

A SELECTIVE COMPARISON

Issue	<u>A Course in Miracles</u>	Gnostic Gospels ¹	Popular Christianity
Creation of the physical world	Mankind’s collective ego, not God, made the illusion of the world—in a futile, but painful, effort to separate from God. T-18.I.12, T-6.IV.9	A force of materialism (a sort of “Lucifer,” or the creator-god of <i>Genesis</i>), not the true God, made the world—and seeks to bind man in this unreal world forever.	The Old Testament says God made the world and was pleased with what he created. Jesus’ New Testament God is that same God.
Our creation	God created the Son of God in His image, i.e., immortal, whole and Spirit (not flesh). Our egos designed the flesh when we chose the illusion of separation, and divided ourselves. T-18.IV.8	The primal being God created is both male and female, and is called <i>Adamas</i> . <i>Adamas</i> is not made of flesh. Man chose to put on the fleshly “garment of shame” by dividing into sexes and begetting animal-like offspring.	God is a male, and he created us in His image, except that Eve is a different design. He made the flesh we wear, and wants us to procreate painfully here on the physical plane until the Judgment Day.
Marriage	It is a senseless ritual of form— a substitute for the wholeness of God. ²	The only sacred marriage occurs in the Sacrament of the Bridal Chamber.	Any marriage sanctioned by the church is a sacred union that man should not dissolve.

¹ The key points are drawn from the Gospel of Philip (R. McL. Wilson, Harper & Row, NY), the Gospel of Thomas (The Secret Sayings of Jesus by R. M. Grant with D. N. Freedman, and an English translation of the Gospel of Thomas by Wm.R. Schroedel, Doubleday & Company, Inc., NY), the Gospel of the Egyptians (New Testament Apocrypha by W. Schneemelcher.), and the Exegesis on the Soul (Trans. by W. C. Robinson, Jr. in The Nag Hammadi Library in English).

² A Course in Miracles, T-16.V.12., T-21.11.13, T-18.II.6

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Procreation	We believe we are images of our own making, but the Holy Spirit disagrees. T-3.VII.4-6	Begetting children equates with “eating of the tree with the bitter fruit.” Our only children should be Light (the Christ).	Physical procreation is God’s command; “Be fruitful and multiply.”
Sexual intercourse	We can only become one beyond the body, when we use the body to enlarge spiritual vision by <i>avoiding all sense of loss</i> . Other attempts to deny the body are misguided. ³	“Normal” sexual intercourse is a fatal effort to become one, not recognizing that the only true unity is spiritual. Sexual continence during intercourse is necessary for spiritual union.	Sexual intercourse (with physical gratification) is natural and unavoidable, except for those pure enough to become celibate.
God’s purpose for the union of male and female	The holy relationship is God’s Plan for salvation. In each holy relationship, the babe of Bethlehem (Christ) is reborn. ⁴	Jesus became the Christ in the Sacrament of the Bridal Chamber, in which male and female become one.	The union of male and female for any purpose but procreation is sinful. Jesus was celibate.
Lust	When used as Spirit directs, the body’s a beautiful lesson in communion— until we achieve true one-ness. Egos pursue lust, but equate it with death. T-8.VII.3, T-19.IV.B.13	Intercourse for those who unite in the bridal chamber will satisfy— unlike a carnal marriage. Physical desire is left as man and woman become a single life.	Lust within, or outside of, marriage is sinful, but virtually inevitable. It is proof of humanity’s innate baseness.

³ *Ibid.* T-1.VII.2, T-25.IX.3, T-22.VI.1, T-20.VI.11, T-2.IV.3

⁴ *Ibid.* T-22.VI.4, T-19.IV.C.9-10, W-p.11.5.4, T-20.IV.6, T-24.II.11, T-20.VI.10

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Rejuvenation	It is possible for our body to become incorruptible while we are still in material form. ⁵	In the Sacrament of the Bridal Chamber, one rejuvenates, and is restored, or resurrected.	Various doctrines conflict. But generally transfiguration of the body is limited to Jesus.
Immortality	God's eternal promise of immortality lies in our holy relationship. In its safety, protected by union with our brother, we overcome death. ⁶	One becomes the Christ and enters eternal life when male and female become one in the bridal chamber.	Belief in Jesus Himself, rather than following his teachings, guarantees eternal life. But one must die and go to heaven to receive this reward.
Crucifixion	The resurrection, not the crucifixion, proved the Atonement. T-3.I.1	The crucifixion did not save anyone. Jesus overcame death because he had already attained Christhood.	Jesus suffered and died for our sins , and unless we believe that we are hell bound.
Physical resurrection versus transcendence	The physical plane is not our Home, and we can never find peace here. We are Spirit masquerading as flesh. Physical resurrection would only recreate the problem.	Physical flesh cannot inherit the Kingdom. We must become a Christ, by "putting on the Light in a mystery." True being is achieved as human existence is transcended.	It is misguided to suggest we can return to Spirit, except by death. Only Jesus could do that. Also, we will get our <i>physical</i> bodies back on the judgment day.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. T-19, IV.C "The Incorruptible Body," Par. 5

⁶ *Ibid.* T-20.III.11; T-19.IV.C.9.

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Death	We cannot leave the birth/death wheel by death but only by truth—and truth can be known. ⁷	We must acquire the resurrection in this world, by returning to a Christed state, or we will not enter the Kingdom.	We suffer here, so we will be released in the <i>next</i> world.
Reason for death	Death is the result of separation from our brother. We heal this fatal split in a holy relationship. T-20.V.1	Death came into existence when Eve and Adam separated. It ends when they reunite in the bridal chamber.	Death is God's will. Jesus overcame it because He was his Father's special sacrificial lamb, not through reunion.
Entering Heaven	Heaven is entered by a shift in perception; it is not a place. <i>Having</i> and <i>being</i> the Kingdom are the same.	There is no vision of the real realm until we <i>become</i> it.	The Kingdom of Heaven is a real place, somewhere else, and we die to go there.
Evil	Evil does not exist. It seems to exist only because our perceptions are distorted.	The illusion of evil is merely the pull to continue material pursuits.	The Devil is evil, real, and constantly vying with God for men's souls. He often wins.
Sin	The Son of God is innocent. There never was any sin, only error. T-31.I.7.11, T-19.IV.B.12	A pearl (man) does not lose its value from having been cast in the mud. God loves us.	Sin is "original" and real, and deserves punishment, unless God intervenes with unmerited grace.

⁷ *Ibid.* T3.VII. 6:11.

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Content versus form	Content, not form, is the key to spiritual progress. T-3.V.5	Truth is more significant than religious observance.	It is dangerous to study spiritual content. It is wiser to adhere to the form, as decreed by external authorities.
Inner guidance	We must ask the Holy Spirit before doing anything, if we wish to return to Spirit. The answer to attaining salvation lies within us. And our Identity is shared with our brother. T-9.IV.1	Jesus taught His followers a secret “gnosis” (knowledge) that enabled them to become Christs. No one becomes the Christ without Gnosis.	Seeking to learn God’s will, except through external religious authorities and reading the Bible (only) is sinful and perilous.
“Gnosis” versus grace	To return to Spirit, we must willingly meet the necessary conditions. It is our choice. ⁸	Deliverance comes through knowledge, not through sacrifice.	We must wait for Grace to return to Spirit. Grace is only possible at all because Jesus suffered on the cross.
God’s Will for us	It is God’s will that we end our suffering and return to Spirit as rapidly as possible. T-2.III.5, T-11.1.8	It is God’s will that we end our suffering return to Spirit as rapidly as possible.	It is God’s will that we be here until it pleases Him to rescue us, or we die and go to hell or heaven.

⁸ Watch for the temptations of the ego, and do not be deceived by it. It offers you nothing. When you have given up this voluntary dis-spiriting, you will see how your mind can focus and rise above fatigue and heal. T-4.IV.6