

The Keavy Encourager

WELCOME TO THE KEAVY CHURCH OF CHRIST!

(March 8 2026)

- Visitors: Please fill out a visitor card and grab a Visitor Welcome Kit!
- Communion is available in the front of the building on the table.
- Our website is: www.keavychurchofchrist.com, and our email address is keavychurchofchrist@outlook.com Please share this information with your family, friends, and social media pages! Services are available online at our website and on our YouTube page.
- If you would like to be subscribed to brother Mark Tabata's email list (for weekday devotionals and other Bible and Bible related studies), please let him know!

March Prayer List

Kurt And Joanne Martin, Sanders Family, Eddie Craft (Cancer), Jimmy Brooks (Tammy's cousin, cancer), Kathy Mingus (Cancer), Anne Baker (Cancer), Sandi Tabata, Bill and Mary Ruth Browning, David and Ivy Mosley, Margie Turner (Hospice), Jake Robbins (Cancer), Coy Gilliam (Cancer), Roger and Sandra Frazier & Family, Carman Carroll, Edward Young Sr., Ed Young, Harmony Mullins, Claude Humphrey (Cancer), Felicity Lanham (Cancer), Piere Daigel, People In Ukraine, Earnie Baker (Phyllis Sanders Brother In Law), Barbourville Work, Marlene Howard, Rod Hill (Cancer friend of brother Paul), Charlene Reef (Cancer), Jimmy Turner (Cancer), Danny Day, Katherine Myers, Jim and Linda Day, Mary Martin, Chad Couch, Kathy McFall (Brother Gary Lewis' Cousin, Cancer), Lisa Hurt, Martha Moberly, Terry & Rita Wooton And Family, Keith Bowling Family, Gary Fleming, Bessie Young Family (Lost Loved Ones), Tiffany Cox And Family, Barry Mitchell (Surgery), Don Stidham (Surgery), Gary Fleming, Keith And Kathy Bowling, Quintin Nelton, David Mitchell (Recovering), Kenny Irvin, Sherri Engle Family, James Williams, Shirley Lawson, Ronnie Gregory, Tammy Sapienza, Aileen Smith, Couch Family (Lost Loved Ones)

Were Jesus And Mary Magdalene Married?

Part Four: Let's Meet The Gnostics

2 Peter 2:1-But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.

My friend Perry was supposed to meet me for lunch in New Philadelphia, Ohio, but had gotten our appointment confused for another time. So, while I waited for him to drive from WVU in Morgantown, West Virginia, I had a few hours to kill. I went and had lunch, and saw the (then) new Spider-Man movie. After that, I went to the local Borders bookstore and browsed the books, striking up conversations about the Lord with other customers. One lady I spoke with told me she was looking for a book that she had heard about from her old “church.”

Mark: Really? What’s the name of it? I may have read it.

Lady: It is the gospel of Mary Magdalene.

Mark: Ummm...actually, I have read that. But I didn’t know it was available in local bookstores.

Lady: Yes! I know a lot about it. My former...church group, I guess you could call it....was into lots of books like that.

Mark: It’s an interesting book! I am surprised that you have heard about it. What church group was it? Somewhere local?

Lady: No. To tell you the truth, I am a Pentecostal now, but back then, I was a member of a church of Satanists. The gospel of Mary Magdalene tells the real truth about Jesus. It was written by the Gnostics, the real followers of Christ. Just between us, the Bible can’t be trusted.

Mark: Well, I have a lot of reasons to trust that the Bible is the Word of God. But the Gnostics were sure an interesting group of people.

The conversation continued on for a good while, but the point had been made in my mind: the Gnosticism that I had learned and read about in seminary was now becoming popular with the masses.

Learning about the Gnostics will be the next stop on our journey in learning about Jesus and Mary Magdalene, as well as in dealing with other conspiracy theories brought out by Dan Brown's book, the Da Vinci Code.

Let's study.

The word "Gnostic" comes from the Greek word *ginosko*. This word means "to know." It is where we get our word "agnostic" from in English. In Greek, if you place an alpha (the letter "a" in English for all intents and purposes) in front of some words, it serves to *negate* that word. So the word "atheist" literally means "I know that there is no God," while the word "agnostic" means "I do not know." Agnostics are usually people who claim that we cannot be certain about the existence of God.

In much the same fashion, the Gnostics were a group of people who sprang up near the end of the first century. They claimed to have special "knowledge" about Jesus that even His Apostles did not possess. These people began to combine teachings of the Bible with elements of Greek paganism, and they came up with lots of different sects and beliefs. Ken Johnson gives us a good overview of some of the history and beliefs of the various Gnostic groups:

"The father of Gnosticism was Simon Magus, the Simon of Acts 8. Two major schools had developed by 150 AD, the followers of Valentinus and the followers of Basilides. Our knowledge of Gnosticism comes mainly from the early church father Irenaeus, who wrote the five-volume set, *Against Heresies* and the Gnostic literature itself found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945. Irenaeus wrote that Gnostics derived their teachings from the heathen, namely Homer, Plato, Aristotle, the Pythagoreans and others. 16 John the Apostle would not enter a bathhouse where Cerinthus was, and Polycarp said Marcion was the firstborn of Satan. 18 The basic teachings of Gnosticism that the church called heresy are: There are thirty Aeons (gods) that exist in the Pleroma, outside time and space. 1 The goddess, Sophia, created the Demiurge, a creator angel (the god of the Old Testament) who was a tyrant;

and being unaware of the Aeons, thought he was the only God. He created man; but Sophia gave man a spirit. 2 Some may be saved if they do enough good works; but some are predestined to go to hell. 4 (works salvation) Gnostics have spirits that are emanations from Sophia. This makes them predestined to be saved. It is impossible for them to lose their salvation. It does not matter if their behavior is good or evil. The most “perfect” of them addict themselves to evil deeds and are in a habit of defiling the women they convert. 3 Eventually all matter will be destroyed since matter is evil and not capable of salvation. 9, 6 Gnostics will become spirits and will marry the angels. 9 Christ descended upon Jesus at His baptism and left before Jesus went before Pilate. Sophia would not allow Christ to suffer. 9 (Adoptionism) They utter mantras to effect nature. 10 (Hindu mantra and Kabalistic letter magic, Gramera, and emanations) Souls reincarnate. 32 Perfect knowledge is obtained by baptism, spiritual marriage, and last rites. 5 (Sacramentalism) Sophia sent the serpent (the angel Michael or Samael) into the Garden of Eden to free Eve and Adam. By eating from the tree they attained true Gnosis and were set free. 15 Sophia saved Noah from the flood sent by the evil Demiurge. 15 The Demiurge forced Eve into sexual intercourse many times. Eve thereby gave birth to other evil creator angels. 15 (Serpent Seed) At death, some souls enter an intermediate state to be purged of the animal nature before going into the Pleroma. 17 (Purgatory) Later, other Gnostics would add or change some points and found their own Gnostic schools.” (Ken Johnson, Ancient Church Fathers: What The Disciples Of The Apostles Taught, 115-116 (Kindle Edition): CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform)

Some of the beliefs and teachings of the Gnostics infiltrated into Christianity and are even present today. Here are some examples.

- Many of the Gnostic groups practiced glossolalia (speaking in gibberish), just as is done in modern Pentecostal churches (and often erroneously called “speaking in tongues”).
- Some taught the doctrine of “once saved always saved,” which is similarly adhered to by many of our Baptist neighbors.
- Other Gnostic groups taught that the body of Jesus was vaporized and not truly resurrected, just as the Jehovah’s Witnesses proclaim.

- Still others taught the notion of individual predestination to Heaven or Hell, as do many of our religious neighbors who espouse the teachings of John Calvin.
- Most of the Gnostics rejected the Bible teaching that baptism in water is part of the plan of salvation (which many denominations in our time also advocate).
- Some of the Gnostics began to assert authority over local churches, rebelling against God's pattern for the organization of His body (Philippians 1:1). This led eventually to the rise of the monarchical bishops, archbishops, and the diocese system adhered to by both the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches.
- Plus, have you heard the "modern" idea that the God of the Old Testament is different from the God of the New Testament? That is exactly what the Gnostics taught.

Gnosticism was a serious problem in the early church, and one that continues to be an issue in many ways today.

In our next study, we will see how Gnosticism led specifically to the main issues taught and adhered to in the Da Vinci Code.

Announcements

- Bill and Mary Ruth continue to stand in need of our prayers.
- Regularly Scheduled Events; Sunday Bible Class All Ages (Every Sunday @ 10:00); Sunday Worship (Every Sunday @ 11:00 AM And 5:00 PM); Wednesday Evening Bible Class All Ages (Every Wednesday @ 5:00); Keavy Ladies And Supportive Saints (K.L.A.S.S. Every First Sunday Of The Month After Evening Service); Keavy Support Group And Youth Group Meeting (Every Tuesday @ 6:00); Adult Night (Every Second And Fourth Friday @ 6:00); Keavy Fellowship Meal (Every Last Sunday of The Month After Morning Service)

Bible Class And Sermon Notes

A.M. Sermon: The Millennium: Revelation 20 (Reading: 2 Peter 3:10-13)

P.M. Sermon: Old Testament Baptism (Reading: Hebrews 9:9-10)