



"The Problem With Matthew"

A Guide For Refuting Missionaries

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Introduction

The purpose of this book

The purpose of this eBook is to point out the deceptive practices of Missionaries by going to one of their own sources, "*The Book Of Matthew*". *The Problem with Matthew* is a book written for Jews. It was not written for the purpose of converting Christians to Judaism. Jews don't proselytize, and, frankly, that is not my purpose. Most committed Christians that I have met are good people, and they have respected my beliefs, and it is not with these believers that I have a problem. Often, when you have two people who are committed to their respective faiths, you end up with a mutual respect towards one another. I acknowledge that there are points where the Christian bible does teach some of the things that *Torah* scholars speak, such as man's relationship to man, as well as man's relationship to G-d in each of their unique and different traditions.

But remember, there are many things that the Christian bible speaks of that is not Jewish, and there are many things that Jewish writings speak of that is not Christian. It is like two circles that intersect in some degree. It is my belief that all religions intersect in some way. They are separate and complete methods of expressing one's soul and establishing one's relationship with the Creator. By separate, I mean that while there are areas that agree, there are large areas where they disagree. It does not mean that one religion is the only "true religion". Instead, it means that every religion is different in its expression and relationship to G-d; some have more differences than others. A person who educates himself or herself in his or her tradition will have a greater expression of their yearning soul. This book is an expression of that national yearning.

How I came to write this eBook

Some time ago, while having a conversation with someone concerning the differences between Christianity and Judaism, I was asked if I ever read the Christian bible. I had to confess (so to speak) that I did not. I was then challenged to read some of it in order to get a better understanding of Christianity. After all, how can you have an intelligent conversation about something that you only learned from hearsay and from made-for-TV movies?

I knew that I had a good foundation of Torah Judaism behind me, but was ignorant of Christianity, so I sat down for quite some time, for nearly a year, intensely studying the first book of the Christian text: the "*Book of Matthew*." I used the same logical techniques of study that I do with the Gemara. I plucked at sentences, looked for meanings, and researched related verses in other passages and in the other books of the Christian bible. When it referenced a Hebrew verse, I looked at the original in its entire context. After having done all of that, I was able to put down my pen, and sit back amazed. As I said, prior to this period of study, I knew very little about Christianity and its relationship to Judaism. I took it for granted that everything that I had been told by friends, neighbors, teachers, and the media was "gospel" (so to speak).

I can sum up my amazement in a single sentence:

*If a **Torah-educated** Jew actually took the time to read the Christian text, he or she would easily see that Christianity and Judaism are fully incompatible religions at their most fundamental levels.*

By incompatible, I mean that the basic doctrines of each religion do not compliment each other and that in many cases their core beliefs are contrary to one another. As spiritual expressions, they can coexist, but not in a single person, nor can they be swapped for one another. As an analogy, try to fit an 8-track tape cartridge into a cassette player or put a compact disc on a record turntable. You can force it to play, but you still won't hear the music! (If you don't know what an 8-track tape is, go ask your parents!). I bring this up because it is the job of the members of Christian-sects-with-Jewish-Symbolism (hereafter known as CSWJS) churches to convince the Jew that being a Jew is incomplete, or, failing that, to convince the Jew that he or she can believe like a Christian without losing his or her Jewishness. The idea that Christianity, as we know it today, is a natural outgrowth of Judaism, is a mistake that many educated people have made. A Torah-educated Jew, one who is well grounded in his or her own religion, could read the Christian text and see this clearly.

I also emphasize "Torah-educated", because if an uneducated Jew who reads Missionary literature, and if such a person is not educated in Jewish Scripture, he or she might fall prey to these deceptions. I wrote this book to provide you with those insights so that *you* do not have to spend the time doing those months of research as I did.

After all, a Jew should be spending his or her time studying *Torah*.

[\[Pirkei Avos 2:19 - Rabbi Eliezer said: Be diligent in the study of Torah, and know what answer to give an unbeliever.\]](#)

So why isn't the idea that Judaism and Christianity are two distinct and contradictory religions, obvious to every Jew, especially to those who fall prey to the Christian missionaries? Frankly, I don't have a pat answer. My guess is that we don't spend enough time learning about our own text. We have our own internal problems too: uneducated Jews looking at educated Jews with distrust, or Observant Jews avoiding non-Observant Jews. We need to unite in order to save our people.

The Uneducated Jew

Educated Christians read and study the Christian writings on a consistent regular basis in order to expand their Christian expression. Also, educated Jews read and study the Jewish writings on a consistent regular basis for our own spiritual expression. Each group does this to fulfill the spiritual yearning, to strengthen one's faith and to provide a solid spiritual foundation. Those who don't participate in a regular regime of religious study often experience a spiritual void, a soulful malnourishment.

When I speak of an educated Jew, I do not mean to speak disparagingly about any Jew who does not participate in regular Torah study. It is simply a term that I use to distinguish the Jew who has a solid foundation of Judaism to support him or her, as opposed to the person who, while having the same yearning spirit, has spent little time participating in any regular Torah education, thus leaving him or her in a vulnerable position.

Jews, like anyone else, need to experience their connection with the Creator. For the Jew, this manifests as *Torah* study, performing *mitzvos*, and prayer every morning, afternoon, and night. And without those things, the Jew often feels empty and unfulfilled.

If a Jew cannot find fulfillment in Jewish activities, he or she will certainly go elsewhere to find it. Sometimes this takes the form of taking some meditation or Tai-Chi classes. In these cases, the person taking these classes knows that the philosophy or discipline is not Jewish and can compartmentalize these classes with his or her Judaism. There is no deception here, and the people offering these classes are very up-front about whom they are and what they teach, allowing the Jew to use his power of discernment while participating. Our souls yearn.

Perhaps our unfulfilled Jew belongs to a *shul* where there is little, if any education. Or perhaps the person does not connect to the prayers, or even understands them. Eventually, he or she will move on, finding another *shul* or community to belong to where one can experience spiritual nourishment. This is not so uncommon, especially in areas where Judaism has devolved into a series of rituals and social events. People do not find long-term fulfillment in a social club.

So imagine such a seeker being approached by a Messianic “Jew” and being invited to a “*Shabbos*” service where people are smiling, singing Jewish songs, clapping, and later on they invite the Jew to come to any of the many classes and to nourish the soul. To the uneducated Jew, it’s just another *shul*, and one where they can nurture their soul. And such a person eventually learns that what was Christian is actually Jewish, and the two worlds blend. The uneducated Jew may unknowingly become part of the Baptist movement called “Jews for Jesus” or any of the other CSWJS churches that are disguised as Jewish. CSWJS teachers blur the Jewish and Christian differences to the point where it seems that the circle called Christianity overlaps the circle called Judaism (using the earlier metaphor) in a far larger portion than it really does, overshadowing it to such a degree that an uneducated Jew is unable to tell the difference.

A Jew is a Jew and a Christian is a Christian

There have been spiritually hungry Jews who have become Christians. When they lacked education in Torah they did not study, but instead, put their focus into Christian bible. And usually, such a person will normally call himself or herself a Christian.

It is important to note that the founder of Jews for Jesus was born as a Jew who converted to Christianity. He became a Baptist minister and called himself a Christian. It

was only later on, after he created this recent Christian sect, that it became popular to call oneself a Jew while worshiping as a Christian.

If the Pope's maternal great-great-grandmother was a Jew (with an unbroken matriarchal line), legalistically he would be called Jewish, but the reality is that his spiritual tradition and actions are solely Christian in nature. A *Torah*-Jew would not enter the Church of the Pope, saying "Well, the Pope's Jewish, so it's okay!" (Oh, and in case you were wondering, this is only an example. As far as I know, the Pope's mother wasn't Jewish!)

Such a leader is a Christian. The founder of Jews for Jesus was a Christian. And the members of Messianic "Jewish" or CSWJS Churches (that are incorrectly labeled as "temples") are Christians. Christians fund their churches. And yet, CSWJS members intentionally blur the distinction in order to entice and deceive the uneducated and spiritually hungry Jew.

Let's get clear on at least one thing: Judaism and Christianity are incompatible religions, even though they both participating in devotional and spiritual expression. We need to remember the saying of the most successful Christian missionary. Paul, told his followers that he needed to discard his Jewish identity in order to follow Jesus (*Philippians 3:8*). So too must any Jew who participates in the way of Paul. There is no valid relationship between Judaism and Christianity.

My goal is to inform the uninformed Jew. There is passion and fulfillment in Judaism. If you cannot find it, then learn where to find it. Search for another Jew who has also gone through such spiritual travails, and learn from that person. There are Rabbis and Jewish teachers who yearn for the yearning student. The Jewish cure for any spiritual malnourishment is to study and learn *Torah*. The greatest counteractive method that any *shul* can do is to provide daily classes and have a daily *minyan*.

But learn from Kosher sources, not sources that look Jewish on the outside, but are not Jewish on the inside.

There is a Jewish teaching that tells us that the pig is not a kosher animal. It *does* have split hooves, but it does *not* chew its cud. Of all of the animals in the world, the pig is the only animal that falls into such a category. Kosher animals have split hooves and chew their cud. And there are some non-kosher animals that chew their cud but do not have split hooves. In this way, the pig is unique. When the pig lays down, it cannot bend the knees and hide them as many animals do, but instead needs to lay partially on its side, thus displaying its feet for everyone to see as though to say, "Look! I have split hooves. I'm Kosher!" The outside presents something that is inconsistent with it's inside, which means it is not kosher at all.

There is great power in sharing your spiritual experience with other souls, in telling another person what is important to you, and being straightforward and clear in your expression. When the intent is to speak from the heart, such communication speaks

directly to the heart of another. And when a Jew receives such an expression from a Christian, a Buddhist, a Hindu, or someone else who is passionate about their religion, the Jew can experience the impact that the other spiritual tradition has upon the other person. But the Jew can still make the distinction that, while the other spiritual tradition is intensely important to the other person, it still isn't Jewish.

Contrast that to the Missionary who tells you that Christianity is a natural outgrowth of Judaism, or misuses Jewish scripture to sway you to believe that there is no distinction. Although Jewish verses are often quoted in Christian sources, they are always used in a Christian manner, and not a Jewish one. Christianity should not need Judaism to justify its existence, but only faith alone, just as Jews don't need proof that the Exodus really happened. It is an act of faith.

I don't mean to make it sound like every Jew is running to convert. Actually, prior to the Messianic "Jew" movement of the 1970's, the conversion rate for Jews to Christianity by traditional Missionaries was small. Assimilation was a greater factor, resulting in an increase in the number of non-observant Jews converting to Christianity or Buddhism. For many Christian leaders, this wasn't fast enough. The founder of "Jews for Jesus," realized this when he broke away from a more up-front Missionary group in order to form one of deceit.

And they have been very successful.

A Missionary will tell you that "Matthew" was a Jew who wrote his book to a Jewish audience, and yet we will see that the "bad guys" in the book are the educated and observant Jews, while the "good guys" are not. It is likely that this book was written to appeal to non-Jews, which becomes problematic when you want to appeal to Jews. This is certainly a problem from the Missionary point of view, and it is an equal problem from the Jewish point of view.

This is one of the problems with Matthew.

It is either a Jewish text, or a Christian text. It isn't both. To the educated Jew, to someone who is educated in Judaism and can make a distinction between Judaism and Christianity, this is easy to spot. In later chapters in this book, I will show you that what is Jewish is usually not Christian, and what is Christian is usually not Jewish.

Making a difference

I have written this book so that you can use the information in the "*Book of Matthew*" to refute a Christian missionary. However, this is not a guide to help convince Christians that their religion is invalid. That is an error that every Jew needs to avoid. This book was written for your own education. It was also written in a format that can be shared amongst Jews who lack the information, or to those Jews who have been confused or deceived by Christian missionaries.

I have met and spoken with a number of Jews who have become part of this Missionary process. They are like you and me in the area concerning spiritual yearning. They believe that they are still Jewish, and they want to express this in their own unique way. They are no more psychologically unbalanced than anyone else, as some refuting textbooks infer. They are Jews who have transferred their alliance from the Jewish community to the Christian community. But they do not see it that way.

They incorrectly believe that they straddle both worlds.

Trained converts usually will learn more about Jewish scripture than when they were part of the Jewish community, although the direction of their interpretation is normally never a Jewish one. They are solid in their belief and faith and nothing short of an epiphany will shake them from it. One such person told me “I study Torah, I keep kosher, and I keep *Shabbos*! I’m more *frum* than my parents who belong to a Reform Temple. Who are you to say that I am not Jewish?”

He was born a Jew, but his *kavanah* is not Jewish. He believes otherwise. He has been well educated with deceptive teachers and missionary texts. No one can convince someone of faith that his or her understanding is flawed. For every reason that you give, they can give the appropriate response. You must first educate yourself. It is important that we first focus on understanding why Judaism and Christianity are incompatible religions. When Jews realize that, they will not fall easy prey to Christian Missionaries. This is not about gaining converts, but about regaining our family. That is a Jewish idea.

The format of this book

There are a lot of “refutation texts” out there. Some of them are in paper form, while others are on the Internet as web pages. And, as expected, there are also web sites out there that refute the refutations! It has become an intellectual game of cat and mouse, with the Jewish soul as the prize. As Jews, we tell the world what is Jewish, and as CSWJS members, they tell the world that we don’t know what we’re talking about. And ‘round and ‘round it goes.

Speaking of web sites, there are some very good web sites out there, such as [Jews for Judaism](#), which provides very good refutation information a non-emotional manner. I truly appreciate information that is clear and accurate, and they embody that. Hopefully, this book reflects that same idea.

Other sites are not so easy to read, for they scream, rant, and rave about Christianity. They compare it to pagan mythologies, they call Jesus and assortment of names, and sarcasm pours forth. And it isn’t just web sites, but there are also books, some good and some that are screamers.

After the original writing of this book, I reviewed it and saw that I too had done the same thing, albeit in a lesser degree. Therefore, I went through several revisions before it became the book that you now see before you.

Undermining another's faith is not useful, and is actually very destructive. I do not want to participate in that manner.

However...

In describing CSWJS groups, I will often use the word "deceptive" as well as other synonymous words. This is not name-calling, but a simple fact: when you misrepresent yourself, you are deceiving others.

Also, if you are not a Jew, I invite you to read this introduction and go no further. In this introduction I am brought forth the concept of the deceptive missionary, and that is all you really need to know right now. But starting with chapter 1, I will begin to show you that what is Christian is not Jewish, and what is Jewish is not Christian. A Christian has the deep-seated faith that Christianity is an offshoot of Judaism, and because I will tear that argument apart, beginning with chapter 1, I do not want Christians to read those chapters.

What feeds the human spirit is one's *emunah*, or deep-seated faith. I do not want to be responsible for undermining the faith of a believing Christian. But, G-d willing, it would be a blessing to me if these writings to make reduce the memberships of CSWJS churches of those members who were born as Jews. It is an interesting side note that the members of CSWJS churches are primarily men and women who were not born Jewish, and never were Jewish. *LaShon HaRah* (speaking evil) is an important concept that I want to avoid.

Let's use a modern day metaphor.

Let's say that you know a particular store is known for carrying non-kosher food items. Because of that, you carefully look at all of the labels on all of the food items that you put into your cart. It is because of this awareness that you do not mistakenly bring something non-kosher into your kosher home. If you came from a point of view that everything in that store was kosher, then you might not be as observant, and you might end up bringing non-kosher items into your home, and feeding these non-kosher items to your family.

This is how you need to treat the words of the Missionary: they are not kosher, and so long as you come from that position, you will be taking the first step to excluding them from your life.

It all starts with education.

King David wrote to all Jews of all generations, telling us how we can experience a greater relationship with G-d, and avoid the pitfalls that the missionaries put before the Jew. He tells us to avoid them, to spend time in *Torah* study (in contrast to "the law of

the Lord” as this verse is often translated in Christian texts), and that we will experience spiritual nourishment and growth in the tradition of our forefathers and foremothers.

We are Jews, possessors of the *Torah*. Let us remember and remind our brethren.

*[Tehillim 1:1-1:3 –(Forward striving and discerning) is the person who has not walked in the counsel of the wicked [misleaders], has never stood in the path of the [unconcerned] sinner, and in the seat of the verbal deceiver, he has not sat. For only in the **Torah of HaShem** does he strive, and in His instructions does he meditate days and night He [as a Torah Jew] shall be like a tree [that became] transplanted [to be] near a rivulet of water which produces a crop in it's season, and whose leaf does not wither, and [in] everything that he does, he will be prosperous.]*

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Chapter 1 – The Problem

It Isn't Jewish

As a Jew, I believe with complete and unwavering faith that my religion is complete and fulfilling. Missionaries disagree with that premise. I want every Jew to appreciate Judaism fully and to be able to intelligently respond to every Missionary:

"What you are saying isn't Jewish."

It is the one statement that goes to the heart of the argument. Certainly, the Missionary may counter with their poor translations and out-of-context Jewish verses, but by being well grounded, you can easily reply with:

"That is certainly an interesting argument, however it still isn't Jewish."

And the Missionary tries to tell you that what is Christian are really Jewish. They show you horrid translations of the *Tanakh*. They then try to tell you that your understanding was flawed. You need to know enough to say:

"Poor translations are not valid Jewish texts, so what you are saying isn't Jewish."

As you can see, the common denominator is:

"It isn't Jewish."

And if what the Missionary is saying isn't Jewish, then he or she is certainly not a representative of what it is to be a Jew. You also need to keep in mind that there are two kinds of CSWJS members: those who were once uneducated Jews and now truly believe in what they are telling you, and those who were born and are still Christian. Either way, these Missionaries will tell you anything to get you to become a CSWJS church believer.

Don't bother trying to undermine the belief of a true believer. You cannot sway him or her. Initially it becomes an interesting form of verbal jousting, but it accomplishes very little and becomes a tiring game. Just as they cannot sway my beliefs, I cannot sway theirs. Thus, what you will learn in this and other chapters is not how to undermine their belief, but how to strengthen yours.

If you have a family member who has fallen prey to a CSWJS church, the best thing that you can do is to maintain your connection, for you are their anchor, and if you cut them off, they may drift in those turbulent waters forever. Love them, encourage them, and be authentic. And if you encounter a Missionary, don't scream at them. They are used to this reaction. Throw them off with kindness. If you don't want to talk to them,

then thank them and move on. But if you do, always keep in mind that the modus operandi of a Missionary is deceit and enticement.

Deceptive practices of Missionaries

Over the past few years, the desire by Christian Missionaries to convert Jews has grown in intensity. Jews are their focal point. Nowhere do you find "Hindus for Jesus" or "Buddhists for Jesus." Christian Missionaries do not seem to have the same intensity of proselytizing when it comes to non-Jews. For example, on June 13, 1996, the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution targeting Jews for assimilation into Christendom. With 15 million members in the U.S. alone contributing to this cause, this adds up to a lot of money! In the midst of Hanukah on December 9th, 1999, that same council became committed to having 100,000 missionaries invade Chicago. On the holiday that Jews celebrate non-assimilation, these Christian missionaries have the chutzpah to announce their intent to assimilate!

These Southern Baptists send their Christian Missionaries to annoy us during the Jewish High Holidays. It is a holy time for us, a time of prayer and reflection. They annoy us by putting out a press release, publicly announcing that they will be praying to Jesus, pleading to their savior in the hope that the Jews accept Jesus as their Lord and Master. This is an intrusive practice that we have gotten used to over the years, and Jews will normally keep as far away from these types of people as possible, for their way isn't Jewish. As I already said, very rarely will an educated Jew engage the Missionary in any verbal swordplay, for there is no point.

In every major city where there are Jews, there are Christian missionaries, preying on any Jew who is vulnerable. Vulnerability means someone who is not knowledgeable in both Christian and Jewish theology and cannot make a distinction between the two.

But being vulnerable doesn't just mean an intellectual vulnerability, but emotionally vulnerable as well. In this, we need to take full responsibility. For where there are Jews who are infirmed, lonely, or in despair, with no caring Jews around to aid them, there is often a Missionary waiting to befriend them, gaining their confidence, and then as they walk away, they look back and see the desperate Jew follow. This has been reported repeatedly as a problem in nursing homes, and with Jews who feel disenfranchised, such as the blind or the deaf. The soul yearns to feel fulfilled, and the lonely Jew who doesn't participate in prayer and Torah study on a regular basis may be willing to do anything to experience friendship at any cost.

But that's another issue. In these cases, the deception isn't intellectual, but emotional.

As I said, there are two classes of Missionaries: those who are straight forward about whom they are and what they believe, and those who are not. That second class of Missionary uses deception to get what the he or she desires most: the assimilation of Jews

as Christians. The CSWJS Missionary does this by presenting himself or herself to Jews as being Jewish, and through the use of Jewish symbols and distorted Jewish texts, they convert the uneducated Jew who knows nothing about these practices. One of their own Christian leaders, Billy Graham, has denounced their activities when, in an interview with Fox News in January of 2000, he said:

"I normally defend my denomination. I'm loyal to it. But I have never targeted Muslims. I have never targeted Jews."

By “my denomination”, he might as well be referring to the CSWJS churches, which are so aligned with the Southern Baptist Council of Churches, that they are, for all intents and purposes, Baptists. The leaders of these churches are often seen in the company of Baptist leaders. When the organization is built by Baptists, funded by Baptists, trained by Baptists, and whose membership is primarily people who are Christians and never were Jewish, is it any wonder that Jewish organizations cringe when they see someone wearing a “Jews for Jesus” t-shirt?

But these t-shirts aren't always being worn.

And it's too bad, because when CSWJS Missionaries get dressed up, you usually can't tell what they are until they engage you in their routine. They have been known to infiltrate schools and *shuls*. I know of one who tried to pass himself off as an Orthodox teacher in order to counsel Jewish youths, teenagers who may be going through some crisis in their lives. (*See below*). Again, a hidden Missionary waiting for the vulnerable Jew, waiting to deceive him or her when the Jew is at his or her weakest, and then taking advantage of the situation.

You will find these CSWJS Missionaries dressed in traditional Jewish garb as they set up booths near secular College campuses in order to attract Jews. Perhaps they announce an event where "Traditional Jewish music" will be played, in order to entice Jews to listen to their "Messianic" message, which is inserted into their program. These Missionaries work on getting Jews to come and celebrate at a "Messianic" church, although they will use the word "temple" or "shul" to get Jews to go there. The uninformed Jew might think that such a church is full of converted Jews, when in reality he is in the minority, being a Jew since birth. It is a church of Christian Missionaries welcoming the Jew after manipulating Jewish symbolism in order to gain yet another convert into their fold.

I bring this up to emphasize one specific point: Don't be fooled into thinking that "Jews for Jesus" is just another branch of Judaism, like Conservative or Reform, which was started and is maintained by Jews. Instead, Jews for Jesus is a CSWJS religion posing as Jewish in order to gain more converts. Many Jewish groups have tried to get these "Messianic" churches eliminated from the Telephone Yellow Pages under "Synagogues", but have so far been unsuccessful. The best they have done so far is to get them their own subheading: "Synagogues - Messianic", but I have discovered that this is not necessarily true in every city of the United States.

These Christian missionaries will use any resource that they have in order to accomplish their goal. For example, they have used their own children to befriend secular Jewish children as a way to get to the barely observant Jewish parents. This has especially been a problem in Israel. I came across one web site on the Internet that was committed to converting Jews. It had a very angry tone because Israel had passed an ordinance that allowed the ejection of Missionaries from Israel whose tactics were deceptive and coercive. (This ordinance has been rarely used.) I read into this an almost manic need for the Missionary to convert the Jew, and to take that away from him or her is like taking food away from a starving person.

Remember, even though the members of "Jews for Jesus" say that their organization is a Jewish outreach program, this does not mean that they are Jewish men and women reaching out to other Jews, but that they are Christian men and women reaching out to Jews. Despite this, when interviewed, they will often use the term "we Jews", when in fact there is nothing Jewish about them, except for the outward trappings.

A couple of Missionary stories

Sometimes the end that the Christian Missionary goes to stretches the imagination. The odd thing is that these events are rarely ever printed about in the secular paper unless the Jewish community is in an uproar and cries out for attention, and then it is often a small article that barely gets read. To many non-Jews, there is this lack of comprehension why a Jew would care one way or the other about remaining a Jew. This is something that cannot be understood unless it is experienced.

Earlier I started to tell you of the Missionary who wanted to go to Israel and consul Jews. This is a perfect example as to how deep the Missionary is willing to go to get what he or she wants, and with little secular reporting on it.

The man was in his early 40's and went by the name of *Tsiyon*. What his actual name was, we will never know. He wore *peyos* (traditional long locks on the side of the head), and the traditional black garb of an Orthodox Jew. He told people he was a *Kohain* and claimed to have some background in *Chassidic* Judaism, and was very interested in that subject. Other Jews at the *Yeshivah* where he was studying didn't see him at *davvening* with the others. *Tsiyon* claimed to be attending *Chassidic shuls* frequently. But something didn't ring true. He was especially interested in the process of conversion.

Tsiyon also claimed to have a Ph.D and the *Yeshivah* he attended in early 2001 was "*Ohr Somayach-Monsey*," a traditional school of Jewish learning. He was planning to move to Israel, where he could teach and counsel other Jews. But he was found out to be, in reality, a Christian Missionary posing as a Jew. He was kicked out of the *yeshiva*. He then attempted to infiltrate other *yeshivos* in order to legitimize himself as a Jew elsewhere, so that he could do eventually do harm to those who might seek his counsel. The Jewish newspapers, "*Yated Naaman*" and others ended up containing a large add

from the *yeshiva* with a picture of this individual and his known information in order to stop him.

Imagine the harm he could have done if he had placed himself in a Jewish Outreach program where vulnerable Jews would come to him, asking him for teaching and advice. And yet, this story didn't get very far, it remained within Jewish circles. If Jews don't act and if Jews don't care, nobody else will.

But let's also take a look at another example that actually did get a lot of press.

[In February of 2000](#), the ABC news program, 20/20, reported a story of a 12-year old Zack, a Jewish boy who was a few weeks away from his Bar Mitzvah, and was playing with some non-Jewish friends in his hometown of Dallas, Texas. These "friends" were Baptists and invited him to play at their church without telling him that it was "target night", a night where non-Baptists are "saved". His parents, who tried to instill in him respect for other religions had no problem with Zack playing with non-Jews. The boy went with his "friends" to their church to play. While there, Zack met a Church member who manipulated the boy into signing some paper, saying that in doing so, all of his sins would be erased. Zack trusted the nice man and did so. When his parents found out later on that what the boy had signed were conversion papers, the entire family felt betrayed. They ignored the paper and the boy declared that he would remain 110% Jewish. The experience changed their lives forever.

When the television news reported this event, it took a poll to ask if what the religious leader had done was wrong. More people than not indicated that it was fine, that the religious leader did nothing wrong. Perhaps this is because the religious leader was fulfilling *his* religious obligation by getting a non-believer to proclaim to the world that he or she is now a believer.

This is but one example of a Jew who nearly succumbed to verbal coercion and trickery from Missionaries who target Jews; the young, the vulnerable, and the uneducated.

As we see from the previous two examples, we have one group that deceives, looking *kosher* when he or she in reality a Christian Missionary, and another group that entices, but not hiding the fact that they are made up of Christians. The second group is easy to avoid. The first group, however, is not so easy.

Many missionaries will commonly use deceit and look for a trusting Jew who's "open-minded" (translation: non-observant and unconcerned). But it isn't just the non-Observant Jew who is approached. One Missionary emailed me and claimed to have been a teacher in a *Chabad Lubavitch* in Los Angeles. Yet even so, he quoted from "Matthew" over and over again to warn me against trying to destroy the faith of the faithful. There was no *Chofetz Chaim*, no *Talmud*, and no Jewish verses at all. And when I explained a theological point that is fundamental to Judaism, he couldn't accept it. No, just because you can act the part doesn't mean that you actually lived the part.

By their appearance, Christian missionaries are using visual deceit, however, they will more often use verbal deceit. They will take Jewish writings that mean one thing and present them in a twisted manner in order to make it mean something completely different. They will use intentionally incorrect translations of Jewish texts to prove something that they were never intended to prove. They will take words from the Jewish vocabulary and redefine them in order to confuse and entice the Jew away from Torah Judaism and into Christianity, or into Christianity presenting itself as being a “bit” Jewish. The Missionary continues to hammer away, selling the Jew on the idea that Judaism is an incomplete religion and only by becoming a Christian can the Jew truly experience the love of G-d. They will tell the Jew that the real meaning behind the verses are the Christian meanings, and that the Jewish meanings are deceptions. What is up is down, and what is down becomes up.

Remember, just because a pig looks Kosher on the outside, it doesn't mean its Kosher.

One of the purposes of this book is to warn Jews that just because someone wears a *kipah*, or a piece of Jewish-looking piece of jewelry, or if they look *frume*, it doesn't mean anything.

So if you meet someone, and if you suspect anything at all, point-blank ask the person if they believe Jesus was their Savior. If they say "yes" or dance around a response, you probably have a missionary on your hands. For most Missionaries will not deny that Jesus was their Savior, even to entice a Jew.

[Tractate Sanhedrein (Talmud), 38b - We learned in a Mishnah: Rabbi Eliezer said: A person should be diligent to learn the Torah and know how to refute the arguments of a non-believer. Rabbi Yochanan said: This was taught only with respect to a non-Jewish heretic, but a Jewish heretic will use your arguments to support his misleading points.]

Conspiracies of the Jewish-Jews and non-Jews

I dislike “secret” conspiracy theories, for they rely on the idea that a small group of people can fool a larger group. The reason that many criminals get caught is that they can't keep their mouth shut! The larger the group, the more likely it is that someone is going to tell someone who shouldn't be told.

In the general definition of the term, the CSWJS churches and the Southern Baptists have conspired against the Jews, but the conspiracy isn't a secret. This is what can be termed an “open conspiracy”. The director of “Jews for Jesus”, one of the most successful form of CSWJS churches, will often appear with the head of the Baptist council of churches. These two Christian leaders don't try to hide their relationship to those who see it. They are very open concerning their commitment to convert Jews. This information has been printed in numerous publications, both Jewish and non-Jewish, as well as being spoken about openly on the radio, television, and the Internet. What they

are not very open about is how they label the Jews for Jesus as a “Jewish” religion, when it has not relationship with Judaism at all.

No, the CSWJS churches are not plotting in secret. There is a difference between being secretive (standard conspiracy theory) and being deceptive (your typical “con” or “hustle”).

That brings us to the notion of a “secret” or “closed” conspiracy. Such a conspiracy relies on the idea that “nobody but *us* knows this.” But if that were true, how does the *speaker* know this? What privilege does the speaker have, giving him or her this secret information that nobody else has? No, secret conspiracies don’t exist. They can’t, since human beings just can’t keep their mouths shut!

For example, one conspiracy was that the U.S. government had used flame-throwing tanks to burn up the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas. There were hundreds of witnesses, and what they saw was fire starting from the inside.

And yet, the secret conspiracy that the U.S. had burned down that building began to spread. After all, there was footage from a news camera that showed a gleam of sunlight, but the conspiracy buffs proclaimed that it just *had* to be a flame!

Now imagine, if hundreds of people knew the “truth”, why is it that the people who were there have a conflicting story? You would think that after weeks or months, someone would have finally admitted what happened. The police rely on this part of human nature to capture criminals. They can expect that when more people participate in the crime, it is more likely that someone will be caught.

And yet, the Christian Missionary will often use the “secret” conspiracy ploy to deceive the Jew. The Jew will be told that it’s not his fault that he doesn’t worship Jesus. The Rabbis always knew the truth and have kept it hidden from the Jews for centuries. Or the Jew will be told that the Rabbis never teach much about ancient prophecy, since they are afraid that their congregation will learn the “truth”. Or that the Rabbis modified ancient text to make it look like Jesus did not fulfill any prophecy.

And yet, in all the centuries, we don’t have any educated Rabbis who expose the Jewish leaders, crying out that it’s all been a sham! But the Christian Missionary knows the “truth”, for somehow he or she is privy to information that no Jew has access to: the secret society of power-hungry Rabbis.

There is no such conspiracy.

A Missionary once told me of an Orthodox Rabbi who, after the holocaust, converted to Christianity. “How come,” he asked, “your Rabbis don’t mention him? See, there are Jewish leaders who have become Christians!” My answer was simple: first, such a thing is an aberration, and as such, an isolated incident is not given much weight. It is not, as the Missionary suggested, a plot by the Jewish leaders to keep their uneducated

congregants in check. The second is that the holocaust itself was such a great aberration that it tested the faith of many. And for every tale of lost faith, there are many more of faiths strengthened. I suggested reading "Chassidic Tales of the Holocaust" by Yaffa Eliach (Avon books) for some of these examples. There is a difference between being susceptible because of deception and being susceptible because of despair.

So, how is it that the Christian Missionary who knows little of Judaism is privy to information that millions of Jews around the world don't know anything about? They know what they know because that's what they have been taught to know. It is also in line with tradition Christian teachings. As we will see, Matthew wrote how terrible and corrupt the Jewish leaders were, while we Jews have named our *shuls* and children after some of these same great men (such as *bais Shammai* or *bais Hillel* for example).

This is nothing more than a variation of the anti-Semitic book "Protocols of Zion", where there is a secret plot by power-hungry Jews to take over the world.

Those Jews

In reality, we Jews have made it easy for the Christian missionaries to do this type of verbal manipulation.

Many Jews have fallen into the "you aren't bad like they are" manipulation. In other words, a Christian missionary says, "you are an intelligent person", or "you certainly have an open mind", or some other type of opener to get you to a particular state of mind. We, as human beings, want to be inclusive, accepting, and appreciated. Because of that, we don't want to be associated with any group that is not liked because they are perceived to be exclusive, non-accepting, and closed-minded.

Let's look at a modern-day example.

A non-observant Jew is at a computer conference. An observant Jew walks by wearing the traditional garb, with a beard, black hat, and *tzitzis*. Two non-Jews look at one another with a grin and one says to the other "Hey, look at the Rabbi!" and they snicker. The non-observant Jew says nothing and walks away. He did not want to be associated with being "Orthodox", and he did not want to lose his standing with his colleagues.

If you heard this, would you want to be associated with the traditionally dressed Jew and be part of the minority?

When the secular media reports on religious Jews in Israel, they label religious Jews as Ultra-Orthodox. The media will downplay the numbers and the importance of the observant Jews, usually by 50% or more. Who wants to be part of some minority, who are even part of a minority in their own country? We do this to ourselves. Would you want to be associated with any group that is Ultra anything? After all, this would be like saying that you are part of the Jewish fringe element (pun intended!).

There are people who are proud to be Jews but don't want this type of association. In fact, the problem goes deeper. Many Jews will be antagonistic to other Jews, just so they don't "accidentally" get labeled as extremists. If one Jew sees another who is less or more observant, then the difference is noted and there is this instant wall of separation erected.

This is one of the reasons why the Christian missionary goes after the person who doesn't look too Jewish. They already have a built in program to use, by playing on this fear of association.

I read a Christian paperback¹ which had an interview with a man who was once a Jew and who converted to Christianity and is a missionary to convert Jews. In it, he stated that the only reason that Jews don't convert is because they do not think for themselves. If their Rabbi says that there is nothing to it, then it must be true.

He then proceeded to make the same bad quotes to "prove" that Jesus was G-d. He tells anecdotes where he asked Rabbis to explain what the words of the prophets meant, and they could not answer his questions. He continued to attack the leaders, saying that it's sad that Jews do not convert because of this conspiracy by Rabbis who know the truth.

Missionaries will use this process of divide and conquer, if that's what it takes to convert Jews. And while it is not anti-Semitic in the strictest sense of the word, it certainly borders on it.

What is "Jews For Jesus"?

Did you ever wonder when the first "Messianic Jews" appeared? Was it 2,000 years ago? 1,500 years ago? No, even the modern state of Israel is older than the "Messianic Jew."

They first appeared in the 1960's!

Back then, fundamental Christian organizations were frustrated at their attempts to convert Jews. Sure, Jews were marrying non-Jews, and the assimilation was taking place, but it was still going rather slowly. Some less observant Jews were becoming more observant, and some less-observant Jews were becoming non-Observant. Some Christians were converting to Judaism, and some Jews were converting to Christianity.

These early hard-hitting Christian bible-beating missionaries were turning more Jews off than bringing them to Jesus. A Christian Missionary coming to a Jewish home, knocking on the door, with black bible in hand, they had very little success. The Jew would see the bright cross on the book and shut the door as fast as possible.

¹ Lee Strobel, *The case for Christ*, (Zondervan Press, 1998)

Public “Jesus fests” were working much better, and depicting Jesus as an anti-establishment bearded young man trying to make the world a better place hit a nerve with the young people of the 60’s. Things were happening, but it still wasn’t very fast when it came to the Jews. They needed a better idea.

So by using the term "Messianic Jew", a relatively new idea, their process of converting Jews became more successful. They often mislead the Jews by telling them that the roots of Christianity are based on Judaism. They provided arguments that Christianity is the next logical step for the thinking or open-minded Jew. The organization "American Board of Missions to the Jews" was founded, and Reverend Martin Rosen, worked for them for 10 years, and in 1973, he broke away from them and founded his own organization.

Reverend Rosen was an assimilated Jew named Moishe Rosen² who converted early in life. In 1952, Moishe told his father that he wanted to be a Christian and his father sent Moishe to a psychiatrist, and after 2 days of analysis declared that Moishe was sane. Reverend Rosen wrote:

“So no matter what anyone says about my mental stability these days, I at least have a letter to prove it. Most people don't.”

He was ordained in 1957, and was, and still is, a very fiery preacher, standing on street corners and shouting to the world of his belief in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. He founded "Jews for Jesus." While other Ministries were started around this same time, Jews for Jesus is one of the best known, and the most vocal. It spends millions of Christian dollars every year on its broad campaign. This is but one example of such an organization, and it is not alone. And the members of these groups all consider themselves as "Messianic Jews," rather than members of a CSWJS church. In 1996, Reverend Rosen transferred leadership to David Brickner, who has been the executive director ever since.

In writing her book about Rosen and his church, Christian writer Ruth Tucker, in writing a very positive book about Jews for Jesus stated:

From these groups I have come to understand, at least to a small degree, how it feels to face opposition and rejection -- sometimes from fellow Christians. I have been personally criticized for overlooking heresy and befriending those whom others view as dangerous or outside Christian orthodoxy.³

Yes, Christian leaders know that Jews for Jesus is blurred Christianity, and Jewish leaders know that Jews for Jesus is also blurred Christianity. Both sides are willing to agree on this, and that such a sect perverts both Christianity as well as Judaism. The only side disagreeing is Jews for Jesus! Their stance is that they can call themselves anything

² Moishe Rosen with William Proctor, *Jews for Jesus* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1974)

³ Ruth A. Tucker, *Not Ashamed: The Story of Jews for Jesus* (Multnomah Publishers, 1999)

they want, and if they want to call themselves Jewish, nobody is going to stop them, and if the non-CSWJS Jews don't like it, well, that's *their* problem, not the Missionary.

But remember, we are not talking about a sect made up mostly (even 51%) of Jews. We are talking about a sect made up primarily of non-Jews who want to call themselves Jews. And the biggest problem is that only a minority of the population (Jews) even care that this deception has been going on for several decades.

To quote Reverend Scott of the Anglican Church in Toronto Canada:

"It should be noted that no Jew anywhere can accept that a member of Jews for Jesus is in fact a Jew, and--while some of the members of Jews for Jesus may have been Jewish earlier on, I have strong reasons for thinking that many so-called Jews for Jesus have never lived within the scope of Judaism prior to identifying themselves as Christians. It is an accepted principle of inter-religious dialogue that a religious community be allowed to define itself, and, on this basis, the Jewish community is perfectly justified in declaring the Jews for Jesus are in fact not Jews at all."

You cannot find the term "Messianic Jew" anywhere in the Christian bible. It is a deceptive practice that has been recently been developed to entice Jews into thinking that the belief in Jesus as a "Christ" is compatible with Judaism. There is no such compatibility, and these ideas are not Jewish ones.

And if you are ever in doubt that CSWJS "temples" are anything other than churches, remember Reverend Rosen's own words that he wrote about his organization:

"We believe in affiliating with a local church and being accountable to the church for service and discipline. We consider ourselves to be an arm of the local church."

This certainly doesn't sound very Jewish to me.

You cannot have it both ways

There is only one G-d. Christians and Jews pray to G-d. However, the difference between Judaism and Christianity is that Jews cannot give G-d a form, and Christians see no real difference between G-d and Jesus, and hence, Christianity has a G-d with form. Jews are forbidden to pray to anything or anyone. In Judaism *HaShem* has neither form nor substance.

Christianity has replaced the Book of *Berashis* (Genesis) by the Gospel of John. It says "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with G-d." Christians believe that Jesus was "the Word", and this therefore proves that he existed with G-d before the creation of the Universe. In Christian terms, Jesus is one of three: they are one and they are distinct entities.

This is surely not a Jewish idea.

The reality of it is that a Jew cannot replace *Torah* with faith in Jesus and still call himself or herself a Jew. The small number of Jews in the earlier part of the Christian millennium who tried to retain their Jewish identity and take on the beliefs of Christianity faded away into obscurity. They tried to keep all 613 mitzvos and accept Jesus as the human non-supernatural *Moshiach*. But as time pressed on, such beliefs were abandoned. Later on, anything Jewish was gutted and replaced with the belief of Jesus as a supernatural deity called a "Christ."

This belief structure was certainly not done to appeal to Jews.

No, one cannot be both a Christian and a Jew, and those who try end up not fitting into either community. "Messianic" Judaism is a Christian organization that dupes Jews into converting. It is a group that convinces its converts to bring others into the fold. It is a group that lies to its converts over and over again concerning history and Bible versus in order to keep them in their place. Many Jews are becoming alarmed when they hear the term "Jews for Jesus", as well as the other lesser-publicized Messianic cults. It's not the packaging, but what's inside the package that matters.

Christianity sees Judaism as an incomplete religion because we do not believe in Jesus as our savior. Christian missionaries created "Messianic Judaism" in order to bridge this gap and to create the false image that this Christian sect, that is bound and supported by Christian churches, is the "complete" religion, the complete Judaism, when, as we will soon see, isn't Jewish at all.

What Jews For Jesus Really Believe

On January 12th, 2000 David Brickner, the executive directory of "Jews for Jesus" appeared on the Larry King show with Reverend Alert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. With opposing viewpoints were two Rabbis. Unfortunately, such a format does little to educate the public. Each person gets a small sound bite, and with the topic switching do different points, no single point ever gets fully investigated. This was a good example of how the Missionaries dance all over the place, and unless you regain control, it becomes a dizzy dervish.

If I had to vote for who won in this debate, I'd have to say the Baptists. The Rabbis were always on the defensive, and there was only a single moment when the regained control, but it was soon wrenched from them.

The Baptists were very, very, good. As an educated Jew, I knew what was going on. The Rabbis continued attack against the CSWJS organization instead of going to the foundation of their non-Jewish beliefs, making the organization wrong instead of making a simple distinction, which is about all you can do in 20 minutes. Unfortunately, to the uneducated Jew, the Rabbis may have unintentionally created more confusion.

What one needs to do in such a situation is to maintain control. Keep bringing the subject back to the primary point: "Yes, that's nice, but it isn't Jewish." "We're Jews, and that's not part of our religion." "That's appropriate for the non-Jew, but not for the Jew." "Yes, that's nice but it isn't Jewish." Alas, that didn't happen, and not much of a message came out.

What a Jew needs to do is to keep focusing on what Judaism is not, rather than trying to focus on what Christianity is not. "Yes, that's nice, but it isn't Jewish" is a good response. It keeps the other person on the defensive, trying to justify their position, but in the end, "Yes, that's nice but it isn't Jewish" has no defense when it is said from an educated Jew.

What was fascinating is that Mr. Brickner stated very clearly the beliefs of CSWJS members. He did not try to hide the fact that they believe no differently than the Southern Baptists, with the exception of saying that Jews believe the same thing!

Yet, at the end of the debate, the listener was not left with the idea, "It isn't Jewish at all!" but rather with "Maybe it isn't Jewish."

I can only pray that this wasn't the case for everyone.

Here is a metaphor that may drive the point home. Let's say that I have a dog and a cup sitting on the floor. I point to the dog and ask someone what it is, and he says "a dog." That is the expected answer. I then point to the cup and ask what it is, and again he says "a dog." This is an unexpected answer. I ask the person to describe the second "dog", and he says "a ceramic container with a handle." Just to be clear, I ask him to describe the first "dog", and he says "a brown four-legged animal." I then ask if the second "dog" is the same as the first "dog", and he says "No. But it's still a dog. Who are *you* to tell me that it isn't?"

This was how the interview went. Mr. Brickner distinctly defined himself and his organization in Christian terms, completely turning his back on any Jewish definition, and ended the interview with saying that he was no less Jewish than the Rabbis who sat opposite him.

What follows is an extract of many of the key points made by Mr. Brickner. Read this and ask yourself, "Is this Jewish?"

It isn't.

1. CSWJS belief: Jesus died for our sins

The Director of "Jews for Jesus", in his opening statement said:

"We are Jewish people who have come to believe that Jesus is the messiah and the savior of the world, that he died and rose again to pay the penalty for our sins."

Let's take this apart, shall we?

"We are a Jewish people who have come to believe that..."

According to public records, the typical CSWJS church is primarily made up of people who were not born Jewish and never converted to Judaism. Since they are made up of Christians, and people who were born Christian, they did not "come to believe" anything. The reality is that they joined the CSWJS church with that belief unchanged and intact.

The fact that some Jews have joined these CRWJS churches does not make the churches Jewish, nor does it make the non-Jewish members Jewish. Hence, the first part of his opening statement is clearly untrue.

"...Jesus is the messiah and the savior of the world..."

The idea that the messiah will be the savior of the world, while certainly a Christian concept, is not a Jewish belief at all. I will be covering the idea of a Christ versus a *Moshiach* in more detail later on in this book.

"...that he died and rose again to pay the penalty for our sins."

The idea of someone dying to pay the penalty of the sins of the world is certainly not a Jewish concept, nor is the idea of some sort of self-resurrection. These are fully Christian ideas, not Jewish one. The idea of us being born in sin, or "original sin" is also not a Jewish concept. Every morning we say as part of our prayers "My G-d, the soul that you have placed within me is spiritually pure." The belief that mankind needs to be redeemed because we are born into sin is Christian, not Jewish.

As we can easily see, it was appropriate for the director to appear with the president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, since the two of them have the same theological structure.

2. CSWJS belief: No one comes to G-d, except through Jesus

Mr. Brickner truly believes that his "Jews" who pray to Jesus are fully Jewish. He quotes that

"Jesus said, 'I'm the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father but by me.'"

As Jews, we are forbidden to be facing even a drawing of someone during prayer. To keep in mind the image Jesus, or to pray to Jesus is a violation of *Torah*, where we are told "I am *HaShem*, your *Elokim*,... you are not to have [another] *Elokim* in my presence." Christianity, however, does not consider this a problem, for their belief is that

since G-d came to earth in the form of a man, the violation of making images of G-d is no longer in effect.

As Jews, we don't believe that there exists or ever will exist an intermediary to whom we pray. In fact, the *Rambam* wrote just the opposite in his "13 principles of faith." Such a belief that is contrary to Judaism is considered *Avodah Zorah*, a "strange offering," and is forbidden in the strongest terms. Christianity disputes this, as does Mr. Brickner.

3. CSWJS belief: Jesus was the only righteous man who ever lived.

Mr. Brickner then tells the audience that not only will someone never know G-d except through Jesus, but also that Jesus was the only *Tzaddik* to have ever lived.

"Jesus is only righteous person who lived on face of this earth, and because of that he could pay the penalty for our sin. Because of that, we can have forgiveness, and we can know love of G-d."

As Jews, we believe that there are righteous in every generation. There is no Jewish belief that there are no *Tzaddikim*, and that there will be none until the *Moshiach* comes. In fact, their names are written about in many of our texts. In fact, the *Torah* calls *Noach* a *Tzaddik*, and commentators go into great detail explaining that this verse is trying to teach us. So for Mr. Brickner to say that Jesus was the only righteous person who ever lived is not Jewish.

There is no Jewish belief that humanity could only know forgiveness through someone's death. There is no Jewish belief that we can only know the love of G-d through someone's death. Christianity has the belief that a penalty needed to be paid for the salvation of mankind. This is not a Jewish belief.

But frankly, I wonder if the founders of Christianity held this current Christian belief. For in Matthew 9:11 Jesus was reported to have said, "I have come for sinners and not for the righteous since they do not need me." It's apparent that Jesus believed that there were righteous people. This perception, however, is part of the Southern Baptist belief, as well as the members of CSWJS churches.

4. CSWJS belief: Only accepting Jesus will save you from Hell.

During the interview, the moderator asked Mr. Brickner about Hell. He wanted to know if Jews will go to Hell unless they accept Jesus, and if Mr. Brickner would have ended up going to Hell if he had not accepted Jesus as his savior. Mr. Brickner in an exceptionally non-Jewish manner:

"Yes, absolutely, except for the fact I've embraced God 's forgiveness in the person of Jesus."

So please note: if you embrace Jesus as your person savior and surrender to him, then you will not go to Hell. If you don't, then you will go to hell.

Repeat after me: "Yes, that's nice, but it's not a Jewish idea." Baptist ministers will often preach of Hell and eternal punishment. Rabbis don't.

So far, can you see that everything that is being said is not Jewish, but Christian? And those who participate with such a belief structure are Christians and not Jews. Yet the director of "Jews for Jesus" said:

4. CSWJS belief: Believing in Jesus doesn't make anyone less Jewish

In Christian theology, there is this concept of a "suffering servant", and Christian missionaries use their translated quotes from Isaiah to support this. We Jews, who can read Hebrew, do not read it in this manner and therefore the idea of a "suffering servant," which Mr. Brickner brings up, is not a Jewish idea at all, but is the foundation of Christianity. In short, there is no Jewish belief of a Moshiach who will be beaten and will need to die. In fact, the opposite is true.

"There are some of us Jews who do believe that Jesus is the messiah, who do believe that there are messianic prophecies concerning a suffering servant who would come and suffer and die for the sins of the people, and rise again... And those of us who believe that are no less Jewish."

Since such a belief is non-Jewish and is fully Christian, we end up with the question: Can someone embrace the theology of another religion and still be associated with both? This is not about believing that Jesus was the Moshiach. There are sects in Judaism who believe that other people who existed were also the Moshiach. For example, some Chassidim believe that Rebbe Schneerson of recent memory was the Moshiach, and some don't. And yet those that do believe in this manner do not pray to him, for that is not the Jewish way. They do not believe that the Rebbe redeemed them from sin, nor do they believe that he was a supernatural being. The Christian way is not the Jewish way. This is not to say that either way is better, but it is to say that they are incompatible.

Can a Jew believe and pray to a supernatural being in person of Jesus and still be a Jew? Can a Jew commit murder and still be a Jew? The answer to both is yes; the person is still part of a family, for that cannot be severed except through a form of excommunication that hasn't been done in centuries. Yes, that person is a Jew in the noun form, but isn't being Jewish in the verb form. But the reality of it is that when you have non-Jews enticing and deceiving Jews to act and believe like non-Jews. The non-Jews embrace them, saying that both the Jew and the non-Jew are Jewish. There is such a confusion of ideas that one cannot distinguish the Christian from the Jew. And since these are churches funded by Southern Baptists, we can only consider them as Baptists, who were one born into a Jewish family.

In 1984, Ann Landers was asked if a Jew who converts is still a Jew.⁴ Her response was:

"A Jew who wishes to dissociate himself from Judaism and take up Catholicism, Christian Science or Confucianism, for example, is still a Jew by heritage. No amount of disavowing will transform him into a Gentile."

Please note the emphasis on “heritage” which means “that which is allotted to someone by reason of birth.” It is a legal term (inheritance) indicating benefit based on lineage. In the *Torah*, we also read of *Easu* who sold his heritage for a bowl of red lentil soup to his brother *Yaakov*. *Easu* was still the son of *Yitzchak*, but he was no longer heir to the major part of his father’s legacy.

But as I said before, most of the members for Jews for Jesus don’t have the heritage of a Jew, and they continue to call their organization “Jewish” for the sole purpose of deceiving real Jews. Therefore, most of the members have no heritage to lose, and so they focus on stealing the heritage of the unsuspecting Jew.

On a final note about this interview, there were a great number of things spoken of, and what I have presented here is but a small segment. There were arguments and proclamations going on back and forth. However, I don’t want you to think that Mr. Brickner did most of the talking for the Christians. No, instead it was Reverend Alert Mohler Jr., a leader in the Southern Baptist world who did most of the answering and presentation.

I showed only Mr. Brickner’s comments because they are germane to my task: to demonstrate that what Jews for Jesus members believe is aligned with Christianity and not with Judaism at all.

When the interview was over, Mr. Brickner declared that he respected the Southern Baptist Ministry, and applauded the Baptists for their efforts on reaching out to Jews to bring them to Jesus.

That certainly is not the Jewish way. And yet, Mr. Brickner does not see himself as a Christian, but as a "Messianic-Jew," the ultimate oxymoron from a “Jewish-Jew” point of view.

That is certainly not a Jewish perception.

What is Christian?

One can read in the Christian bible, in Acts 11:26 that "the disciples" were first called Christians" while in Syria. The term "Christian" comes from the Greek word *Christos*, ("Christ" or "anointed one") and indicates "Christ's followers," or "Christ

⁴ Ann Landers, *San Francisco Examiner*, 1 January 1984.

devotees." While this translates to the same word as *Moshiach*, we will see later on that there is no real relationship between the two words. The adding of "-ian" to the end of a name to indicate an adherent was a common practice of the first century who attached the termination "-ianos" (or the plural "-ianoi") to the name of the leader or master. Yet in all of this we only find the term "Christian" three times in the Christian bible, two of them in Acts (11:26, 26:28) and another in Peter (4:16), and each time it is used by outsiders to those who were followers of the Jesus. However, to the Jews, they were often called "notzrim", or "misim".

The early Christians called themselves an assortment of things, but they never called themselves "Jews", "the Children of Israel", "the Descendents of Abraham", or anything like that. Eventually, they took on the name "Christian", but according to the texts, it was outsiders who first called them that. They then took on that label as a permanent description.

So if the members of a CSWJS church are adherents of Jesus, the "Christ," then they are, according to this meaning, Christians.

You can have Greek-Christians, Roman-Christians, Israeli-Christians, and so forth. This defines the Christian style based on the land where they consider their home. We do not have Smith-Christians, Jones-Christians, or any other kind of Christianity that is based on a family name. A Messianic-Christian is an oxymoron, and therefore "Christian" is a more simple and straightforward definition.

Jews are called Jews because of our roots, our family. "Jew" does not refer to the residents of the land of Judea, but was named after the tribe of Judah. It is a singular family with a singular belief in the G-d of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. One may leave a family, but one may always do *tshuvah*, a "returning" to *mitzvos* and *Torah*. Because of this one who is born a Jew is a Jew, even though he or she may leave the family. They just aren't Jewish.

As I said earlier, "Jew" defines the person based on their heritage, while "Jewish" defines his or her actions, just as "Christian" defines the beliefs and actions of a person. A Jew who prays to Jesus is not acting Jewish, but is instead acting Christian. Or to simplify, a Christ follower is a Christian, no matter what their heritage.

As I will cover later on, there is a vast difference between the Jewish definition of a *Moshiach*, and the Christian definition of a Christ, or Messiah. Even though they all translate to "anointed", it is there that the similarity ends. The Christian definition is supernatural in nature, while the Jewish definition is not. There are many differences, but the gist of this is that a Messiah as held by Christianity is not a Jewish idea, and a *Moshiach* as held by Judaism is fully incompatible with Christianity. Because of this, I prefer to use the term "Christ" when referring to the Christian viewpoint and *Moshiach* when referring to the Jewish viewpoint.

For a CSWJS church to call itself “Messianic” is the same as calling itself “Christ-based” or “Christian” since the way it holds “Messiah” is fully not Jewish but is fully aligned with Christian theology. There is no such thing as a Messianic-Jew in this context. It would be like calling him or her a “Christ-Jew”, and this is the epitome of using the term “oxymoron”. Even though Mr. Brickner may disagree, while it may not be cultic, it certainly is a sham.

So in response to Mr. Brickner’s claim that those who believe in Jesus are no less Jewish, I say that he is wrong. Such a person is not being Jewish, but is instead being Christian. Mr. Brickner is a Christian (a follower of Christ) and his agenda is to make Christians out of the Jewish people, and to have them believe that being Christian is an extension of being Jewish. It is a deception that offends both the righteous Jews and the righteous Christians.

Being a Christian is fine.

And Christians are not Jewish.

A Common Misconception

Some months after I began writing this book in early 1999, I found a back-issue of the Chicago Jewish News, which contained an interview with a woman who converted from Christianity to Judaism. In the article, the convert was quoted, saying that Jesus was simply a great *Rabbi* who never claimed to be the “Son of G-d.” This is a typical statement that one hears, which roughly translated means “Hey, it’s not a big deal! We can believe whatever we want about Jesus and still be Jews.”

Well, it *is* a big deal.

Here is one of the most important parts of that article: these were words by someone who converted *from* Christianity, someone who supposedly knew something of *her* religion of birth. And even though she was schooled in Christianity, she ended up redefining Jesus in a way that is neither Jewish nor Christian.

And if someone who was educated in Christianity made this type of error, imagine a Jew who knows even less of the Christian tradition.

Contrary to what that woman said, Jesus was *not* a *Rabbi* (there is a distinction between a Rabbi, a prophet, a teacher, a storyteller, and a preacher) and, as we will see later on, he *did* make claim to be the “Son of G-d” not just once, many times! The Christian bible has Jesus contradicting this woman over and over again. It was obvious to me that the woman being quoted had accepted as “gospel”, anecdotes from her friends, teachers, and acquaintances, rather than from any serious form of study. She became uncomfortable with Jesus as a deity, and gradually transformed him down to human terms that she could embrace. When she finally converted, she maintained some belief about Jesus, while attempting to embrace a Judaism.

Most Evangelicals and ministers, who embrace the pale of Christian Orthodoxy, would also disagree with her. They can prove to you that according to their texts, Jesus *was* not only the Son of G-d, but was also the Creator of the universe, one of the 3 personages of the one Creator. Some sects of Christianity are uncomfortable with their own foundation, and have reduced the object of their devotion to a mystical healing sage whose wise words deserve to be listened to. (And as we will see later on, this contradicts basic Christian Theology). The fundamentalist, from where nearly all Missionaries get their support, typically denounces such offshoots.

I don't know if I can drive home this one point too much: the foundation of Judaism is *Torah* and *mitzvos*. The foundation of Christianity is believing in the deification of Jesus, and that you cannot know G-d except through Jesus, and that the *Torah* and *mitzvos* are no longer relevant. If you have a Jew who is firmly grounded in the Jewish position, and a Christian who is firmly grounded in the Christian tradition, there can be no melding of beliefs, but there can be a melding of respect for one another.

This brings us back to the article about the woman who converted to Judaism. As I said, she, like many others before her, made Jesus into whatever character was comfortable to her without establishing it on the actual Christian text. She is not the only one who has done this. Other Jews have made Jesus into whatever they want him to be, and these people are ripe for the Missionary. When you have a nebulous understanding, then Jesus can take on any traits that you are comfortable with. And it is this poor understanding that Christian missionaries use to their advantage. They don't care *why* you initially embrace Jesus, only that you *do* embrace him.

Therefore your the first step to thwart any Christian missionary is to get out of this deadly embrace. This includes being aware of your vocabulary and how you relate your life to the rest of the world. Take the time for *Torah* study. Learn about the *Torah* sages of Jewish history and the greatness that they embodied. And when a Christian missionary comes to you, you will not only have something to base your answers on, you will have certainty in your voice when you say:

"That's nice, but it isn't Jewish!"

So long as one holds onto the idea that Jesus was anything less than an Avatar (to use a Hindu term), G-d manifested in form on this planet in order to redeem mankind from sin by being sacrificed on the cross, such a person's vision becomes blurred and it is that type of person that the Missionary feeds upon. The supernatural nature of Jesus is an integral part of the Christian theology. If you embrace any Jewish concept and try to apply it to Jesus in order to be more comfortable with the character, you have begun to slide down a very slippery slope. So if you want to be a Christian, then you need to embrace Jesus as the co-creator of the Universe. If you can't do that, then don't go where you are not comfortable.

The Missionary will tell you that believing in Jesus is essentially Jewish. It isn't.

I have repeatedly heard “But Jesus was Jewish!” There are famous actors and actresses, criminals, and writers, who were born Jewish, but their lives, their writings, their actions were contrary to *Torah* Judaism. Just because a person is born into a culture it does not necessarily mean that they represent that culture. When a person deviates from what is acceptable, they can no longer be considered viable representatives of their community. They can still say where they came from, but they cannot speak for the people they left. If you can see Jesus as a Jew with a partial education, (he had a poor grasp of *Tanach* and misinterpreted Hebrew verses), and as a Jew who was partially observant Jew (he violated numerous *mitzvos* from the Torah), he becomes a character in a non-Jewish story that is for non-Jews.

We cannot be ignorant about this.

There is a trap in ignorance. Ignorance is darkness, and like darkness, it causes one to mistake a statue for a person. And Missionaries use this ignorance as their foothold in order to convert Jews to Christianity. Missionaries are taught to seek out the Jews who fit the right profile; those who don't dress very Jewish, secular Jews who send their children to secular schools, and Jews who have very little knowledge of their own religion. I have had Missionaries deny this, but we read articles about this again and again in the Jewish press. And since the uneducated Jew probably knows very little about the Christian bible, the Jew is ripe for conversion. For where there is ignorance, deception lies waiting. The missionaries might even "give" you answers to their own questions to “prime the pump”, such as

"Of course, we Jews know that (put Jewish writing in here) means (put forced answer here). Right?"

One example is “Of course, we Jews know that when David wrote ‘My Lord said to my lord’ it is G-d speaking to the Messiah, right?” The reality is that such a verse does *not* mean what the Missionary is inferring, and is based on a bad translation of the text. The Missionary will provide distorted translations and interpretations that are not Jewish, but he or she will present them very convincingly.

The Missionary answer might even sound plausible, and he or she will want an immediate answer. They don't want you to take the time to look up the actual verse in Hebrew and then ponder the question before answering.

Don't fall for these verbal traps and tricks. Always think before you answer a deceiver. Because once you agree that their interpretation is valid, they then take you to the next "logical" step into a very deep pit. So long as you come from the point of view that their sole purpose is to manipulate you into accepting their word as your own, you can easily see the deception for what it is.

We have learned from the Torah that the serpent was able to deceive the first woman in Eden because she made a mistake. She said, “If I touch the tree, I will die”,

instead of "If I eat from the tree I will die". The serpent proved that she would not die from touching it, and therefore was able to deceive her further. It all began with a misunderstanding, and then the manipulation proceeded further. We learn from this that we must always be on our guard, especially when dealing with deceptive Missionaries.

They're Grown-Ups, Aren't They?

Someone once asked me:

"Why are you so concerned? These are grown-ups that you are talking about. If they decide to embrace "Messianic Judaism", that's their choice, right?"

The idea that if you know that someone is being deceived, and then you do nothing, at the very least, does not fall under the category of *chesed*, or an act of loving-kindness. If you saw your child being enticed to do something contrary to what you desired, as a parent you would probably step in. Why is it that when that same person is an adult, we are tempted to let them fall into a pit, thinking "They're a grown-up, they can see the trap for themselves" or "I'm not responsible for them, let them take care of themselves" and do nothing? And yet we make such decisions selectively. When it's someone who we cherish, we will go out of our way to be of assistance. Here is a real-world example of that:

I know of an elderly woman who got caught up in the sweepstake scams. You know the mailings: where you receive a letter in the mail that says that you are absolutely, definitely, certainly, positively, a candidate to perhaps win a million dollars. This woman believed that she needed to buy magazines in order to improve her chances to win. She believed that the more magazines that she subscribed to, the better were her chances. She spent thousands of dollars and received so many magazines, videotapes, audiotapes, and coffee-table books, that the postal carrier couldn't put them in the mailbox anymore. Eventually, her adult daughter stepped in and took charge of the situation, and the sweepstake participation stopped.

The people who heard that story felt that the daughter did the right thing. The mother was did not realize that she was being deceived, and that these "personal" letters were phony. She was being led in a particular direction that was not in her best interest so that the people sending her the letter would get money from her. It was the best thing for the family that someone stepped in and did something.

If this is true for money, can we not give a greater importance when it comes to protecting one more Jewish soul? In today's society, however, sometimes one's finances are given the highest priority, while one's spiritual life takes a back seat. We need to take stock of our lives and take a real look as to what is important in our lives. It is the spiritual life of our brothers and sisters that is being trampled upon. If they were only aware that they were being deceived from the outset, then perhaps we could prevent one more Jew from falling into the clutches of the nearest CSWJS church.

In the fall of 1999, a television special aimed at converting Jews was aired in several television markets. A number of secular and Jewish publications ran large ads advertising "The Rabbi." And in the ad there was a coupon for a free plaque with the *Birchas HaKohain* printed on it.

When the show came out, the publishers realized that they were duped. People who didn't watch the program sent in for the free plaque, which resulted in them being the victims of more Missionary deception. The show was about a Rabbi who accepts Jesus into his life and the last half of the show contained a Christian Missionary who was speaking to the Jewish audience.

Massive e-mail warnings immediately went out across the planet. Jewish organizations were appalled and wrote letters to the newspapers and to the television stations that seemed to support this kind of programming. But as fast as that word got out, we don't know how many people were taken in by this act, and we don't know how many Jews believed the misquotes and the deceptive media presentation that was before them.

On a positive note, it provided a real-world example to the Jews who were warned that what looks Jewish isn't necessarily *Kosher*.

The highly trained missionary

If you are going to converse with a Missionary, I suggest that you read this entire book first. Any good Christian missionary has memorized many key quotes in his or her bible, as well as a number of modified quotes from our *Tanach*. They are extremely well prepared and well trained at their job. A good missionary can pop in and out of verses so fast, causing it all to flow so nicely, without realizing that you've been dragged down a blind path of mismatched parts. But if you can stop their dance, point out the problems, and keep dragging them back to what you know, then you can remain in charge.

They may ask you questions that you really don't know the answers to. They are not interested in having an actual dialog, but in pushing you blindfolded into the depths of Christianity. Sometimes they seem caring and concerned, but they are playing through a scenario in their head, like a game of chess. At other times they may be talking incessantly, never listening to what you have to say, frustrating you, and forcing you into an emotional state of mind.

Let me illustrate with a sample conversation. The key idea that I want to get across to you is this: for a Christian missionary to convert a Jew, the Jew must allow the Christian missionary to define Judaism for the Jew! The Jew must discard everything that he knows in order to embrace something that is absolutely foreign.

The following dialog, while fictitious, is a compilation of an assortment of conversations that I have had with Christian missionaries.

Jew: Jesus was born of a virgin? There is no such concept in Judaism.

Missionary: And I suppose seas don't part either! G-d can do anything!

Jew: But you are saying that G-d would commit adultery.
Missionary: Mary was still in her father's house, so it wasn't adultery.
Jew: But if Joseph wasn't the father, then Jesus was not from the house of David.
Missionary: The prophets never meant a genetic lineage, but a spiritual one.
Jew: But Jews don't sacrifice people for redemption.
Missionary: Jesus was not a person.
Jew: But Jesus was blemished.
Missionary: Physical blemishes only apply to animals, not to the Christ.
Jew: But Jesus violated Torah again and again!
Missionary: G-d is allowed to violate His own laws.
Jew: But Torah is eternal.
Missionary: G-d realized that man could not fulfill all of the commandments, so He nullified it with the sacrifice of His only son.
Jew: But you end up praying to an intermediary, something with a form.
Missionary: He only took that form on this earth.
Etcetera, Etcetera, Etcetera.

When you see this starting to happen, you need to be on your guard. If you do not feel comfortable dealing with a missionary, then by all means, walk away. If you are well versed in Torah, then you may want to debate them, but once you feel that you are out of your depth, get away from them. This is one of the most important ideas that you must always keep in mind: Don't fake an answer if you don't know it, and don't be intimidated by what you don't know!

These conversations can go on and on. And like the man trying to explain that "dinosaur" doesn't mean the same thing as "lunch", the Jew involved in such a conversation will likely end up just as frustrated. Even though you are the Jew, the Christian missionary will be coming from the point of view that he knows more about Judaism than you do. He is able to quote hacked-up verses out of the *Tanakh* at will, shooting verses at you like a machine gun. The Christian missionary will use his advantage to keep the Jew off balance and then pummel the Jew with quotes taken out of context, and reapplied Jewish meanings, until the Jew falls, or until the Jew stops and walks away from the entire conversation, realizing that it's a complete waste of time.

In the Torah, we read where the first woman, when confronted by the serpent, told it that G-d had told her that if she touched the fruit of the forbidden tree, she would die. The truth was that she was not to eat the fruit. The serpent used this misinformation to persuade her that it was totally safe. She touched the fruit and she did not die, therefore she believed the serpent. In a like manner, if you make believe that you know an answer, when you do not, this same information will be used against you.

These missionaries have been trained to get the upper hand by having you feel intellectually inferior. Push your feelings aside. The person you are dealing with is a pro on manipulating people, and has studied Jewish text for the sole purpose of leading a Jew away from Torah. If you are not up to their challenge, don't feel that you need to participate.

After a few encounters, however, you will discover that much of this debate is futile since a good Christian missionary will continue to redefine your terms as you use them and throw them right back at you.

*[Rabbi Nachman said: A person who knows how to debate the non-believers like Rabbi Idid should reply to their challenge; Otherwise, he should not try to counter.]*⁵

Over the past few years, the desire by Christian missionaries to convert Jews has grown in intensity. Some of these Missionaries may seem very cordial. They tell you that they came from an Orthodox home. They use a lot of *Yiddish* words and Hebrew phrases, but they don't know more than the handful of words that they were taught by their teachers in order to sway the Jew to convert. They say that they still study *Torah* but don't seem to know the name of this week's *parshah*. It's a somewhat-honed routine designed specifically to have a Jew lower his or her guard and be ripe for their deception. And because of this, they specifically target Jews who are lacking in Jewish education, with little, if any, observance. The less that you know, the better prey you become.

*[Beware, lest your heart be seduced and you turn astray and serve deities of others and bow to them.]*⁶

They have tailor-made their Christian service to look more Jewish, and there's an important reason for this.

If a Jew entered a "Messianic Temple" and heard the "Sh'ma" followed by a song praising Jesus, that same Jew would be very uncomfortable. To get around this confusion, these "temples" will use a Hebrew name to refer to Jesus (which has no root connection to the name "Jesus") such as "Yehushua" or they may use the Hebrew word for Messiah (Moshiach) in order to validate such a contradictory use. In reality, "Messianic Jews" are not simply misguided Jews, but they are organized Christian missionaries. More than that, they are committed to evangelize to the same degree as the Evangelist churches in the United States who fund these operations.

In Chicago, a Missionary can go to the Moody Bible Institute and get a BA degree in Jewish Evangelism and learn how to be an effective Missionary. They can go to other Christian Universities and get ordained as Rabbis and Cantors. And even though there is nothing Jewish about them, a Christian Missionary who calls himself a Rabbi is automatically given an air of authority.

There are a number of sects that try to appear Jewish in order to entice the Jew. They are:

- Ariel Ministries
- Chosen People Ministries

⁵ Talmud, *Tractate Sanhedrin*, 38b

⁶ Torah, *Devarim* 11:16

- Friends of Israel
- Hope of Israel
- Jews for Jesus
- Messianic Jewish Alliance of America
- Messianic Jewish Movement International

And while this list is not exhaustive, it should give you an idea that it isn't just a handful of zealots trying to convert Jews, but literally tens of thousands of people. This is not some disorganized bunch of street-corner Christian Bible thumping screamers that we see in our city from time to time. This is something far more insidious.

So don't be fooled. "Messianic Jews" are really a Christian Missionaries. And of the more than 200 "Messianic Temples", approximately 1/5th of them are affiliated with Southern Baptist churches, and even more are associated with the Assemblies of G-d. Is this really a place where a Jew belongs? Even the Mormons, a group that most fundamentalists consider being part of a cultic sect of Christianity, have gotten into the act and have become very problematic in Eretz Israel.

Actually, the way that the CSWJS Missionary feels about Mormons is rather interesting. These Missionaries are offended that some new religion was given birth by a man who taught ideas that are contrary to the Christian Bible. And their claim is that the Book of Mormon is the New-New-Testament, it supplements the original Christian Bible.

I think the non-Jewish term "Karma" fits in here rather nicely.