in **Acts 20:29-31**, “I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard!”

We know that men claiming to be apostles turned up at Ephesus and were tested by the church there and found false. Jesus even said so in **Revelation 2:2**. So it happened there, and in the Galatian church, and it occurred also in this vibrant Christian church in Corinth. False teachers seek to deflect examination of their heresies by pleading for love and church unity, claiming that their ideas are also from the Scripture, and quoting “Judge not that ye be not judged.”

In Corinth the heretics were men with a mission, wanting to spread their views throughout all the congregations of Jesus Christ. Wherever they prevailed it was the end of that church, and you can see how successful such men have been in Europe in the past century. Paul was determined that they would not prevail where he had planted and taught a congregation. “Remember,” he says to the Ephesians in **Acts 20:31**, Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears. There was not an individual Christian in Ephesus who personally had not been warned by Paul, “Be on your guard,” was his refrain.

Of course the world is full of deceivers. Many vivid words and phrases have been invented to describe them, conmen, carpet-baggers, shysters, swindlers, twisters, confidence tricksters, riggers, fiddlers, mountebanks, pretenders, impostors, snakes in the grass, wily birds, wolves in sheep’s clothing.

We recognise that picture of many a heartless deceiver who is in the world around us, but the fearful reality is that such men are in the churches too. The reason for their existence is not because of poverty,

or social deprivation, or lack of education. Many of them are intelligent men who come from decent homes. The reason for the abundance of deceivers is sin within man.

We are not just talking about the faith-healing, health and wealth crooks on religious TV. We are not concerned with their sins today, but our sins, the deceiver in our hearts. How does Paul describe the false Christian here? Are these marks in my life? “Lord, is it I?” That is the thought that should be on our mind.

So let’s look at the marks of RELIGIOUS MASQUERADE .

Number one, they are deceivers. I mean look at the strong language Of Paul in the verse from **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness.

There is something Satanic about deceit. This is how the devil began to harass the human race, by deceiving Eve. It is not surprising that these wicked men in Corinth were disguising themselves as apostles of Jesus Christ. Satan is clever enough to dress himself in Christian garb. He appears as an angel of light rather than as the prince of darkness. Satan is a subversive. When they meet him people are struck by this gorgeous and impressive person. That’s the reason so many are deceived. No black horns growing out of his head. No forked tail. He looks as if he has just stepped out of Hollywood. Also how sensible and wise he sounds. Satan is a master at creating a good impression, and Satan’s servants are what these men are.

There are preachers and theologians all over the world who will talk about the Bible. They will refer to creation and the fall and to hell and heaven. They will use God-words. They might create a very good impression to the Christians listening, but for those teachers the opening chapters of Genesis and the closing chapters of Revelation are not actual events and places in space and time. For them two real people, Adam and Eve, never lived in paradise. There is no place of woe to avoid at all costs. The modernist will use these words, but for him they are symbols and powerful myths. He too is a false apostle and a deceitful workman.

Another thing is they are smooth talkers. Paul says, I may indeed be untrained as a speaker. Perhaps he is saying in quite a straight-forward way that he is aware that he was not eloquent in public speaking and in this regard was inferior to his opponents. I know how he feels. If you ever heard me speak you would know I do not have an eloquent speech. My Texas accent gives me away pretty quick.

Just because they are smooth talkers doesn’t make them right. Or perhaps Paul is being ironic, putting himself in a supposed inferior position to those silver-tongued men or as we used to say silver-tongued devils, whereas he knew, and all the Corinthian church knew, that he was a superb preacher compared to those phonies.

In other words, what was important to these men was the tingle factor. They felt they could really preach! They could be catapults and see men go down before them. They itched to preach ‘great sermons’, but great sermons, ninety-nine times in a hundred are nuisances. They are showy. They have been preached many times. A man will gather together all his favorites stories and illustrations and they

will attract attention, but they shelter nobody, warm nobody and help nobody. They are too near entertainment.

There are times, utterly unexpectedly, when great sermons are given. Then preach them! But they will come of themselves if they are worth anything. These opponents of Paul strive to preach them, and that of itself is almost enough to destroy them. They mounted the pulpit as “a super-apostle.” They thought of their cloaks, their hair, the length of their beards, their posture and gestures. Religious puppets! Ambition, envy and vanity are demons that love to clothe themselves in rhetorical garments like angels of light. But God will protect his children who are sincere in their worship from the wolves in sheep’s garments.

Paul says, I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way.” Paul is reminding them that they knew who the men were whose messages didn’t come free of charge. Think of the world’s attitudes.

We’ll meet many which charges more than all others do, and because it, people will tend to believe they are getting the best. That’s what Paul’s opponents did. If people have paid for something it is galling for them to admit that they’ve been taken for a ride. They want to boast that nothing was spared to get these counsels and that they had their money’s worth. So the false apostles charged a good fee for their talks. “A mere five hundred pounds for a week-end on a Greek mountain. Come and enjoy a mountain top experience!”

For Paul the gospel was very different. For him to live was Christ. He said in **Philippians 1:21**, For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

In other words, for Paul to live was a Man who didn’t have home, no bank account, no drawers full of clothes, no wardrobes, no mode of transport, no objects of value at all. That was Paul’s model, the perfect man, completely fulfilled, always gracious, never too rushed to have time for people, ever in touch with God. Christ was Paul’s example, so the apostle was often in rags, but he had learned contentment, and he wouldn’t be a burden to anyone.

How could these false apostle be preachers when they didn’t count their blessings and weren’t giving God thanks? They were obsessed with the things they hadn’t got and wanted, because they saw others had them. Covetousness, the Lord has said, is idolatry.

Most of these men are ambitious and boastful. Those men have an attitude which says, “My evaluation of things is so obviously right I have little time for people who disagree with me.”

Consider Paul in what he ask the Corinthians in **1 Corinthians 3:5-7**. What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

The false apostle had an utterly different attitude to the ministry. He was moved by Paul’s preaching. He experienced some spiritual power as he sat listening to his word. He heard people’s tearful appreciation of what they had heard, that it had changed their lives. “I’ll have some of that,” he said. He wanted the plaudits and the reputation that Paul had, but he did not have Paul’s gifts, or vocation or his doctrine.

If we are in God's will, there is no reason to be ambitious. God made us the people we are, and the place we occupy is where he has placed us.

My favorite verse is from Paul and fits here perfectly. **Acts 20:24**, However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Paul's ambition was to finish the work God had given him to do, not to shipwreck of his faith, and receive the Lord's commendation, well done my good and faithful servant. This should be every preacher's goal.

In verse 15, Paul says of them, Their end will be what their actions deserve. The Lord Jesus made spectacularly clear the fact that our lives are going to be judged. He especially warned those who claimed they spoke in the name of God. For example, the Pharisees were particular targets of his wrath. Jesus told them in **Matthew 23:12**, Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. And in **Matthew 23:15** he said, You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.

That is what the Lord said to religious teachers. At the beginning of his ministry in the Sermon on the Mount from **Matthew 7:21-23** Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 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 perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evil-doers!'"

Paul tells these Corinthians that they are being influenced by men who face a terrible end. It will be what their actions deserve. So Paul is telling these Corinthians that the end of these false apostles is going to be commensurate with their heresies. Better to have a millstone tied around one's neck and be dropped into the sea than cause Christ's little ones to stumble.

So what are the marks of the true man of god. Number one, He has knowledge.

Paul says, "I have knowledge. Surely the truth of Christ is in me." He was not a smooth talker, any more than his Savior. He says, "We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way." Paul had the truth of Christ at his finger-tips. He needed no wad of lecture notes to read to them, in long dense sentences. There was Spirit and there was life in all he said, so that his sermons and letters are 'perfectly clear' concerning the way of salvation, 'in every way.' Such knowledge is absolutely indispensable for the true man of God.

We must have the truth of Christ in us. I take that in the simplest possible sense, the sense of a literal mental grasp with our minds of the teaching of Holy Scripture. It may seem very elementary and yet it is totally basic. The first thing that believers put on is the belt of truth. A man of God must have knowledge. He must have a familiarity with the teaching of Scripture. He must understand the system of Christian doctrine.

Of course there are people and their interest in truth is not interest in the great foundation doctrines but interest in the conundrum of theology. Let's avoid that. There are others whose interest is in the

controversial doctrines that divide believers. They are only interested in the teachings men disagree about and fight over. We must watch that spirit too.

We are bound as Christians to make conscience of growing in our grasp of the contents of the divine revelation. God has taken great pains to give us a word that we can understand, and it is entirely our obligation to take advantage of that revelation, to soak ourselves in it, and to steep ourselves in the truth, so that we are utterly familiar with it.

Now every Christian should know, and know intimately and readily the doctrines which relate to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. These are not doctrines simply for theologians. They are the stuff of believing meditation. They constitute that great body of truth that sanctifies. My calling is to make it so interesting for you all. Every Christian should know of the great doctrines of propitiation, predestination, justification, adoption, and sanctification. These are not my words, they are words God has chosen. Men in the world know all about taxation, and depreciation, and inflation, and devaluation. Then Christians should certainly know about the great biblical words that God has explained to us. They are for our lasting good.

One of the things that worries me, is the way they are changing the wording in the bible. They have several reasons why they are changing them. They say, changing times, word meanings are changing, but most of all so it is not so offensive. Well I have one scripture for them all.

Revelation 22:18-19 says, I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

I have told everyone I can, if you have an older bible hang on to it because the truth will be lost in future generations because of what is happening to the bibles. Then it will be as Jesus told the Pharisee in **Matthew 23:15**, You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.

This is what changing the bible will do! It will send people to Hell and they want even know why, because they will not know the truth. That is why the truth is so important.

So Christians should know the truth and should be growing in our love for it, in our emotional responsiveness and sensitivity to it so that when we see the splendor of the person of Christ we are moved to bless and glorify the Lord.

The true man of God should show humility. Yes, humility is a key characteristic of a true man of God, aligning with biblical teachings on God's grace and the importance of serving others. Humility is often associated with seeking God's glory rather than one's own, as seen in the example of Jesus.

The Bible emphasizes humility as a virtue that God favors. **James 4:10** states, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." True humility involves acknowledging one's own weaknesses and reliance on God's strength, rather than focusing on personal achievements. A humble man of God will value others' interests over his own, seeking to serve and bless others. Humility is often contrasted with pride, which is seen as an impediment to following God's will. Jesus's life, death, and resurrection

are seen as powerful examples of humility, demonstrating his willingness to serve and sacrifice for others.

So the Christian then is utterly confident about Jesus Christ and his great salvation. I know whom I have believed, Paul says. I know I have passed from death to life. There is assurance concerning Christ and his promises. There is confidence about the Bible. **All Scripture is God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, it says in **2 Timothy 3:16**. But the Christian should be continually humbling himself. That does not make him a weakling but that is the strength of the believer.

The true man of God will not be a burden to others. That was Paul's motivation in refusing to take advantage of his right to accept financial support from the Corinthians.

So there's that Christian concern, let everyone carry his own burden. But there is another duty too, the strong ought to bear the burdens of the weak. You must give us that privilege. The Corinthian church were weak in taking that initiative. The churches in the north, Paul refers to them as the brothers who came from Macedonia were different. They were thoughtful, and they supplied what Paul needed. Caring for him wasn't a burden to them.

Paul had the right to have a wife, and receive the recognition of an apostle, and be supported full-time in Christian work, but he laid those rights aside. He saw the poverty of many of the Corinthians, and knew how his behavior was misinterpreted by his enemies. "He's only here for the money," they said behind his back.

So Paul took nothing at all and survived by making tents, purchasing the skins from the tanners, and cutting and sewing them together with needle and thread, taking them to market and discussing the price with purchasers, and selling them. Then he would buy food and pay his rent for a week or so until the whole process had to be repeated. All this was done not to be a burden to the church. God is saying to the church, It's not more revelation from heaven you need, but simply to understand and do what I've already given you.

So the true man of God is anxious that he should not be a burden to the church. Is that what motivates us and the leaders in the church. The false apostle is on the make. "What can I get from this group?" is his question. "What can I give them?" is the thought of the true messenger of Christ.

The true messenger of God loves the people of God. He loves them from a pure heart and also he was prepared to lay down his life for them. He loves them as it says in **1 Corinthians 13:4-8**. He is patient with them, kind, not envious of one of them, not proud when he's with them, not rude, not self-seeking, not easily angered with them, keeps no record of wrongs they've done, doesn't delight in any evil he heard in their midst, rejoices in the truth they show, is always protecting and trusting and hoping in them. He keeps persevering in his love for them. When Paul was speaking to them personally or to the whole congregation they felt loved.

Paul did he did in love. If it were teaching the young, comforting the old in their frailty, listening and counseling with all the earthly problems that come to his home then Paul loved those people, God knew he did. Paul went on loving them, his heart went out to them.

The preacher longs to see graces appear, and love for Jesus Christ. Paul worked from a sense of obedience to the Lord, and from a sense of duty, but most of all, his love for them made him work. Why do birds sing? Because the song is in them. Why did Paul love? Because the love of Christ was in his heart, and the vent through which it poured was his affection for the body of Christ in Corinth.

There is a unique power in Christian love, because God is love. It is an indispensable mark of grace to love one's fellow Christians.

He never stops opposing the false teachers. Paul says very sternly, I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. The loving apostle yet wants to cut the ground from under those men. His love for the flock of Jesus Christ makes him speak like that.

You can discuss any Biblical topic from the pulpit if you only love men enough. You can discuss pregnancy outside of marriage, divorce, modesty in appearance, mortifying worldliness, women not called to the office of preacher and so on. Of course there are some who will take offense, but in the main you will hold your own and save others. It is perfectly possible to be sweet-natured and also tenacious in holding to the truth of the Bible. A congregation knows when a minister is afraid of them, just as a horse knows when his rider is afraid of him.

That is the mark of the man of God. Take responsibility for what you say, because you must take care not only of yourselves but of all men. And whenever some of the congregation behave badly then you will charge yourself with her or his bad behavior. You will say that it is partly your fault that you did not reach their conscience with your preaching, and vow to be bolder next time.

So as we finish up I want to ask a question. Why Do "Christian Cults" Masquerading as Christianity Fly Under the Radar So Often?

When I hear the word cult, the first word that often comes to my mind is brainwashing. The idea of a cult evokes vivid images of individuals faithfully and obediently following a leader. They adhere to teachings that may appear perplexing or irrational to those on the outside. Alongside brainwashing, the concept of mind control and surrendering your ability to think critically also seem prevalent. This can create a chilling portrayal of what a cult is really like. Sadly, there are infamous cases we have witnessed throughout history. People have fallen under the influence of charismatic figures and engaged in harmful or extreme behaviors. Many times, these end in tragedy for the leader and their followers.

In the world of cults, there are some which are referred to as Christian cults. I want to explore what this means. I also want to help you understand why these Christian cults, which masquerade as authentic Christianity, fly under the radar so often.

So the first thing we must ask is what is a Christian cult? And the answer is, a Christian cult is a religious group or organization that claims to adhere to Christian beliefs and practices. However, they often deviate significantly from mainstream Christian teachings. Unlike standard Christian denominations, Christian cults often introduce unorthodox doctrines or teachings. These teachings are usually in opposition to or contradict established theological principles.

Christian cults often employ methods of control, such as psychological manipulation. They tend to create a culture of fear or dependency. Yet for many in the cult, this happens so subtly they may not even realize it is happening. It is important to note that not all religious groups labeled as Christian cults will subject their members to physical harm. However, because of their divergent beliefs and practices and the errors often found in their doctrine, they may inflict emotional and spiritual harm. This should be cause for concern for every true believer in Jesus.

You may not understand what a Christian cult can be. A Christian cult can easily Masquerade as a Christian organization. Some of the mega Churches we see today are not correct in their doctrine. They preach a health wealth doctrine that does not line up with the bible. They say the reason you don't have is because of your doubt. They will tell you all you need to do is ask and God will make you healthy and wealthy. When it don't work they say you must have to must doubt in your faith. The same if you want to be financially bless. They use themselves as an example. Look at how God has blessed me, they say. It was because I did not doubt! I call bull manure on that one because it is not in the bible anywhere. They also say if you send a donation to them they will pray that your faith becomes strong. The sad part is many a christian buy into this movement. They get basically brain washed into the same thinking.

Now before you say it, Jesus did say in **Matthew 7:7**, Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Also in **John 14:13-14** He said, And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

But most almost always ask with wrong motives, which is the key to our asking. Listen to **James 4:3** where it says, When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

So here would be where I say, Do you ask for you or is it for God's will you ask? For example, Lord Bless me financially so I can Help others when the need arises or Lord Bless me financially so I can afford that new truck so I can take my family on vacation and not worry about breakdowns. Okay, now that I feel I may have step on a toe or two, which of these would bless not only someone else but also bless you and be in God's will. This is what is meant in the scriptures about wrong motives.

Okay, let's get back on track with how does a 'Christian cult' differ from a 'non-Christian cult?'

The distinction between a Christian cult and a non-Christian cult lies primarily in their theological beliefs, practices, and the way they relate to mainstream Christianity. Christian cults claim to be Christian or follow elements of Christian doctrine but often deviate from mainstream Christian teachings. They may reinterpret Scripture or add new doctrines which do not align with orthodox Christianity. Non-Christian cults do not identify themselves as Christian and typically have their own distinct belief systems. They are not trying to present themselves as Christian, and their beliefs have little or no connection to Christian doctrine at all.

But many people do not see these so called churches or mega churches as Christians cults. So why do they fly under the radar so to speak.

One of the main reason is from the outside, it might look and seem similar to a plain old christian church. It is not unusual for Christian cults to adopt outward forms of traditional Christianity. They may even use familiar Christian language, talk about Jesus, and engage in some of the same practices.

For example, one well-known Christian cult is the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW's). They talk about Jesus. They even use a translation of scripture that would look like it is an authentic translation. However, it is not enough to talk about Jesus, the question is what are you saying about Jesus? The JW understanding of who Jesus is, coupled with their error-filled translation of scripture, makes their doctrine untrue. Yet, if you don't know these things, you might get swept in because much of the language may sound similar.

Another reason is that they use manipulation, fear, and control. One way for a Christian cult to fly under the radar is to limit the amount of exposure they allow their members. Christian cults are usually tight-knit and tight-lipped groups. They are usually welcoming when people come in but not so enthusiastic when people want to leave. They create an environment of manipulation and control where people become dependent on the group and actually fear leaving the group.

This fear keeps them silent because if they speak out, they risk losing their position in the group. For those who remain in the cult, very few will ever say anything bad about the group, even when they know it exists. This type of control makes it difficult for people to leave. It makes it even more challenging for people to share what is happening in the cult.

The culture of isolation is rich within Christian cults and is common to Christian cults. Even though they call themselves Christian, rarely do they ever fellowship with other mainstream Christians. This internal focus keeps everyone in-house. The fear passed down from the leadership is if they intermingle with other Christian groups, they may try to lead you astray. This is really just another manipulation tactic because the leaders are afraid you might discover the truth, rather than risk that they keep everyone close together with no allowance for fellowship with Christians outside the group.

For most Christian cults, there is some sort of educational structure. Some will even publish their own material, and these are the only things people in the group can study exclusively. This type of situation allows the leaders of the group to remain in control and forces people to think the same way. Usually, in these cults, there is a Vegas-like policy. What happens there stays there, which is why these Christian cults can fly under the radar. People will see something but will find a reason to justify it because that is the way they were taught to think.

And probably the best reason they fly under the radar is respect for religious freedom.

Speaking for America here, our country still allows the free practice of religion as long as your practice is not breaking the law or causing harm to others. Most of these groups are not breaking the law, even if their doctrines are unorthodox. If they are breaking the law, we don't usually find out until someone who has left the group is willing to speak out against them. Because we still respect religious freedom, Christian cults will continue to operate in our land.

I'm sure there are more reasons but these are probably the main one's we see. So you see they may look very much like Christianity but when we dig deeper into them we see they are only Masquerading as Christianity for there own benefit.

So let's talk for a moment about how do we avoid these type's of churches and doctrine.

One of the main ways is to know your bible. Do the reading and studying yourself. God will give you insight if you ask for it. Too many people today get study helps and self help guide's and have no idea if it leads them down a wrong path because they do not know the scriptures. Study guide's and self help books are great as long as the line up with scripture. But unless you know your bible you will not know if it leads you the wrong way.

Another thing I stress is, use an older bible. The bible is being change right in front of us today so as to become less offensive. I call Bull manure again here. The scriptures say in **Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Scriptures have not changed because our times have changed, it is the same as it was in the beginning. Not only that but even in **Revelation 22:18-19** it says, I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

But then again how will you know if you do not know the scriptures.

Through out the years I have had the opportunity to do character acting as different people of the bible to tell their stories. I guess you could say I was Masquerading as someone else. That same thing is happening today in our churches. Men are Masquerading as preachers of light, when all they are, are men of darkness. If you wonder how I can be so bold it because scriptures says the same thing. In **2 Corinthians 11:14** it says, And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

If Satan can use these men the way he wants too, he will deceive the masses. He will move into our churches and deceive many and they will not even know it. Why? Because they do not know the scriptures.

So you see masquerading in the church, or as our title reads, the masquerading of Christianity, has been going on since the beginning. And the main reason's are power, influence and money.

I will close with this, Know your bible! If you know the scriptures you can spot a wolf in the middle of the sheep without even second guessing yourself. You will see right through the masquerade!