

/We will now begin the first lecture on Comparative Religion.

/Jesus told us that there would be many heresies in the last days. /From among the signs of the last days, Jesus first told us to “be careful of false christs.”

/Today, there are countless heresies. /There are over 80 heretic groups in China, /and there are over a hundred heretic groups in South Korea. /Some heresies came from America.

/First, we will discuss the **definition of heresies**. /“Heresy” in the New Testament Bible is “hiresis” in Greek. /This comes out nine times in the New Testament Bible. /It means, “choice, the opinion chosen, the party or sect holding the opinion.” /These words are used in the Bible. /2 Peter 2:1 /Acts 5:17 /1 Corinthians 11:9 /Galatians 5:20.

/In the early church, heresies were known as doctrinal discordances. /They were known to go against the basic doctrine of Christianity. /Generally, heretics refer to people who stress other doctrines and other assertions.

/Heretics are groups that deny the confession of faith, which has been normatively authorized in Christ. /For example, heretics are called false prophets. /Matthew 24:11 /Verse 24. /They refer to teachers who incorrectly teach the Bible.

/Second, they are called false christs. /Matthew 24:4-5 /2 Corinthians 11:4 /They refer to those who call themselves Christ although they are not.

/Third, the antichrist. /The antichrist refers to groups or individuals who attack Jesus. /1 John 2:18-23 /1 John 4:1-6 /2 John 1:7 /For example, the “eighth king” is the antichrist. /Revelation 11:7 /Revelation 17:11.

/Next, they are called the man of lawlessness. /2 Thessalonians 2:1-9. /Next, the term “pseudo-” is used. /This implies that the appearance seems to be somewhat genuine, but the essence is entirely different. /It means that the inside is different from the outside.

/Any worship of gods other than God is heretical. /Exodus 20:3. /What did Protestant reformers call heresies? /The reformers called heresies unbiblical doctrines. /Non-Christian doctrines and churches were called heresies.

/The Bible uses other expressions for heresies. /First, false prophets. /Matthew 7:15. /Second, savage wolves. /Acts 20:29. /Third, the way of Balaam. /2 Peter 2:15. /Fourth, the way of Cain. /Jude 1:11. /Fifth, the antichrist. /1 John 2:18.

/Sixth, those who claim to be apostles. /Revelation 2:2 /Who calls herself a prophet. /Revelation 2:20. /Those who are of the synagogue of Satan. /Revelation 3:9. /What attitudes must believers have toward heretics? /We must have nothing to do with them. /Titus 3:10. /We must not let them into our houses. /2 John 1:10.

/We must stay away from those who cause divisions. /Romans 16:17. /We must watch out that no one deceives us. /Mark 13:5. /We must stay away from incorrect teachings. /1 Timothy 6:3-5. /We must test them and find them to be false. /Revelation 2:2.

/Let's then discuss the **characteristics of heretics**. /Heretics hide their identities. /They are wolves that wear sheep's clothing and secretly enter the church. /They claim that they can help individuals experience spiritual things. /Today, they claim that they have received direct revelations from God, and deceive people.

/They claim that they are the "returned Jesus" or the "servant of the last days," and make the founder of a religious sect to be divine. /They escape from reality and leave society to go up into the mountains in groups to practice their faith. /They isolate themselves from society.

/They deny traditional Christianity and show hostility towards Christianity. /They entice others with greed. /They entice people with material greed, sexual desires, and selfish desires. /Jude 1:4. /They twist and distort the Bible. /2 Peter 3:3-4.

/They have an authoritarian leader. /Some among them claim to be Jesus or Christ. /They assert that there is another revelation other than the Bible. /Their doctrines change constantly according to the changing beliefs of their religious leader.

/For example, they may claim that the world will come to an end in a specific year, month, and day, but they are proven wrong. Then the religious leader changes his claims and prophesies again.

/They deny the revelation of the Bible. /They deny the authority of God. /They incorrectly use terms used in the Bible. /They incorrectly use the Bible. /They deny the human and divine natures of Jesus Christ.

/They deny the doctrine of the Trinity. /Sometimes they believe in monolatry. /They do not believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

/They believe in modalism. /Modalism is the belief that the Father is the Son, and that the Son of the Holy Spirit. /Some believe in tritheism, which is the belief that there are three gods.

/We believe in the Trinity God. /There are three persons, /and we believe in God who is one being. /The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one being.

/Heretics are morally corrupted. /They are unethical, /and perverse. /They tell people to quit school /and stop taking care of their families, /and they destroy families. /They steal the believers' inheritances. /Anyone who gives himself up to heretics will be ruined.

/Heretics criticize and deny traditional Christianity and the existing church. /Heretics claim that one is saved only when they enter their religious sect. /Heretics use whatever

tactics and violence they can to achieve their goals.

/Next, there is false mysticism. /They believe in divineness and visions, /claim that they have mysterious experiences, /and that they went to heaven and came back.

/Another characteristic of heretics is that they claim, “We are saved by acts.” /“We are saved through circumcision.” /“We are saved through baptism.” /“We are saved only when we observe the Passover.” /Anyone who says these is a heretic.

/How are we saved? /“We are saved through faith in Jesus Christ.” /However, heretics attempt to receive salvation through their actions. /This has been the **characteristics of heretics**.

/In the last days, believers will chase after greed by making selfish desires their master. /2 Timothy 4:3. /Those who do not receive the love of the truth will be deceived. /2 Thessalonians 2:9-12. /We must stay away from heretics and false teachers. /We must not enter the houses of heretics. /We must not greet them. /2 John 1:10.

/There are many warnings of heretics in the Bible. /Acts 20:29 /Galatians 1:6 /Colossians 2:8 /1 Timothy 1:3 /1 Timothy 4:1 /2 Timothy 3:8. /There are more verses about heretics. /Please refer to the textbook on “Comparative Religion” on the right corner of the school homepage.

/What are some names of **true churches in Christianity**? /The Puritan Church. /The Protestant Church. /There are also **true denominations**. /For example, one would be the Presbyterian Church. /The Presbyterian Church follows the beliefs of Calvinism. /Another true denomination is the Methodist Church.

/Another true denomination is the Evangelical Holiness Church. /Also, the Baptist Convention. /Some **true beliefs** are those of reformism, /legitimism, /conservatism, /evangelism, /and fundamentalism. /These are good and proper systems of beliefs.

/Proper systems confess that Jesus is Savior. /We also confess our faith through the Apostles’ Creed. /We believe that the sixty-six books of the Bible are inerrant. /We believe that the Bible is God’s Word.

/The Westminster Confession of Faith is our confession of faith. /This was enacted in England in 1640. /The confession of faith was enacted in England. /The Larger and Shorter Catechisms were also formed at that time. /We must properly build up the Church on the true confession of faith.

/Now, let’s look at **heretics throughout history**. /We will briefly look into heretics in Church history.

/There was the Nicene era in Church history. /The first group of heretics was the Nazarenes. /They were Jewish believers who accepted Christian doctrines.

/They claimed that one needed to observe the laws even while believing in Jesus. /They said that one was saved by observing the laws. /They claimed that one is saved not only through faith in Jesus, but also by keeping the laws.

/They only read the Gospel of Matthew written in Hebrew. /They perform circumcision, /believe in salvation through baptism, /and keep Saturdays as the Sabbath.

/Next, there were the Ebionites during the Nicene era. /What is a characteristic of the Ebionites? /They are a group of Jewish Christians. /They translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek. /Symmachus translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek.

/The Ebionites only acknowledge twelve of the apostles, and they do not acknowledge the apostle Paul as an apostle. /They only use the Gospel of Matthew. /They use Peter's book of preachings. /They claim that Jesus was an ordinary man.

/They claim that God gave Jesus the right to be Messiah because Jesus was superior to others in morals, character, and skills when He lived on this earth. /They claim that Jesus originally had sins. /They claim that Jesus was an ordinary man.

/They say, "God later gave Jesus the right to be Messiah." This is an incorrect claim. /They are syncretic Jews. /They insist on observing circumcision and the Sabbath. /They are heretics that deny that Jesus was born of a virgin.

/Next, there were the Elkesaites. /This means, "hidden power." /This is a mixed religion of Jewish ideas and Christian ideas. /The Elkesaites throw out the Pauline epistles and only acknowledge parts of the New Testament.

/They are syncretic, and they flourished to the east of the Dead Sea. /Later, Islam surfaced based on the beliefs of this heretic group. /This religious group says that Elkesai is the greatest prophet. /They also claim that Christ was just a man. /They also claim that the Holy Spirit is female.

/Next, Gnosticism. /This means, "knowledge." /This is dualistic. /Such worldly philosophies entered Christianity.

/They were influenced by the philosophy of Plato of Greek. /They were influenced by mysticism of the Orient. /They claim that they have true knowledge, /that they have noble spirits, /and that all other human beings have inferior bodies.

/The claim they consider most significant is that "materials are evil." /This is dualism. /They believe that the body of Christ was merely a vision. /They do not believe that Christ came to this earth in the same physical body that we have.

/Later, this idea disappeared around the 5th and 6th centuries. /However, this idea became the root of today's New Age ideologies. /Their god is a completely transcendental

being. /They also claim that this god did not create the universe.

/They say that there was once a great god, and gods of a lower class came out from under him. /This is a wrong idea that believes that one is saved through knowledge.

/Next, there were the Marcionites. /Marcion was born in A.D. 84 and died in A.D. 160. /He lived in Pontus. /He was a wealthy shipowner and merchant.

/He was excommunicated in A.D. 144. /Marcion also believed in extreme dualism. /He claimed that God of the Old Testament and God of the New Testament were different. /He saw God of the Old and New Testaments differently. /Later, the Marcionites were assimilated into Manichaeism and declined.

/Next, Manichaeism. /Mani was born in A.D. 215 and died in A.D. 277. /He was born in Parthian Babylonia. /He was inspired by the gnostic church. /Manichaeism is syncretic.

/At the time, there was a religion in Persia called Zoroastrianism. /He brought forth dualism, /combined gnosticism with Marcionism, /and also combined Buddhism with Christianity.

/Manichaeism combined Zoroastrianism, Gnosticism, and Marcionism. /It was a mixture of the elements of Marcionism, /Buddhism, /and Christianity. /They claimed that the world was a struggle between light and darkness.

/Mani said that he was the last successor to Adam, Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus. /He claimed that Christ was the representative of light, and Satan was the representative of darkness.

/He also claimed that the physical body of Christ was but a vision. /Followers of Manichaeism went to China and imitated Buddhists.

/Next, there was Montanism. /Montanus was a mystic. /He was originally a priest of Esoteric Buddhism. /Montanus claimed that he himself was the descended God.

/Montanists claim that they are special people /and insist on strict asceticism. /They give up marriage, /fast, /and stress virginity. /Montanism can be seen as the start of Shavuoth.

/Next, heretics regarding **Trinitarianism**. /First, unitarianism. /Unitarianism stemmed from Paul of Samosata. /Unitarianism claims that Christ is human and the power of God deliberately dwelled in Him.

/This means that God is in Christ. /The power of God purposely entered Christ. /Christ was a human beings who became God. /They claim that Christ was human, but He became God.

/Second, adoptionism. /This came from the claims of Theodotus. /He claimed that Jesus

received the Spirit of God through a special way when He was baptized. /He claimed that Jesus was nothing more than a mere human being.

/Hence, Jesus is called the adopted Son. /They claim that Jesus was essentially nothing more than an adopted Son. /They claim that Jesus was a human being. /He was simply a human being who received the power of God.

/Next, Sabellianism. /Sabellius claimed in A.D. 217-220 that /the Trinity God was three modes of God (modalism). /The Father God personally incarnated in Christ, /and the Father God received sufferings alongside Christ.

/God became Christ and Christ became God. /This is the claim that God is one being, and Christ is the same person as God but just in a different model. /They claim that the Father God and Christ are different only in their appearance.

/Next, Arianism. /Arius lived from A.D. 280-336. /He claimed that God the Son was of a lower rank than God the Father. /He claimed that only God the Father is eternal. /Christ is the first of all creation.

/Arianism demands worship towards the created Christ. /They say that Christ was made before God. /Hence, they demand worship towards Jesus who became a created being. /Arianism was condemned to be heretic by the Council of Nicaea.

/They believe that God the Father and God the Son have similar divine natures. /However, we believe that Jesus has the same divine nature as God the Father.

/They claim that the divine nature of Jesus is similar to the divine nature of God the Father. /However, we believe that the divine natures of God the Father and God the Son are the same. /There was also Athanasius who opposed Arius. /Athanasius was a follower of orthodoxy. /Athanasius had the same beliefs as us.

/Our Jesus is equal with God in divine nature. /Jesus also had the same body as us in human nature. /However, Jesus did not have any sins. /The divine nature and human nature of Jesus united to become one person.

/Next, there are heretics concerning Christology. /One of them is Nestorius. /His beliefs are known as Nestorianism in China.

/His view was that “Incarnation is the moral dwelling of the logos in the human Jesus.” /Nestorius was banished as a heretic in A.D. 428. /Nestorius claimed that the human Christ was not God.

/Christ was not worshipped because Jesus was God, /but was worshipped because God was in Jesus. /They claimed that Jesus is not God.

/They said that God was simply in Jesus. /They claimed that Jesus was a divine human

being. /They do not acknowledge Jesus as the Lord of redemption. /They think of Jesus as a human Jesus.

/They claim that God was in the human Christ. /They were banished as a heretic group at the Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431. /They were condemned as a heretic group in A.D. 451 by the Council of Chalcedon and were banished thereafter.

/Next, Pelagianism. /Pelagius lived from A.D. 360-420. /He was a monk in England. /His doctrines differed from those of Augustine. /He had a Hellenistic theology.

/He said that the sin of Adam applied only to Adam himself. /He claimed that Adam's sin did not apply to all of mankind. /Pelagianism denies original sin. /They claim that God gives grace, but man can reject God's grace by his free will.

/This means that humans can reject God's grace. /This is the claim of Pelagianism. /This idea resulted in the ideas of today's modern liberalism.

/Here we will conclude the first lecture on Comparative Religion. /Thank you.