



*Exposing the lies  
our culture tells us.*

## Lie #1: Christmas is for Giving

### INTRODUCTION – When Culture Becomes A Cult

If a particular church or religious organization claims to be THE only way God is working on the planet, we call it a CULT. If it makes being a part of any other church or denomination or spiritual organization unthinkable, creating complete dependency on its teachings to know the truth, we call that BRAINWASHING. If a system of rules, rituals, and routines becomes sacrosanct for salvation, we say it is a RELIGION (in the worst sense of the word). If government invades every area of our lives, telling us that it is THE voice of authority for the citizens in every sector of our multidimensional lives, we call that TOTALITARIANISM (TYRANNY). If that same government generates loyalty through a barrage of one-sided advertising, creating complete dependency on its teachings to know the truth, we call that PROPAGANDA. But when the world of commerce and consumerism becomes everything, when the ability to make money and acquire purchases invades every area, every aspect, and every sector of our lives and coerces our thinking so that we could not envision life any other way, we call that GOOD CAPITALISM.

And so we find ourselves immersed in a culture that acts like a cult.  
And in this series we want to offer an urgent message – DON'T DRINK THE KOOL-AID.

### Exposing The Lie

#### CAPITALISM'S PROBLEM:

- Our capitalist market needs ever-increasing spending in order to thrive.
- People in the wealthy West have the money to spend, but have few needs.
- People in the rest of the world have many needs, but little money to spend.

#### CAPITALISM'S SOLUTION:

- Find ways to create need among the wealthy Westerners.

### STEPS TO A TOTALITARIAN CAPITALISM...

**Step 1** – Create pseudo-needs (faux needs) through an infantilizing ethos.

**Step 2** – Make advertising omnipresent.

**Step 3** – Link spending with all activities, including holidays.

**Step 4** – Make shopping its own self-rationalizing activity.

### Detoxifying With Truth

1. Commit to the challenge of maturity.

1 Corinthians 13:11

2. Turn the impulse to buy into the commitment to relate (to God and others).

Hebrews 13:5

3. Invest your energies into giving the right gifts.

Luke 6:37-38

Luke 16:1-15

[www.mcc.org](http://www.mcc.org)

### CONCLUSION – What Are You Giving For Christmas?

Luke 6:37-38

### HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

#### WARMING UP...

1. While reviewing this week's message (taking your time with any specific texts that are points of interest for your group), talk about what most intrigued, surprised, perplexed, encouraged, frustrated or challenged you.

#### LOOK TO THE BOOK...

2. Read about the awkward dinner party in **Luke 11:37-54**. A) What verse or idea stands out to you the most? Why? B) The washing that Jesus avoided was not one of cleanliness but one of religious tradition (also see **Mark 7:1-8**). Was Jesus being unnecessarily rude by not participating in the tradition of his hosts? Why not participate in their tradition out of courtesy? C) What does Jesus say will make the Pharisees all clean? How is this different than what some Christians might expect Jesus to say? D) In what ways could what Jesus says about the experts in the Law in **verses 46 and 52** be said about some religious leaders today? E) Jesus refuses to drink the Kool-Aid of religious tradition or meticulous Law keeping. Does this mean we should trash our church (and especially Christmas) traditions and/or break biblical laws whenever possible? Talk about how we should apply this teaching to our lives today.

#### SO WHAT?...

3. Talk about specific ideas of ways you plan to reject the cult of culture this Christmas.

**Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, December 7, 2008**