

“The Chosen – New Inspiration or End-Time Deception”

Drinking from a poisoned well?

Dick Pence – Coordinator, Big Sky Worldview Forum.

“We wanted to create a TV series about the life of Jesus Christ that would appealed to the Evangelical community... we knew we wanted to resonate our mission and vision to a particular person – (25-to-45-year old female, married or unmarried, church goer, volunteer)... (The YouTube Formula Derral Eves, p.149, Mormon and primary promoter)

The series begins with the first miracle of Jesus healing Mary... did the Holy Spirit by ignorance or oversight fail to record this first miracle? Remember, the target audience is female...” (16:34) (Analyses by a former Mormon)

In the above title, I suggest that *The Chosen*, is a poisoned well. Hyperbolic you say? I would respond that most error or deception does not lay on the surface. The above quotation from the producers are an example. When the messengers for a cult come to your door, they don’t present the issues that a Christian apologist would care about. You have to discern the error and do research.

It seems this is in its 3rd session with plans for 8, maybe even going into the book of Acts and targeting a Billion people. There are roughly one billion bible believing Christians on the planet – they are in the early stages of their plans.

The most problematic issues with this work are not what lies on the surface.

There are three fundamental dangers:

- **First, our culture and Postmodernism.** Even much of the church now values **personal experience and emotion more than facts and truth**. That is why CRT has been so successful. This work plays to that issue in spades. BUT, it’s not evident in the presentations YET. The Devil is in the details – the deception is in the foundation or group running this. And discovering that requires some work and discernment.
- Second, if you watch the YouTube [“The Counterfeit Chosen”](#), you realize that these authors have an **agenda to take this forward** far beyond what you are seeing now. **This YouTube is fundamental to your understanding of our concerns.** In the lead-in (at 3:51 minutes) notice what is in the

background of the picture of his YouTuber group. Yes, the Mormon Temple in Hawaii.

- **A Few Good Men?**

- 1) **Derral Eves** – a Mormon, the main leader and visionary. Sold “*The Shepherd*” pilot project to The Chosen LLC for \$100K.
- 2) **Jeffrey Harmon** (and his brothers) –a Mormon marketer with Angel Studios based in Provo, Utah is **exclusive distributor** of The Chosen. Pay attention to the money issues – the crowd finances much of the project with the possibility of making money on their investment.
- 3) **Ricky Ray Butler** and 4) **Earl Seals** – Co-Executive Producers and both Mormons.
- 5) **Dallas Jenkins** – a professing Evangelical Christian who is coming off a failure in Hollywood and looking for a success. Writer and director.
- **Bill Gates**, did you catch his involvement at 12:05 minutes?
- **Luiz Laffey** – Language Creative Supervisor, translating *The Chosen* into many languages. He is a Mormon. (25:16)

Below are the very own words of these producers (14:30 minutes):

“We wanted to create a TV series about the life of Jesus Christ that would appealed to the Evangelical community... we knew we wanted to resonate our mission and vision to a particular person – (25-to-45-year old female, married or unmarried, church goer, volunteer)... (The YouTube Formula Derral Eves, p.149, Mormon and promoter)

The series begins with the first miracle of Jesus healing Mary... did the Holy Spirit by ignorance or oversight fail to record this first miracle? Remember, the target audience is female...” (16:34) (Analyses by a former Mormon)

[Lighthouse Trails](#) authors claim their research on *The Chosen* could have been a book. As coordinator of the [Big Sky Worldview Forum](#), it is my mission to promote orthodox Christianity and warn of error or deception. This series will cause more division. Already, it is difficult to have a rational discussion with some who are proponents. My concern is rooted in years of watching and research on

the cults, the occult, Eastern mysticism, the Emerging Church, and other un-orthodox Christian pretenders.

I encourage you to consider this with an open mind and remember this. None of us are immune from deception and it always starts with the subtle little things. Some of you have watched episodes for hours. **I am asking you to take one hour and consider what you have been watching and perhaps even promoting.**

Listen carefully to what Dallas Jenkins, the primary architect of *The Chosen* has to say:

“We [Evangelical Christians and Mormons] love the same Jesus... I’ll sink or swim on that statement... I’ll go down swinging protecting my friends and brothers and sisters.” – Producer and co-owner Dallas Jenkins in [The \[Counterfeit\] Chosen](#) YouTube at 30:30 minutes.

Some have suggested that Jenkins is just a little careless or doesn’t know theology very well. But he says he has read the Bible many times.

So, this is the writer and director of content that millions of Christians and Pastors should trust to paint the picture of the life of Jesus and his disciples? Really?

Jenkins says “The Chosen was going to be what people thought of when they thought about Jesus and his disciples... and God assured me, He was not going to let me screw this up.” (19minutes)

One of the most difficult pills to swallow is when we have loved and accepted something, someone, or a message and later learn that it is deception. It takes **real humility** to face the fact that “we missed it”, we failed to see the danger of something very popular.

A decade ago, it was the book *The Shack*. It captured the imagination of many Christians. It presented alluring images. Many things were wrong, but the bottom line was that the author embraced Universal Reconciliation – the doctrine that eventually all will be saved and by default, there is no hell. Promotion of this heresy was not written in *red letters*, it was subtle.

In that same period, Rob Bell was all the rage with millions of Christians. Then he went off the rails and wrote *Love Wins* and embraced the idea that all would be

saved, same-sex marriage and much more. Friends tried to tell me that he was “just fine to begin with.” My position was that they missed it – they failed to discern who and what Rob Bell was. Rob Bell will take many to hell with him. Dallas Jenkins may also if only by lying to dear LDS people about who Jesus is.

Many Issues with The Chosen:

The above statement alone – that Mormons worship the same Jesus is dangerous heresy. Honest, prominent LDS leaders do not believe that the Jesus they speak of is the same as the one orthodox Christians do. My friend, the late Jim Spencer was a Mormon elder who came to Christ and spent much of his life ministering to LDS people. He wrote and spoke much of how the LDS leaders actually did not believe the same things about who Jesus is. (See page 7)

A word to my Catholic friends. Read carefully, these authors talk about New Age practices that are not orthodox and not biblical. There are sources we could point you to help you sort this out.

[A Critique of The Chosen Session 1 and 2](#) presents inconsistencies with the Bible. This YouTube dives a little deeper into issues. You may not like the way they approach this but they point out the essence of this deception. They point to outright distortions in the current episodes of *The Chosen*.

Below you will see issues that Lighthouse Trails Research authors have with The Chosen and the booklet they are putting out. I have known these people for 15 years and been in their home. They are Watchmen. Below is their examination of this production in more detail

January 23, 2022 by [Lighthouse Trails Editors](#)

THE CHOSEN Series—10 Critical Concerns is our newest [Lighthouse Trails Booklet](#).

***THE CHOSEN Series—10 Critical Concerns* A Lighthouse Trails Publication**

The incredibly popular series *The Chosen* is being described as a “global phenomenon” and growing “movement” that is creating the groundwork for world “revival.” However, there are some critical concerns about this series and where it is heading. The following are ten of these concerns:

1) *The Chosen* and Its Mormon Influencers

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14)

The Chosen series was initiated and inspired from a partnership between Dallas Jenkins, an evangelical filmmaker, and three Mormon businessmen, Jeffrey and Neal Harmon and Derral Eves after the three men viewed a film written and directed by Jenkins called *The Shepherd*. The Mormon influence on *The Chosen* is considerable: the executive producer is Mormon, the distributor is Mormon, certain episodes were shot on a special Mormon set in Utah, and the crowdfunding and media expertise is provided by Mormons.

In 2017, Dallas Jenkins had reached a self-described career low as a filmmaker when he was given an opportunity to partner with the successful Mormon businessmen who believed they could create a “global phenomenon”¹ with *The Chosen*. With the Mormon church’s long-standing hope and efforts to be viewed by the evangelical church as just another denomination and Jenkin’s unsatisfied desire to be a successful Christian filmmaker, it seemed like the perfect match to help each other out. Thus, the birth of *The Chosen*.²

Those who defend *The Chosen* may say that so far (through Season 2), no Mormon doctrine has been introduced into the series, and therefore, it’s not a problem that Mormons and evangelicals are working together. **If this was a secular film, perhaps that would be a valid argument. But in a film series that is supposed to be depicting the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and His disciples and which claims to complement the Bible’s message,** then 2 Corinthians 6:14 must be applied where believers (who are to be in the light) are instructed not to be unequally yoked with those who are in spiritual darkness.

It is ironic that forty years ago, Christians were flocking to their churches by the tens of thousands to watch a film called *The God Makers*, which warned about Mormonism, most particularly about the false Jesus of Mormonism.³ Today, in stark contrast, countless Christians are enthusiastically watching a film about Jesus that is Mormon-influenced with seemingly little concern or spiritual discernment.

2) Are the Biblical Jesus and the Mormon Jesus the Same?

For if he that cometh preacheth *another Jesus*, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive *another spirit*, which ye have not received, or *another gospel*, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. (2 Corinthians 11:4, emphasis added)

The apostle Paul warns that some will present a “Jesus” to the church who is *not* the Jesus of the Bible but is one who brings a spirit that is *not* the Holy Spirit and a gospel that is *not* the one that can save men’s souls. Paul’s concern is that some members of the church will embrace and “bear with” a false Christ.

The Chosen’s director, co-writer, and chief publicist, Dallas Jenkins, has gone on record stating that the Mormon Jesus is the same as the Bible’s Jesus. In an interview Jenkins did in May of 2020 on a Mormon program, he stated:

I can honestly say . . . one of the top three most fascinating and beautiful things about this project has been **my growing brother and sisterhood with people of the LDS community** that I never would have known otherwise and learning so much about your faith tradition and realizing, gosh, for all the stuff that maybe we don’t see eye to eye on, that all happened, that’s all based on stuff that happened after Jesus was here. The stories of Jesus, we do agree on, and ***we love the same Jesus***. That’s not something that you often hear. . . . *I mean I’ll sink or swim on that statement*, and it’s controversial, and I don’t mind getting criticized at all for the show, and ***I don’t mind being called a blasphemer***. . . . I’ve made it very clear that if I go down, I’m going down swinging protecting *my friends and my brothers and sisters* . . . I don’t deny we have a lot of theological differences, but ***we love the same Jesus***.⁴ (emphasis added)

In the book, *The God Makers*, Ed Decker and Dave Hunt state:

Mormon missionaries claim to be bringing true Christianity to the world. . . . When questioned, Mormons insist that their gospel comes from the Bible and that they have the same God and the same Jesus as Christians. In actual fact, they have a completely different God from what the Bible presents, a different Jesus, and a different gospel. These differences are denied or glossed over by the missionaries, who are often evasive and unwilling to tell the whole truth to a prospective convert for fear of losing him.⁵

Below is a list of some of the “attributes” of the Mormon Jesus:

- Jesus is Lucifer’s brother.
- Jesus is a spirit child conceived through physical means between an exalted man (Heavenly Father) and the virgin Mary.
- Jesus is not eternal and had a beginning (i.e., not part of an eternal Trinity).
- Jesus was not always God but earned his way to godhood just as we will become gods someday.
- The work of the Mormon Jesus was insufficient for man’s salvation, and to complete it, one has to believe in Joseph Smith that he came from God to restore the church (i.e., Smith has a role in salvation).
- Mormon doctrine teaches that without our own righteousness, there is no forgiveness of sins (contrary to Romans 4:5 and many other Bible verses).⁶

These and many other teachings of the Mormon church clearly show that the Mormon Jesus is *not* the same as the Jesus of the Bible. And for Dallas Jenkins to say otherwise helps to legitimize Mormonism as true Christianity and to bring it into the evangelical fold.

In 2021, Dallas Jenkins further defends what he calls his “brothers and sisters” in the Mormon religion when he states:

[The] calling of my life is to make the *authentic* Jesus known to the entire world, and *anyone* who’s going to help me do that *is welcome*.⁷ (emphasis added)

Jenkins’ open invitation to “anyone” who wants to help present his alleged “authentic” Jesus is a prime example of what the apostle Paul was warning about in 2 Corinthians 11:4.

By calling Mormons his brothers and sisters (obviously in a spiritual sense), this implies there is no reason to introduce them to the one eternal God and evangelize them to a true biblical faith.⁸

3) *The Chosen*—“A Definitive Portrayal of God’s People”?

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1)

In a 2021 interview, Dallas Jenkins says the following:

I felt like God was saying like [*The Chosen*] is **going to be the definitive portrayal of my people**, and this is what people are going to think of around the world when they think of my people, and I'm [God] not going to let you screw it up.⁹ In other words, **Jenkins seems to be saying that everything in the series has been approved by God**. And what's more, **God isn't going to let Jenkins mess any of it up**, even though Jenkins went to Mormons to help create, produce, and promote *The Chosen* and develop a "definitive portrayal" of the church, and even though most of the content of *The Chosen* is not found in the Bible (by Jenkins' own admission).

When Dallas Jenkins "felt" he heard God telling him these things, did he test what he heard, as Scripture instructs us, to see whether these things were of God? One of the ways a Christian can "try [test] the spirits," is to compare what he thinks he is being told with Scripture.¹⁰ Would the God of the Bible actually tell Jenkins that his film series is going to be the "definitive portrayal" of His people (the church) when most of the content is not in the Bible and is made up? Wouldn't this put *The Chosen* above *God's Word*? But according to Scripture, God puts His Word even higher than His name!:

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. (Psalm 138:2)

The Mormon church teaches that the Christian church went *completely* apostate and basically became non-existent until the early 1800s when Joseph Smith came on the scene and *restored* the church. However, the biblical Jesus says this about His church: "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Now, was there *some* apostasy that came in after the resurrection? Absolutely (just as the apostle Paul warned about in Acts 20:29). But from the beginning of the church that Jesus and His disciples established, there has always been a remnant of the true church which has consisted of born-again believers in Jesus Christ (God in the flesh). Thus, it is unbiblical and absurd to think that Joseph Smith was used to restore the Christian church. If God really told Dallas Jenkins that *The Chosen* would be the "definitive portrayal" of His

church, it stands to reason that God would not condone Jenkins' turning to Mormons to market *and* influence this "portrayal."

4) "95% of the Content Isn't From the Bible"—Dallas Jenkins

Dallas Jenkins told one interviewer that "95% of the content [of *The Chosen*] isn't from the Bible."¹¹ This means that *The Chosen* is almost completely man's word—not God's Word.

The Chosen writers do not hesitate to add their own ideas and opinions to actual Bible events. For example, Mary Magdalene backsliding is not in the Bible; Matthew portrayed as autistic—not in the Bible; Jesus rehearsing His sermon on the mount—not in the Bible (John 12:49-50; John 17:8). With future episodes yet to be written and future seasons to come, how far afield will the writers of *The Chosen* take their creative liberties to recreate and reimagine God's Word?

Matthew 7:29 says, "For he [Jesus] taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The meaning here for the Greek word "scribes" is *writers*. Dallas Jenkins often says that the fictionalized stories he's created are "plausible." According to *Webster's Dictionary*, the word *plausible* means "superficially fair, reasonable, or valuable but often specious (i.e., having a "false look of truth or genuineness" and "having deceptive attraction or allure")."¹² When Jenkins writes into *The Chosen* script that the apostle Peter had a gambling debt that pressured him to fish overtime on the Sabbath to pay back what he owed, Jenkins suggests that this is "plausible."¹³ But in the Matthew verse, it is clear that Jesus was *not* offering plausible ideas but was "one having authority" (i.e., speaking the truth).

Jenkins continually elevates the practice of "artistic imagination"¹⁴ over literal Scripture. In interviews, **he gives the impression that Scripture, by itself, is flat, boring, and one-dimensional** (contrary to Hebrews 4:12 which says it is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword). The result is a cleverly devised extra-biblical story that is 95% fiction.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables . . . (2 Peter 1:16)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God . . . (2 Corinthians 10:5)

There are serious ramifications that can occur with fictionalizing the Bible. For instance, in Season 1 of *The Chosen*, where Jenkins has Peter fishing on the Sabbath, Jenkins asked Messianic Jew, Rabbi Jason Sobel (one of Jenkin’s advisors), what he thought about adding this in; the Rabbi did *not* believe such a scenario would be *plausible* and that “this would be a huge deal to the point where I don’t even believe it would have ever happened.”¹⁵ Non-believing Jews who watch the series and see this scene could easily believe this is in the New Testament, and knowing that something like this would be nearly impossible in the Jewish culture of the time, it will be further evidence to them (in *their* minds) that the New Testament is a collection of fictitious stories that never could have happened. This is just one example where Jenkins’ “artistic imagination” could backfire and be detrimental to those searching for truth.

Dallas Jenkins appears to believe that reimagining the New Testament on screen will draw people to reading the Bible and, at the same time, draw people to Jesus. However, by presenting 95% fictionalized content, it may create a “Jesus” with a great personality but one with no redeeming power and rather present “another Jesus” where viewers will be entertained but not saved.

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (Romans 1:21)

5) Jonathan Roumie’s Spiritual Affinities and His Influence on Millions

Jonathan Roumie, the actor who plays Jesus in *The Chosen*, is a fervent Catholic with a strong affinity toward the New Age. He is a Knight’s Templar, and in 2020, he was nominated for papal knighthood;¹⁶ he also claims to have had “personal interactions” with a deceased Catholic “saint.” Roumie “credits his Catholic faith as the foundation of his portrayal of Jesus.”¹⁷ And now, because of his newfound celebrity status playing the role of Jesus, Roumie has gained a significant global platform through interviews, live events, YouTube, TV, radio, and social media—a platform he is using to draw his fans and followers to his Catholic beliefs and his New Age propensities.* The following is just a small sampling of Roumie’s involvement with both:

- In a YouTube video that as of this writing has had over half a million views, Roumie testifies that he utilizes the Divine Mercy Chaplet, a meditative

Catholic prayer ritual that was started in 1935 by Saint Faustina. “Mother” Mary Angelica (founder of the popular Catholic station, EWTN, and teacher of the Chaplet) says this about the Chaplet:

“[Saint] Faustina stated that she received the prayer through visions and conversations with Jesus, who made specific promises regarding the recitation of the prayers.”¹⁸

- In an August 2021 statement on his Twitter account, Roumie posted a photo of himself standing next to the tomb of Padre Pio, a Roman Catholic priest and mystic who died in 1968. Roumie stated:

“Visiting Saint Padre Pio, one of the most powerful saints and witnesses to the suffering and the miracles of Christ in the 20th century, as well as one *with whom I’ve had personal interactions*; also the first priest on record to have had the stigmata (physically documented)!”¹⁹ (emphasis added)

*(In an interview with Roumie, a Catholic priest stated: “God bless Dallas for being able to help us [the Catholic Church] to actually spread this message of divine mercy in a way through you [Roumie].”)²⁰

- Jonathan Roumie has also become a popular voice on Hallow, the number one Catholic contemplative meditation, prayer, and sleep app. For those not familiar with contemplative prayer, you may request a free booklet from Lighthouse Trails that explains its New Age roots.²¹
- On June 9, 2019, on Roumie’s Instagram account, Roumie praises and promotes New Age practitioner Russell Brand, a strong proponent of Transcendental Meditation.²² After spending an evening with Brand at a TM presentation, Roumie states, “fantastic night of do-gooding, meditative appreciation, and transcendental inebriation.”²³
- Roumie’s recommended reading list on Amazon includes *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything* by Jesuit priest and New Age sympathizer, James Martin. The book openly teaches the panentheistic New Age doctrine of God “in” everyone and everything as the following quotes from that book illustrate: “God can be found in everything. And everyone too”;²⁴ “We’ll look at how to find God in everything and everything in God”;²⁵ “. . . goal:

finding God in all things . . . encountering God . . . In all things. And in all people.”²⁶

Martin’s book teaches that one can reach a panentheistic state of New Age awareness through meditative exercises such as Lectio Divina, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (the founder of the Jesuits), contemplative prayer, imaginative prayer, and centering prayer. These are all forms of New-Age style meditation under the guise of “Christian meditation.”²⁷ Also referenced in Martin’s book several times is Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (considered the “Father” of the New Age movement). For Roumie to list a book on his recommended reading list that is so outrightly filled with New Age practices and beliefs makes it wholly evident that he is definitely drawn to the New Age.²⁸

Some will say it doesn’t really matter that a devout Catholic who has “interactions” with the dead, participates in and promotes Catholic/New Age mystical prayer practices, and who resonates with numerous New Age-sympathizing public figures is playing Jesus because he is just acting a part. What he does with his personal life can cause no harm. But this is faulty reasoning. It is because of his role in *The Chosen* that he has this newly found platform that has given him a celebrity status. For example, Roumie was listed as one of “10 Catholics Who Restored Our Faith in Humanity in 2021.”²⁹ He is already influencing millions of people.

In a Zoom interview with the *National Catholic Register*, Roumie said that he “hopes to lead people ‘to Christ in some way.’”³⁰ Given what he is promoting and practicing, the Christ he is leading people to is a different Christ and not the biblical Jesus.

6) Dallas Jenkins—*Unequally Yoked or Equally Yoked?*

In August of 2021, Dallas Jenkins joined Jonathan Roumie for a visit with Pope Francis. As the two were sitting together waiting for the meeting, Roumie asked Jenkins what he was thinking at that moment. Jenkins replied:

I am honestly . . . This is a big deal because for me it represents two things that are important. One is the branching out of the show to the world. Another one is the branching out of the show to people in traditions that I wasn’t part of. So it shows that *the walls are coming down*. I’ve never . . . I’ve been a Christian a long

time. . . . I've never seen a project *that united more faith traditions*.³¹ (emphasis added)

While critics have said that Dallas Jenkins is “unequally yoked” in his connections with those of different “faith traditions,” perhaps he is actually “equally yoked.” In other words, if you look at statements like the one above, Jenkins makes it increasingly apparent that he may be more in the camp of those *outside* traditional biblical Christianity than those within it. Even one of the three writers for *The Chosen*, Tyler Thompson, is described by Jenkins as a “Cathelical” (what Jenkins says is “partly Catholic, partly evangelical”) as a 5-hour documentary on YouTube shows.³² It would be difficult for creators of *The Chosen* to deny that the atmosphere they've created is definitely ecumenical. In one YouTube video, where a Catholic interviews Mormon Executive Producer, Derral Eves, *The Chosen* is praised for its “ecumenical” and “inter-religious” appeal.³³

One of the people Jenkins favorably quotes is the panentheistic mystic and Franciscan priest, Richard Rohr, who is a proponent of the New Age concept of the “cosmic christ.”³⁴ In a March 14, 2019 Facebook entry, Jenkins posts an excerpt of Rohr's book, *What Do We Do With the Bible?* saying that the quote was “rocking my world.”³⁵ Jenkins' 2019 Facebook entry by Rohr states:

Just because you use Scripture, even in a God-affirming way, does not mean you're using Scripture for life and love, growth and wisdom—and for the sake of God or others. Many of the worst genocides and atrocities in history have been supported by Scripture quotes in the mouths of selfish and scared people. Excessive God talk and quoting of Scripture are the best cover possible for a narcissistic personality. In fact, sometimes it seems to me that the churches that go on and on about “the greatness of God”—in both their sermons and their music—are often filled with the very groups and individuals that most want that greatness for themselves. I doubt if God needs us to be saying how great God is, as Satan does here with Jesus. Yes, religion is the best thing in the world and also the worst thing in the world—and so is Holy Scripture.³⁶

Rohr tries to attribute genocides and atrocities to the quoting of Scripture;³⁷ but atrocities and genocides are committed by people who do not care to follow Scripture. They are committed when people add to Scripture that which

does *not* belong there and by people who take away from Scripture that which *should* be there. Scripture shines a light on evilness and is the beacon that is a light unto our path. Thus, it reveals the secrets of the heart and exposes darkness.

The derogatory manner in which Rohr speaks of God’s Word (and of those who talk about it and quote it a lot) is typical for Rohr and other popular figures today who resist the truth of the Bible.³⁸ It is disturbing that Dallas Jenkins resonates with and is “rocked” by statements such as Rohr’s, especially in light of how little scriptural content Jenkins uses in *The Chosen*. But it is also disturbing that Christian leaders such as Jack Hibbs³⁹ and Kirk Cameron⁴⁰ are yoking themselves to *The Chosen* by openly promoting the series to their countless followers.

7) Seduction by Fiction

In December of 2021, T. A. McMahon of The Berean Call ministries wrote an article titled “*The Chosen* Fiction.” T. A. studied filmmaking in graduate school, worked for Century Fox studios for several years, then entered a career as a screenwriter in Hollywood prior to becoming a believer. This section is an extract of T. A.’s article; used with permission.

“*The Chosen* Fiction”

Can the Bible be presented through the filmmaking process and stay true to what God’s Word says *about* His Word? This is how the process works. A movie begins with a screenplay. It’s either an original story or a screen adaptation from someone else’s work (such as the Bible). The screenplay or movie script, in addition to presenting the storyline or plot, the characters, and the dialogue, consists of visual descriptions of what is taking place in the movie story. . . .

Changes to the script always take place during filming. . . . Reasons for the changes from the original script are seemingly endless: actors’ egos, budget cuts, weather problems, location problems, the executive producer’s ego, the cameraman’s “inspirational idea” for filming a scene, union problems, stunt failures, the director’s ego, etc. . . .

As with other theatrical endeavors, “biblical” production comes about primarily through the screenwriter’s interpretation of what has been written in Scripture. Add to that the movie-making necessities and changes—things such as a storyline

and dialogue related to the plot that are obviously lacking in the Bible—that, therefore, must be supplemented by the screenwriter in order to create a theatrical production.

Character descriptions are limited, at best, and must be added in order for a casting director to select the actors. Along that line, how does one cast the sinless God/Man, Jesus Christ? The perfect attributes and righteous characteristics of the Son of God could never be displayed by an actor on the screen. When such an idea is incorporated into the script, the end result is a counterfeit Christ, at best. . . . If what a person is taught about Jesus is not true to the Person revealed in the Scriptures, that character is “another Jesus” and a false Christ, no matter how endearing and engaging the actor may be. The same is true regarding all the actors representing biblical characters.

Movies are perhaps the most seductive of all media the world over. I learned as a screenwriter that manipulating an audience’s emotions was the key to a box-office success: make them laugh, make them weep, frighten them, make them cheer, arouse their passions, their lusts. In other words, control their emotions. That power of persuasion through the film medium seduces believers who normally would recognize that they are being snared by a fictional screen character. The comment most often given by those who enjoy *The Chosen* series is, “I really like a lot of the human qualities displayed by *The Chosen’s* Jesus. It’s so easy to relate to him.” . . .

The Chosen’s audience has been conditioned to accept whatever the screenwriter, director, and other creative personnel contribute, with no apparent concern for biblical accuracy. . . . Yet for the greater number of viewers, many of whom have not read the Bible regularly, the images they watch are received as though they are actually in the Bible.

I’ve been told biblical movies are great motivators for people to check the Bible out. Really? And if they do, what happens when they can’t find the movie scenes such as the gritty backstory of Mary Magdalene? **Furthermore, most people would rather watch a highly dramatized Bible story with little concern that it’s fiction than read the actual words of Scripture.**⁴¹

8) “Get Used to Different”?

The Jesus of *The Chosen* tells his disciples and global viewership to “get used to different.”⁴² However, the Bible’s Jesus Christ emphasized to His disciples and followers just the opposite—*beware* of different. The true Jesus warns to beware of a different Christ—a false Christ—who will pretend to be Him (Matthew 24:3-5, 15, 24). God reiterates and magnifies this warning about the coming of a different Christ—Antichrist—in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation.

While *The Chosen*’s creators, directors, and producers may argue that “get used to different” was just a throw-away comment in a particular situation, **why has this statement become the flagship motto for the series?** It’s emblazoned on *Chosen* merchandise from T-shirts and hoodies to ball caps and coffee mugs; and *Chosen* actors and staff often wear “get used to different” T-shirts when being interviewed or making a speech. In January 2022, the owners of the series applied for a U.S. Trademark for this seemingly benign and innocent motto.⁴³ We can find some very interesting insights into the marketing of *The Chosen* by examining a book written by Executive Producer Derral Eves, *The YouTube Formula*. From a section titled “The Ultimate Unicorn: Jesus,” Eves, states:

On a big project like [*The Chosen*], we do a multiday lockdown marketing session, but beforehand, we have several brainstorming sessions to get a good handle on *who the right viewer persona would be*. . . . **we realized that Gen X and millennial women are the biggest spenders online, so our target buyer persona was females aged 25 to 45. We targeted the people who were the community, school, and church volunteers, the I-love-Jesus type.** . . .

Some of our biggest contributors said they donated money because someone had pushed it to them—that someone was usually a person who fit our target persona profile (*our buyer strategy worked!*). In just a few short weeks, we were able to get tens of thousands of Facebook followers.

The essence here is that the more you understand and relate to your audience and *create content* for them, the more **YouTube will connect the dots and feed them their preferred flavor of ice cream, so to speak.** Maybe it’s the unicorn-poop-flavored kind, or *maybe it’s the Jesus kind.* . . .

You have to keep going back to look at your data and reevaluate. The more data that comes in, the more patterns you will see and the better you will be able to *shift your strategy* as needed to make better decisions *about your content.* . . .

When I work with clients, I always have them develop a plan to *build their following before they create more content*. . . . make sure you *create the content specifically for them*. . . .

[L]et me tell you how my partners and I built a loyal following around . . . *The Chosen*, and it has nothing to do with religion. Every client I work with is required to read a book called *Primal Branding* that teaches the fundamentals of *community building*. . . . When . . . Dallas Jenkins and I connected, one of the first things we talked about was *building an audience*. . . .

We needed a passionate social army who could see our vision and our mission and make it their own. . . . As *The Chosen's* community grew, our *Creed* changed based on feedback and interactions with our followers. . . .

“Get used to different” became a catchphrase that viewers really responded to. So it became a Creed. . . . The same thing happened with the phrase, “Binge Jesus.” Our viewers latched onto it, and *we integrated it into our Creed*.⁴⁴ (emphasis added)

As you can read above, a big part of *The Chosen's* popularity can be attributed to adjusting the content to fit into what the “**community**” of targeted viewers want to see. Underlying what on the surface appears to be a project affirmed by God (as is claimed by its creators) is a well-researched, market-driven, and calculated formula to make *The Chosen* successful and “different.”

9) *The Chosen*—The Stage for a Worldwide “Revival” and “The Healing of the World”

God is tilling the soil and sowing seeds for a fertile revival. . . . I think it’s already happening, and I think we are an additional element of that story and of that accomplishment, by God.⁴⁵—Jonathan Roumie

In Season 2, *The Chosen's* Jesus says he is starting a “revolution” and invites everyone to “partner” with him in “the healing of the world.”⁴⁶ **But the true Christ said He did not come to bring revolution or international peace and healing, but rather “division”**—to separate those who desire truth from those who oppose it (Luke 12:51). Similarly, New Age leaders talk about a world-wide revival as well. In both cases—*The Chosen* and the New Age—the goal is to break down barriers and bring all faith traditions together.⁴⁷

In 1898, a book titled *Christianity and Anti-Christianity in Their Final Conflict* by Samuel J. Andrews was released. Andrews was concerned that the church was not being warned about the Bible's account of the last days when the Antichrist would come on the scene and deceive the world. Pastor Andrews described the Bible's warning of "great deception"—not of a world-wide revival:

This summary of the Lord's teaching shows us that anything like a conversion of the world before His return by the preaching of the gospel was not in His thoughts. Had it been, He could not have failed to comfort His mourning disciples, and encourage them to vigorous action by assurances of the success of their mission. But He persistently holds up before them hatred, persecution, death. His life on earth was prophetic of the history of the church; and the greatest manifestation of hostility to her, as to Him, would be at the end.⁴⁸

In former New Age follower Warren Smith's 2020 book *The Titanic and Today's Church*, **he shares important insights about a coming false "revival" and "revolution"**:

Looking for spiritual experiences while hurrying toward "revival" without identifying, confronting, and repenting of the false teachings, false teachers, and spiritual danger in our midst . . . is symptomatic of the same false confidence and complacency the crew of the Titanic exhibited as they underestimated the physical danger in their midst. The Bible describes a great last-days deception, not a great last-days revival. . . . For the church to have revivals without repenting of the sin and deception entrenched in it does not make for a true revival.⁴⁹

10) "Never Underestimate the Enemy"

Jesus Christ warned that in the last days, there would be many false christs. He said, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:4-5). Is it possible that our adversary, the devil, could use a series such as *The Chosen* to deceive many?

In Season 2, Episode 4, a religious zealot, in referring to the Roman official they are seeking to kill, turns to his accomplice and states—"Never underestimate the enemy."⁵⁰ But have Dallas Jenkins, his Mormon partners, his Catholic Jesus, and complacent viewers underestimated the enemy and where this all may be going?

In *Primal Branding*, the book Derral Eves recommends all his clients—including Dallas Jenkins—read, there is a haunting quote at the end of the book. The author states:

In the end, the question that primal branding finally asks is, **do you want to be just another bland service organization or product on the shelf, or do you want to become a necessary and desired *part of the culture*?** As Maureen White, a former vice president at Target, said to me, “I get it. **Don’t just build a church; *create a religion.***”⁵¹ (emphasis added)

Is the revolutionary “movement” and “revival” *The Chosen* is spearheading actually sowing the seeds of a new “religion” for a New Age? Are Dallas Jenkins and his cast and crew unwittingly walking millions of people in the world and the church into a deadly deceptive trap? Would it not be wise for them to take heed to the words quoted in their own production?

Never underestimate the enemy.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. (Amos 8:11)

Endnotes:

1. “*The Chosen*, the Pope and Going Global” (RNS, August 11, 2021, <https://religionnews.com/2021/08/11/the-chosen-the-pope-and-going-global>).
2. *The Chosen Exposed—The Full Documentary* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LI484mywHU>), minute mark (mm): 20:00.
3. Ed Decker and Dave Hunt, *The God Makers* DVD (Jeremiah Films, 1982).
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXliv3Nhlhc&t=796s>, mm: 9:37-10:55.
5. Ed Decker/Dave Hunt, *The God Makers* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1984, Kindle edition), chapter 1, Kindle location: 125-129.

6. In addition to *The God Makers* (1984), there is also *The God Makers II* by Ed Decker and Caryl Matrisciana (Harvest House, 1993) and Walter Martin's *The Maze of Mormonism and Kingdom of the Cults*.
7. *A Candid Conversation with Dallas Jenkins, Director of The Chosen* (Melissa Dougherty, 4/27/21, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Yyq1FPQI>), mm: 67:45-67:55.
8. Read Mike Oppenheimer's booklet, *Did Jesus Identify Himself as God?* (read free online at: <https://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=19180>).
9. *A Candid Conversation with Dallas Jenkins, Director of The Chosen*, op. cit., mm: 14:26-14:37.
10. Read "Neglecting to Test the Spirits—A Tragedy of Enormous Proportions" (<https://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=30277>).
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12. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plausible>.
13. *The Chosen's Biblical Roundtables* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRN3PtFebyo>).
14. <https://eurweb.com/2020/12/04/the-pulse-of-entertainment-season-2-of-the-chosen-begins-filming-in-utah-at-lds-motion-picture-studio>.
15. *The Chosen's Biblical Roundtables*, mm: 16:33.
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17. <https://www.ncregister.com/interview/actor-in-the-chosen-hopes-to-lead-people-to-christ-in-some-way>.
18. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVGEHr_lzbn&t and <https://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=34091>.
19. <https://twitter.com/JonathanRoumie/status/1424372235205283848>.
20. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3zTI7jIZO0&list=RDLVjAF5bxfNmCQ&index=3>.

21. Write to P.O. Box 307, Roseburg, OR. 97470 or e-mail editors@lighthouse Trails.com for the free booklet, or read online free at: <https://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=18192>.
22. <https://www.instagram.com/p/ByhHES6pzul>.
23. Ibid; also see: <https://www.facebook.com/JonathanRoumieOfficial/photos/i-love-how-eloquently-and-magically-my-brother-russellbrand-addressed-the-global/10158031802889597>.
24. James Martin, *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything* (New York, NY: HarperCollins e-books, 2010 epub edition), p. 6.
25. Ibid., p. 27.
26. Ibid., p. 391.
27. See endnote #21.
28. Read Warren B. Smith's testimony, *The Light That Was Dark: From the New Age to Amazing Grace* (Mountain Stream Press, 2nd Ed. 2006).
29. <https://aleteia.org/2021/12/30/10-catholics-who-restored-our-faith-in-humanity-in-2021>.
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33. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxqYx9Li_aM, mm: 26:29, 39:38.
34. <https://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=30756>.
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36. Richard Rohr, *What Do We Do With the Bible?* (Great Britain, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2019 edition), pp. 69-70.
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38. Read <https://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=28301>.
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42. "Get Used to Different"
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKYpA3A-4eY>.
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46. Season 2 trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tZ7cg4D_z8 (also in Season 1, Episode 7).
47. Read "The New Age: 'All the World's Great Spiritual Traditions and Paths'" by Ray Yungen
(<https://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=30719>).
48. Samuel J. Andrews, *Christianity and Anti-Christianity in Their Final Conflict* (Bend, OR: The Berean Call edition, 2017; first published in 1899), p. 17.
49. Warren B. Smith, *The Titanic and Today's Church* (Mountain Stream Press, 2020), p. 125.
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51. Patrick Hanlon, *Primal Branding: Create Belief Systems That Attract Communities* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, Free Press, 2006, Kindle edition), p. 244.

For Further Study:

The Word Like Fire blog: <https://thewordlikefire.wordpress.com>.

Letter to the Editor by a Former

Mormon: <https://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=34418>.

The [Counterfeit] Chosen YouTube

channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lijbpfCQBnA&t=43s>.

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