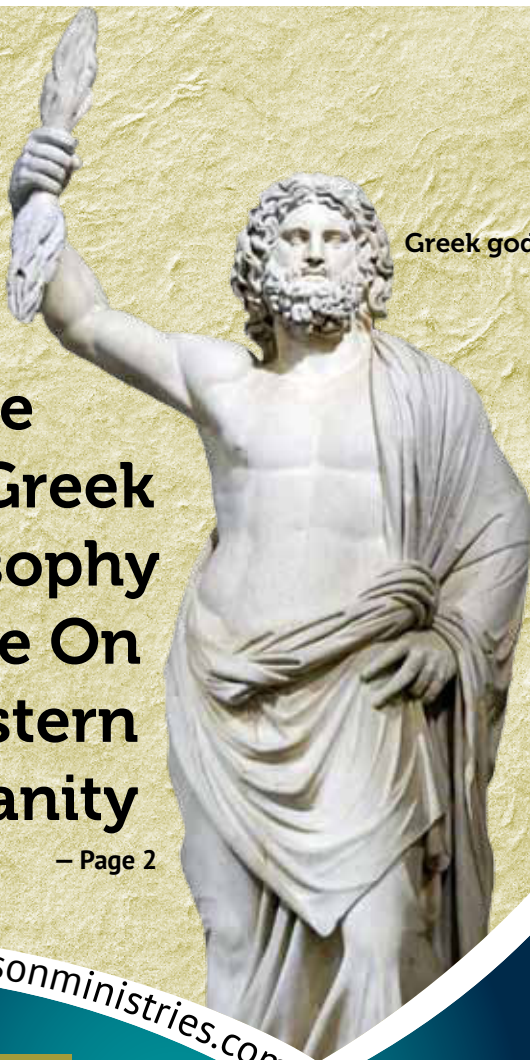


How Much Influence Does Greek Philosophy Have On Western Christianity

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Greek god Zeus



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Magazine

Spring/Summer 2019 Report

by Mark R. Anderson



How much Influence does Greek Philosophy have on Western Christianity?

Part I

(title for a future book)

Answer! A HUGE INFLUENCE! Many in Europe and North America have no idea how much Christianity in the West is influenced by Greek Philosophy. I would say that most Christians in the West are more influenced by Greek Philosophy than they are by the Bible. Let me share why! Firstly a number of years ago a survey was taken amongst Christians in the USA from all different denominational and nondenominational backgrounds. The question was worded something like this. If you were raised as a Christian and were taught to believe things a certain way and later in

life you found out that what you believed did not actually line up with God's Word, would you believe the religious tradition you were raised in or would you believe the Bible? Most Christians taking the survey answered they would rather believe the religious tradition they were raised in than the Word of God. That is the sad state of affairs in much of the Church around the world.

There have been many good and many bad beliefs that have come out Greek Philosophy over the years. I'm one of those who unashamedly believes the Word of God should be our final authority. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work* (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Greek Philosophy was gaining strength during the time of Jesus and the early Church. Leaders like James and John warned us about the negative effects of Greek Philosophy in the Church. By A.D.150 1/3rd of Christians had turned gnostics, bringing a very imbalanced view of God and the Spiritual realm into the Body of Christ. By A.D. 400 Greek Philosophy had established a stronghold in Western Christianity that exists even today.

Religious traditions have made the Word of God of no effect even in the times of Jesus. Jesus speaking to the religious leaders of His time said *so you nullify the [authority of the] word of God [acting as if it did not apply]*

because of your tradition which you have handed down [through the elders]... (Mark 7:13 Amp). Many Christians have no idea how much they are influenced by Greek Philosophy and powerless religious traditions of man. Hebrews 5:14 talking about the importance of being grounded in the Word of God says *But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*. Being grounded in the Word of God helps us discern right from wrong and keeps us from being deceived by false doctrine.

Let's compare these beliefs influenced by Greek Philosophy, that have been passed down to us with the Bible and Jesus' theology. Some of the issues we address in this series are how Greek Philosophy has distorted our perception of God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. How it distorts our views on politics, marriage, sexuality, finances, divine healing, deliverance, divine protection, the authority God gave to mankind and Christ had to restore to us, to mention a few.

How did Greek Philosophy Gain a Stronghold in Western Christianity?

First off lets look at which Western Church Leaders embraced Greek Philosophy and what they brought into Christianity with that belief system. The first and most influential leader by far to introduce Greek Philosophy to Western Christian was Augustine (A.D. 354-430). Augustine was

an extremely intelligent man. He was an important leader of the Roman Catholic Church and European Governments. He was able to communicate Christianity so well that he reached many of the educated elite during his time. Though raised a Christian he walked away from it for a time in his life. During this time he was trained in Neo-platonism, the philosophy of Plotinus. Neo-platonism was the

Being grounded in the Word of God helps us discern right from wrong and keeps us from being deceived by false doctrine.

reworking of Plato's ideas. Plato developed the teaching that the spiritual realm was the real world and natural world was not important and the

two realms were separate. Jesus and the early Church did not teach this but taught both the spiritual/invisible realm and natural/physical realms were integrated as one. So much false doctrine has come about by separating these two realms. We will share many of those with you. Once Augustine became a passionate follower of Christ he brought much of his beliefs and experiences from Greek Philosophy into Christianity which had a huge impact on what most Christians believe to this day.

Greek Philosophy

Others greatly influenced by Augustine were John Calvin, who brought reformed theology or what many call Calvinism today into Christianity. Martin Luther was also greatly influenced by Augustine but also started the reformation when he stated that it was not by works of the law we are justified but the just will live by faith (see Romans 1:17).

A tendency many Christians have is, if a Christian leader is right in some things that they believe, then they are right in everything. Or if a Christian was wrong in some things they believe they are wrong in everything. That is not true! When I share about the negative influence of Greek Philosophy on Western Christians I am not saying everything these leaders did was wrong. These Western Church Leaders brought a lot of good things into Christianity but at the same time taught some religious traditions that were contrary to the scriptures and what Jesus taught and modeled.

When comparing Greek Philosophy to the Bible keep in mind the best theology came from *the Word made flesh and dwelt amongst us* (see John 1:14) Jesus Christ Himself. Let what Jesus taught and modeled be our standard! John 14:9 says Jesus said to him, *“Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the*

Father’? If you want to know what Father God is like and what He believes you do not have to look any further than Jesus Christ, the Son! Anything that contradicts what He taught and modeled needs to be questioned. **Jesus’ theology is the highest form of truth we can embrace!** Jesus said Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth (see John 16:13). Many Christians live their lives as if Christ never went to the cross. You will see this with those that have embraced the influence of Greek Philosophy and mixed it with Christianity! We need to filter all of our theology through Calvary. Learn to live on the right side of the cross! Otherwise we turn Christianity into a powerless religion!

Gnosticism, Gnostics and Agnostics

Many Christians and non-Christians alike have embraced knowingly or unknowingly **Gnosticism and Agnosticism** because of the influence of Greek Philosophy. Lets look at these words because much of Christianity embraces these beliefs. As mentioned earlier **Gnosticism** became a stronghold in Christianity around A.D. 150. What came out this belief is separation of the spiritual and physical realms with all the focus being on the spiritual realm, because Plato taught that the physical realm was immaterial and corrupt. When you divide these two realms you end up with people who are either **Gnostics or Agnostics**. Gnostic is someone whose entire focus is on the Spiritual realm and ignores the physical realm. Their beliefs

become tied to that mindset, just like Augustine. **Agnostic** is someone who is disconnected from the spiritual realm and only focused on the physical realm. They believe there might be a God out there and there might not be a God but that does not matter to them. They are only connected to the natural realm! There is a total disconnect from the spiritual realm. God has no place in their lives as their emphasis is totally what they can see, feel, touch, smell and hear. For many who live this way the attitude is eat, drink and be merry. Live life to the fullest for self, because someday you will die.

These beliefs came about because Greek Philosophy separates the two realms. The Apostle John warned the Church of these destructive beliefs in 1 John 4:1-4 (Amp).

Beloved, do not believe every spirit [speaking through a self-proclaimed prophet]; instead test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets and teachers have gone out into the world. By this you know and recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges and confesses [the fact] that Jesus Christ has [actually] come in the flesh [as a man] is from God [God is its source]; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus [acknowledging that He has come in the flesh, but would deny any of the Son’s true nature] is not of God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and is now already in the world. Little children (believers, dear ones), you are of God and you belong to Him and have [already] overcome them [the agents of the antichrist]; because He who is in you

is greater than he (Satan) who is in the world [of sinful mankind]. Since Greek Philosophy places all the emphasis on the spiritual realm they could not comprehend how God could come from the spiritual realm into the physical realm. They thought because the two realms were separated it would be impossible for this to happen. Why and how could God, a superior being come to a lesser, corrupt, insignificant realm that is not even reality? So for that matter God or Christ (the anointed One) never became a man. This is what **Gnosticism or many Gnostics** believed. So many wrong beliefs have come into Christianity by separating these two realms. More later!

We all know our humble God stripped Himself of His deity and came to earth a man (see Hebrews 2:14). One reason He was able to come to earth a man is because these two realms are not separated but fully integrated as one. The other reason was because He loves us and wanted sons! *Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men* (Phillipians 2:6-7). Here it states He had no problem being God but **made Himself of no reputation with God**. The word **no reputation** in the Greek is the word Kenoo. It means to make void, of none effect, laid aside equality with or the form of God, deprive of force, render vain, useless, of no effect, cause a thing to be seen to be empty, hollow. The

Greek Philosophy

American Standard Bible states in verse 7 **but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.** Jesus laid aside His privileges as being God. The New International Version says *rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.* The word likeness means **an exact duplicate in kind.** In Genesis 1:26 Jesus made us in His image and **likeness an exact duplicate in**

“Jesus did not operate in divine power but from the position of being born here as a man (a son) and being anointed by the Holy Spirit, through the baptism of Holy Spirit.”

kind. We sinned and disobeyed God in the beginning and He came the exact duplicate of a man, in flesh and blood. Greek Philosophy can not believe that happened and tries to reason it out with their own puny little minds. Jesus referred to Himself as the **Son of man** more than He referred to Himself as the Son of God. Jesus did not operate in divine power but from the position of being born here as a man (a son) and being anointed by the Holy Spirit, through the baptism of Holy Spirit.

Zeus or Jesus?

Greek Philosophy has tremendously distorted the perception of God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. For many Christians influenced by Greek Philosophy, perceive God at times, as an angry God full of judgement, ready to judge sin around the world with death and destruction and then on another day a God full of love and compassion. They make God out to be schizophrenic, not knowing which side of God they will have to deal with from day to day. Where does that kind of belief come from? Early church leaders warned against this kind of belief and told Christians don't be deceived. **Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning** (James 1:16-17). Pretty strong words **Do not be deceived!** God is a good God and only does good. Then where did the teaching come that He does good some days and bad the next? Part of it comes from a misconception with the first written book of Bible, the Book of Job. We will address this more in Part II. The other part comes from Augustine! He taught an extreme view of God's sovereignty. Listen to what he said "Nothing happens unless the Omnipotent wills it to happen." Augustine also went on to say a victim "ought not to attribute (his suffering) to the will of men or of angels, or of any created spirit, but rather to His (God's) will." Augustine's "extreme sovereignty" theory took root and became a widespread belief. John Calvin

went on and taught in the 1500s that, "all events are governed by God's secret plan." So according to Augustine and Calvin their perception of God, is that God is the one to blame for bad things that happen on planet earth. Most Western Christians believe that. Insurance companies blame God for destruction.

This doctrine full of unbelief breeds arrogance! What many Christians don't realize when they believe and speak this way is they are walking in a deceptive subtle arrogance that God says he resists (see James 4:6). What is communicated to others is blame to God. They show how they love God and put up with these bad things God supposedly does to them. What it says to others is "All praise to you for being able to endure what this harsh God does to you." What deception! God is not our problem! He is the answer to our problem. As long as Satan can deceive us into to thinking God is our problem, the longer we stay bound.

The problem is they have forgotten basic Christianity 101! God is good and the Devil and demons are bad. Jesus said in John 10:10 Amplified **The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows].** Augustine and Calvin have made our loving Heavenly Father out to do the demon's and Satan's job. **How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for**

God was with Him (Acts 10:38). Very clear Holy Spirit does good healing and Devil does the bad oppressing people with sickness.

Some Christians take the sovereignty of God too far. They assume that whatever happens in life, good or bad, is God's will, because God is sovereign. This reduces Christianity to the same level as Islam or Hinduism, which believe that whatever happens in this life good or bad is Allah's will or the will of the Hindu gods and your karma in life. Karma is the Hindu's version of sowing and reaping, there is no grace involved. Why do so many Christians believe the same and have such a misunderstanding of the sovereignty of God? **Sovereignty simply means having supreme rank, power or authority. I do believe in the sovereignty of God.** What does it mean God is sovereign? He is the ultimate ruler, the head, the top one, the one with the most power and authority! That is the place of God the Father, God the Son Jesus Christ and God the Holy Spirit. But to whom did they give the earth to rule, reign, subdue and, have dominion over? To mankind! Psalm 115:16 says, **The heavens, even the heavens are the Lord's: but the earth hath He given to the children of men.** If there is problems on planet earth don't blame God. It's either mankind or fallen angels or both!

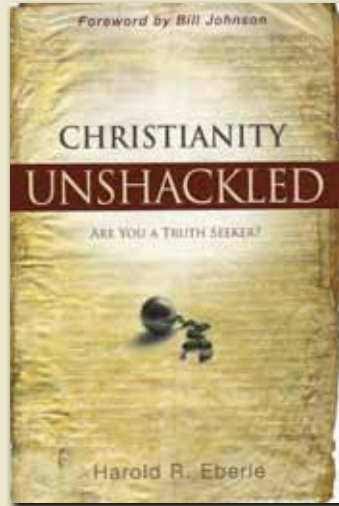
The mixing of Greek Philosophy with Western Christianity has caused most people to perceive

Greek Philosophy

Jesus as Zeus. There is a major difference between the two! Zeus is the god of the sky, lightning and thunder in Greek religion. You don't dare step out line or he will strike you down. Many Christians have grown up thinking that is what God the Father and Jesus are like. Raised a Lutheran, I always perceived God to be like that until I came into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Why? Because of the influence of Greek Philosophy mixed with Western Christianity. Let me spell it out. I do not worship Zeus! I worship Jesus! Here is the difference between the two. Zeus a demon god, uses his hands to form a fist, to strike down and destroy in anger. Jesus, God the Creator, came to earth and rather than forming a fist to strike, he spread out his arms in love and allowed His Creation to hammer nails into His wrists and feet and hung on a cross. All because of His great love which is beyond our comprehension! Romans 2:4 Amplified says *Or do you have no regard for the **wealth of His kindness and tolerance and patience [in withholding His wrath]**? Are you [actually] unaware or ignorant [of the fact] that God's kindness leads you to repentance?* Stay tuned! We will have leave it here for now and pick up with Part II in our Fall 2019 issue of the Good News Magazine. ●

Special Book Offer

I owe thanks to a good friend and mentor in this area of teaching, **Harold Eberle**. His knowledge of the influence of Greek Philosophy and how it



infiltrated Western Christianity is so very helpful in writing and teaching about this subject. You can order Harold's book **"Christianity Unshackled"** from his website www.worldcastministries.com/store/p13/Christianity_Unshackled.html. It gives historical insight to this subject matter. I highly recommend it! It is life changing revelation! Pastor Bill Johnson says this about this book: **Christianity Unshackled is timely and provocative in all the right ways. I read this manuscript with excitement as I can see that God is about to use Harold once again to challenge accepted norms and bring us into a deeper Kingdom experience.**



Why Bhutan?

We are inviting 100 plus pastors and leaders from the persecuted nation of **Bhutan** to spend 2 full days, October 16 -17, 2019 for training. This will be with our India ministry team pouring into them with training and imparting to them. This is a huge expense for our ministry but with eternity in mind we have no choice but to trust God for His provision to conduct this timely conference in order to light a fire in this unreached nation of Bhutan, for Jesus. The timing could not be better than now to conduct this crucial event and distribute our books to them. On September 8th **Pastor Bill Johnson** will be praying over Sharmila and I while in Redding, attending Bethel Church. Pastor Bill said he counts it an honor to pray over us for this strategic October trip.

Why Bhutan? By Missionary Lisa Yow

"Bhutan, a predominately Buddhist nation, has a population of 759,000 people with less than 0.3% professing Christians. Open Doors has classified the small Himalayan kingdom 12th out of 50 countries where religious freedom is violated. Churches as well

as Christian Schools are not permitted to be built nor can you evangelize or print Bibles. Bhutanese who convert to Christianity can lose their citizenship. Current churches have either rented facilities following the guidelines of the government or are underground. Admission across the border is very strict. For a foreigner, it will cost \$250 US per day to enter Bhutan. You are closely monitored and can stay for a very limited time. Because of this, there is inadequate training, mentoring and discipleship within the country. The church suffers with disunity, competition and there is not much focus on evangelism or worship. There is a great need for teaching and training in the areas of knowing our identity and understanding the authority of the believer. Many think that walking in the power of God is only for a select few. We not only want the leaders to understand and have revelation of the Word, but we want them to encounter the Living God! There will be freedom to impart and pour into the lives of leaders and send them back with a fire and passion to reach their nation for Jesus!" ●

Spring/Summer 2019 Trips

From May to July we made two trips to **Germany, India and Switzerland**. Holy Spirit has moved in powerfully during these trips.



A powerful miracle in Berlin from May 2019 trip: Mark had a word of knowledge about a stint but nobody responded. Later an older lady came for prayer who had severe heart problems and often needed a walker or cane to walk outside and could not climb stairs without getting out of breath. Mark asked if she would like a stint from heaven put in and she said yes. We prayed for that. The next day she was completely healed, shared with us that she could walk without aid, could now climb stairs and breathing freely.



Refugee has shoulder completely healed by Jesus - May 11, 2019 Ludwigslust, Germany.

In May we ministered at 7 churches in Germany and also did a conference for refugees.

Most of the churches were in the **Berlin** area. Our last meeting was in **Nastätten, Germany**. Holy Spirit saved the best for last. People from 10 different churches participated in this 3 day training conference. They had spent much time preparing for this training and in prayer for it. They were not disappointed as Holy Spirit showed up and healed many people, as those taught put into practice what they received. A broken shoulder was healed, felt metal disappear, disc prolapse, disc pain, rheumatism, hurting knees all



Beate Borchner fell down stairs and broke shoulder. Metal plate installed with 10 screws. After prayer shoulder healed and felt like plate dissolved - May 18, 2019 Nastätten, Germany.

healed and much more!

Our most recent trip from June 15 to July 9th was fruitful. We ministered in a traditional Bible College and two churches while in India. In the Bible School we saw Holy Spirit come on a few students in a powerful way during the prayer for the Baptism of the Holy and Impartation. We saw many healings as Holy Spirit confirmed the word in the churches!



Fell down stairs, severely injured her ribs on her right side. Cried out to Jesus for healing! Was instantly healed! **India June 23, 2019.**

After finishing in India Sharmila and I traveled to Europe. We conducted meetings in **Basel, Switzerland and Rheinfelden, Germany** on July 7-8th. The hunger for teaching and training was amazing! We ended up selling a record number of my German books for that weekend of ministry! Over 1,700 euros in book sales! Other



Had word of knowledge heart was being healed in certain section of the crowd. Doctors wanted her do an angiography because of servere heart problems and breathing problems. Came to church to be healed! Healed and breathing better after prayer! **India June 23, 2019!**

ministry doors are now opening for this region.

Testimony from **Pastor Mike Griffith Rhiefelden, Germany!** While ministering in his church I shared on THE AUTHORITY GIVEN TO

MANKIND. This church knows how to operate in that authority. Here is a great testimony, to glorify Jesus of what happened after we left.

“Last week a lady from our church had some serious issues with her lungs and they admitted her into the hospital. While she was in the hospital they gave her medicine to thin out her blood. After they gave it to her she started bleeding in her brain. Then they put her in a coma and after a couple of days told the husband that she was brain dead. One of our members was in the airport when she heard and started praying with her in authority and soon was filled with peace and joy to the point that she started singing and telling people she met how much Jesus loved them.

I went with another man to the ICU with the husband because the doctors wanted to have the husband decide to take her off the machines. We prayed and prayed with the husband, with the authority we have been given. We spoke life over her, commanded death to leave and for her to come back. She started twitching and I felt the Holy Spirit say to now watch Him work. So we put worship music on and thanked the Lord.

Three days later she opened her eyes and her body temperature is normal. We are rejoicing and anxious to hear more good news.

This is the second time in the past six months that someone from our church was put into a coma and then the hospital said they were brain dead but God directed us to pray life over them and they lived.” ●

Special Book Offer

If you want to know more about the negative effect of Greek Philosophy on Western Christianity order my book **Overcoming Roadblocks to Healing**.

Foreword by Randy Clark

...Mark exposes the lies that have caused believers to deny that healing exists or that it is not for today. He reveals the influence of Greek thought on our Western Christianity, which has caused a false belief that suffering and illness are the will of God. . . I believe this book should be read by every believer, especially those who need healing. It is a tremendous resource for those who have not walked in the healing ministry, to be aware of roadblocks in people's lives to healing.



Order your copy today of Overcoming Roadblocks to Healing <https://www.markandersonministries.com/product/overcoming-roadblocks-to-healing>

Remaining 2019 Schedule



OCTOBER 5 -18 INDIA

NOVEMBER 15 Sport Studio Engel, charismatic prayer room, **Berlin, Germany**

NOVEMBER 16-17 Diekreative Church **Berlin, Germany**

NOVEMBER 18 OR 21 Joel Haus **Berlin, Germany**

NOVEMBER 19 Gemeindaus 39615 **Schonberg, Germany**

7pm

NOVEMBER 22 -24 Healing Seminar Gebetshaus Salchow, Karower Chaussees 4, 17213 **Malchow, Germany**- Nov 22- 7:30 pm/ 23rd -10am, 3pm. & 7:30pm/24th 10am Registration: Attendance/ accommodation & meals on donation basis. Registration by Nov 15th. Email: gebetshaus.malchow@cidnet.de, Tel.: +49-381-12732587, Mobile: +49-176-62928606.

NOVEMBER 29 -DECEMBER 1 Freie Evangelische Gemeinde **Eutin, Germany** 49-4521/8477092

DECEMBER 8 Hutte David's Bodensee **Tettngang, Germany** 49-754-2989-4950



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