

What Will You Do With Jesus' Tattoo?

Jesus wears a name that says, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Don't mislabel His true identity.

I don't have a tattoo, and I'm not planning to get any at this point in my life. However I've met many young Christians who have bought into the tattoo craze. I've seen hearts, crosses and Scriptures (English, Greek and Hebrew) on wrists, ankles, arms and necks. When I meet a young guy who has "JESUS DIED FOR ME" inscribed on his back, I don't criticize his fashion sense.

Regardless of what you think about tattoos, you can't ignore Revelation 19. I preached from this passage earlier this month when I spoke at a college in Georgia. I reminded the students that one of Jesus' many names is written on His body. John said:

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True ... He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ... And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.'" (v. 11,13,16).

"Today

people pick and choose what they believe about Jesus without accepting His full identity. They craft a god in their own image to meet their needs, then they stick the Jesus label on their idol.”

Purists will argue that this is not a tattoo, and they are probably right since John’s vision is allegorical.

But we must face the truth that is clearly etched in ink in this verse. JESUS IS LORD. Is that how you see Him?

✘ John says Jesus will burst on the scene in all His majesty at the end of history, and all the world will see Him for who He is. Yet today people pick and choose what they believe about Jesus without accepting His full identity. They craft a god in their own image to meet their needs, then they stick the Jesus label on their idol. Do you recognize any of these false versions of Jesus that are popular today?

1. The Rolex Jesus.

Many people worship at the altar of this golden calf. This Jesus promises health, wealth, mansions and luxury cars—but the people who benefit most from his favors are the prosperity preachers who demand that you tithe to them.

2. The Santa Claus

Jesus. He lives far, far away and visits rarely. He makes a list and checks it twice, and his love is based on your performance. If you aren’t too naughty he gives you what you ask for.

3. The Rabbit Foot

Jesus. Some people treat Jesus like a magic charm.

They don't seek to know Him personally, but they figure if they show up at a church service a few times a year, or hang a picture of him on their wall, they'll be lucky when bad things happen to other people.

4. The Oprah Jesus.

He's soft, cuddly and adaptable to your spiritual preferences. He lets you define your own morality. He's like a spiritual bartender—he'll mix Buddhism, Hinduism and hedonism into your favorite New Age cocktail. He invites you to eat, drink and be merry because all religions lead to heaven.

5. The Fightin' Fundie

Jesus. He's always angry, especially at homosexuals, women who work outside the home, and stores that sell liquor on Sundays. At any moment he's ready to unleash an earthquake to destroy America. He doesn't really like other countries either.

6. The Liberal

Mainline Jesus. He's similar to the Oprah Jesus, but more respectable. He doesn't mind if you rewrite the Bible, but he requires that you wear a suit to church and that you sing the first, second and fourth verse of every hymn. And he asks that you keep your music very mellow.

7. The Rock Star

Jesus. This one is hugely popular today. He doesn't care how you live your life during the week, or who you sleep with, but in

church you must be trendy and use lots of hair gel. Songs must be loud (even if they have no content) and sermons must have a lot of movie clips. Words such as “sin” or “holiness” are off-limits because they are just not cool.

8. The Republican

Jesus. When this flag-waving Jesus was transfigured, he appeared with George Washington and Ronald Reagan. He’s willing to bend the rules and let certain conservative politicians and pundits into heaven (especially Mormons) if they promise to keep taxes low and guns available.

9. The Democratic

Jesus. He rides on a donkey and dispenses good will, health care and stimulus money to all who are weary and heavy-laden. He steals from the rich, gives to the poor and creates jobs for people who are too lazy to work. He’s fine if you talk about God in speeches, as long as you don’t mention sin or offend a special interest group.

There are many other false versions of Jesus out there, but I think you catch my drift. We need to know, worship and proclaim the real Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible whose robe was dipped in blood because He died for all of us. His name is clearly legible: KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. Let’s tell everybody about Him now so they won’t be caught by surprise when this life is over.

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