

The Utilitarian Christ!

(A.W. Tozer)

Our Lord forewarned us that *false Christs* would come. Mostly we think of these as coming from the outside--but we should remember that they may also arise within the church itself.

We must be extremely careful that the Christ we profess to follow, is indeed the very Christ of Scripture. There is always danger that we may be following a Christ who is not the true Christ--but one conjured up by our imagination and made in our own image.

I confess to a feeling of uneasiness about this when I observe the questionable things Christ is said to do for people these days. He is often recommended as a wonderfully obliging, but not too discriminating, Big Brother--who delights to help us to accomplish our ends, and who further favors us by forbearing to ask any embarrassing questions about the moral and spiritual qualities of those ends.

Within the past few years, Christ has been popularized by some so-called evangelicals as one who, if a proper amount of prayer were made--would help the pious prize fighter to knock another fighter unconscious in the ring.

Christ is also said to help the big league pitcher to get the proper hook on his curve.

In another instance He assists an athlete to win the high jump; and in another case, not only to come in first in a track meet--but to set a new record in the bargain.

He is said also to have helped a praying businessman to beat out a competitor in a deal. He is even thought to lend support to a praying movie actress while she plays a role so lewd as to bring the blood to the face of a professional prostitute!

Thus our Lord becomes *the Christ of utility*--a kind of *Aladdin's lamp* to do minor miracles in behalf of anyone who summons Him to do his bidding.

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Apparently no one stops to consider that if Christ were to step into a prize ring and use His divine power to help one prize fighter to paralyze another--that He would be putting one fighter at a cruel disadvantage and violating every common instinct of fair play. If He were to aid one businessman to the detriment of another, He would be practicing favoritism and revealing a character wholly unlike the Bible picture of the real Christ. All this is too horrible to contemplate.

Theirs is a Christ of *carnal convenience*--not too far removed from the gods of paganism.

The whole purpose of God in redemption is to make us holy and to restore us to the image of Christ. To accomplish this, He disengages us from earthly ambitions and draws us away from the cheap and unworthy prizes that worldly men set their hearts upon. A holy man would not dream of asking God to help him beat an opponent, or win over a competitor. No man in whom the Spirit dwells, could bring himself to ask the Lord to help him knock another man unconscious, for filthy lucre or the plaudits of the vulgar spectators.

To teach that *Christ will use His sacred power to further our worldly interests*, is to wrong our Lord and injure our own souls.

We modern evangelicals need to learn the truths of the *sovereignty of God* and the *lordship of Christ*. Christ will not be *manipulated* by any of Adam's selfish brood! We had better learn these things fast if this generation of young Christians is to be spared the supreme tragedy of following a Christ who is merely a *Christ of convenience*--and not the true Lord of glory after all!