

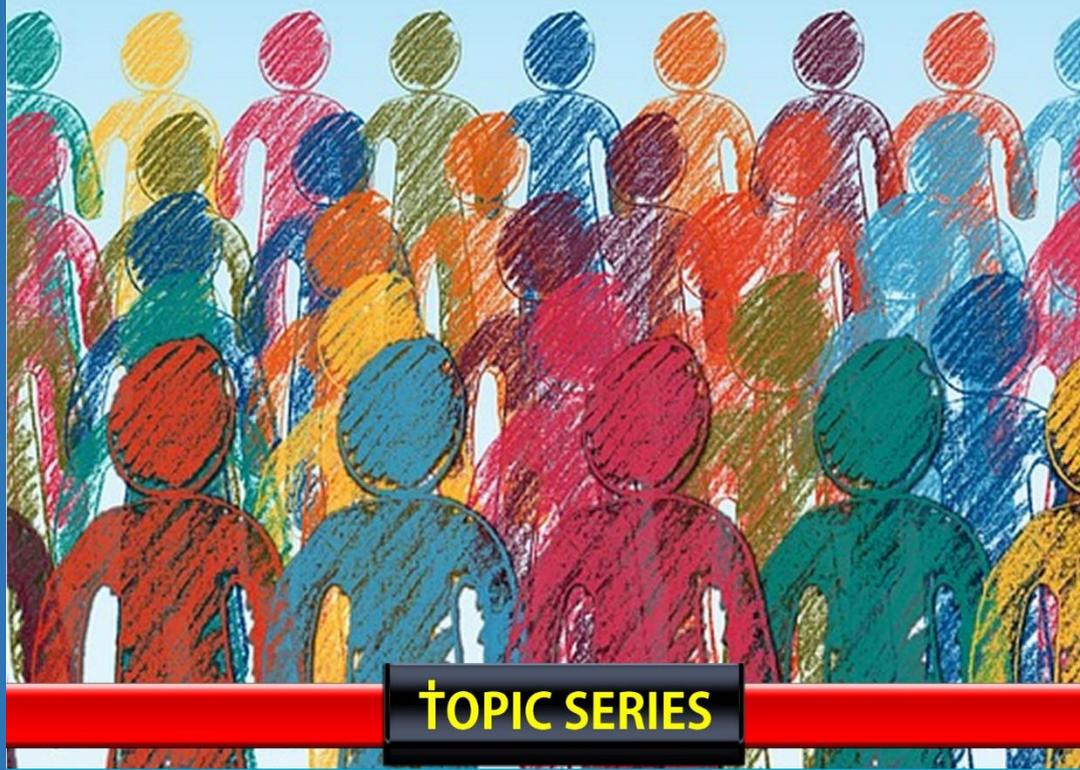


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FALSE TEACHINGS

VOLUME 2

THE CULTURE OF **CULTS**



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FALSE TEACHINGS

VOLUME TWO

THE CULTURE OF CULTS

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FALSE TEACHINGS – Volume 2

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INTRODUCTION

Cults are one of the most spiritually dangerous groups that are on the rise today. Many cults will use variations of brainwashing and mind control techniques in order to control and subdue their followers.

THE CULTURE OF CULTS aims to equip readers with a basic and brief understanding of how cults think and operate.

What Is A Cult?

Cults are everywhere and they exist all over the world. A cult can exist in different forms. For example there are religious cults, political cults, sex cults, new age cults and many more.

Some groups are extreme and abusive cults, while others are very subtle and deceptive cults. Some cults are widely accepted and mainstream, while other cults prefer to be isolated from the general public.

However, the most important thing to understand about most cults is that there is a major element or culture of lying, deception, manipulation and control. Cult leaders or the group leaders will excessively or subtly deceive, brainwash and control their members.

The context of this article is specifically related to defining religious cults that are of a pseudo-Christian nature.

Since there is an overwhelming number of religious groups existing all over the world, it's important for people to know and understand the difference between a legitimate Christian group and a religious or pseudo-Christian cult.

WHAT IS A CULT?

What is a cult? In the Christian context, a cult is a religious group that either subtly or blatantly denies or distorts one or more of the **fundamentals or essentials of Biblical doctrine**. Most religious cults are also known for exercising manipulative mind control techniques in order to brainwash or control the lives of their followers. Therefore when understanding the characteristics of a cult, it is important to understand that a religious cult has 2 natures that govern how the group operates.

The two natures / aspects of a cult are the following:

1. The Doctrines / Beliefs of the Cult
2. The Group Dynamics of the Cult

A cult's doctrines / beliefs and its resulting group dynamics are usually interrelated as these natures are like 2 sides of the same coin.

1. THE DOCTRINES / BELIEFS OF THE CULT

Every cult either denies or distorts the fundamentals or essentials of Biblical doctrine. For example, a cult may deny the deity of Jesus Christ. Some cults may deny salvation through faith alone and instead teach a works-based salvation. Other cults may distort the Biblical view of grace and instead they will teach a perverted type of greater grace / hyper-grace which is sometimes called antinomianism.

At their core, the doctrines of these groups creates a false

concept of God and causes the followers to believe in a false gospel and to follow after a false christ (**2 Corinthians 11:4**). Furthermore, the doctrines of a cult can lead to false conversions or false believers (**Matthew 7:21-23**).

In **2 Corinthians 11:4**, Paul says: *For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.*

In **Matthew 7:21-23**, Jesus says: *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”*

Therefore there are many religious cults which claim to be Christian and may teach from the Bible, but yet because of their false doctrines and beliefs, these groups have created false believers who believe in their false gospels.

Therefore in the Christian context, a cult denies or distorts one or more of the fundamentals of the Christian faith by promoting the group’s own false doctrines and religious traditions above the truth of the Bible. Such groups are likely to prevent the genuine conversion of their followers. The nature of a cult is such that if the

false doctrines of the group are believed, it will cause many of their followers to remain unsaved or to be under the deception that they are saved when the Biblical reality is that the members are not truly born again. Hence Jesus emphasizing that not everyone who says “Lord, Lord” will enter the kingdom of heaven (**Matthew 7:21-23**).

Examples of mainstream or well-known religious groups that claim to be Christian but are actually cults are **Jehovah’s Witnesses**, the **Mormons (Latter Day Saints)** or the **Moonies**.

These religious groups and many more are known for preaching a different gospel, a different Jesus and they are under the influence of a different spirit (**2 Corinthians 11:4**).

Their teachings deny the **essentials of the Christian faith** and put emphasis on the doctrines and traditions of the group rather than on the true interpretation of the Bible.

However, besides well-known groups such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses or Mormons, there has been a fast-paced growth for several decades of a different breed of pseudo-Christian groups that teach a variety of false gospels and heretic doctrines. For example, such false gospels / doctrines include the prosperity gospel, seed-faith teachings, hyper-grace / antinomianism, spiritual covering doctrines and word of faith theology.

Many of these groups, whose leaders have become

extremely wealthy due to their false teachings, have either become cultic in nature or have over the years evolved into full-blown cults that have distorted the true gospel of Jesus Christ and Biblical Christianity.

In **2 Timothy 3:13** Paul speaks of *evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

In **Matthew 7:15** Jesus said that we should “*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.*”

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 says *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.*

Ultimately a group becomes a cult simply because it denies or distorts the essentials of the Christian faith and the group’s false doctrines & traditions are promoted by its false teachers above the truth of God’s word.

2. THE GROUP DYNAMICS OF THE CULT

Group dynamics refers to the interactions or system of behaviours that occur within a cult and influences the attitudes and behaviours of the followers / members.

The Bible says that “*bad company ruins good morals*” (**1 Corinthians 15:33**) and therefore the consequence of being a member of a cult will psychologically and spiritually influence the members in a negative and

ungodly way. Members may become morally, spiritually and also psychologically corrupted because of the social system and cultic methods that may exist within the group.

In most cases the cult leader is a **narcissist** who seeks to intimately control the lives and decisions of his followers for his own personal gain. Therefore control and dominance is a very big thing within a cult.

Some of the group behaviours or characteristics of most cults are as follows:

A) *The Cult Leader is a "little christ"* – In a cult, the focus shifts to a man and not to the Biblical Christ. In a cult, the cult leader can be a dead person. For example in groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons and many other groups, the heretical teachings of the founders of these groups are still believed and practiced by the members long after the founders / leaders have died. Therefore the founder of the cult is extremely revered and adored by the cult members as if he/she were a type of deity. The founder can be either dead or alive, but his heretical teachings will remain as foundational doctrine to the members and to the overall function of the group.

Followers perceive their leader as a "spiritual father", "God's man", "God's anointed", "God's apostle", "God's prophet", "God's special messenger" or a type of "christ".

If an outsider were to speak or comment negatively about the group's leader or even the cult itself, the members are likely to get very upset and even vindictive for being against their leader or the group. Therefore the cult leader, whether dead or alive, is revered by the members as one who stands as a human deity for the group – or as spiritual mediator on behalf of his group. (*read 12 Characteristics of a Cult Leader, Page 20*).

B) *Authoritarian Leadership* – A cult leader will teach and enforce false doctrines such as **spiritual covering theology** or use various submission and fear techniques to influence their members to submit to them and their control. A culture of legalism is also introduced in the group.

The leader demands total submission and unquestioned obedience from members even when there is a conflict with the scriptures. The leader claims to be a “spiritual covering” or a “spiritual father” over his members. The “touch not my anointed” phrase is used to subdue members. Therefore the leader can never be challenged; he is always right and no one should correct, judge or criticize him or else they will encounter curses or the wrath of God for “touching the anointed”.

In the authoritarian system of a cult the members are always under pressure to please the group leader and to gain the leader's approval rather than God. The

members also fear to disappoint the leader rather than God because in the cultic system the leader and God are perceived to be one. As a result the members fear opposing or criticizing their leader even in situations where it is Biblically justified because they are falsely warned of inviting a curse from God if they disagree with their leader. (***read Who Is Your Spiritual Covering? Is It Biblical?, Page 31***)

- C) *Group Over Individual* – The group’s goals, objectives and purpose supersede the individual’s needs, concerns and aspirations. Therefore the group always comes first. To say “no” to the group is to say “no” to God or to the group’s leader, which is considered to be unacceptable. Members can be persuaded to deny or forsake their friends, family and even job for the sake of the group agenda or group goals. Members lose or shed their original personality / individuality and take on a cultic personality or the personality of the group or the group leader. Therefore there is always a psychological and emotional pressure by individual members to please the group and its leader. Fear, guilt, love bombing, and other forms of emotional manipulation is also used to coerce and control members.
- D) *Critical Thinking Not Allowed* – The cult leader is the exclusive means by which the “truth” is revealed or

taught. Therefore members will often quote the leader or reference the leader's teachings instead of referencing Bible scripture or Biblical truth. To the members, the teachings of the cult leader on particular issues are more accurate than what the Bible actually says about those particular issues. The group leader's teachings must not be questioned. Therefore members lack critical or independent thinking regarding many topics that are taught within the group.

Members become a clone of their leader and will often channel their group leader's characteristics through mimicking / imitating the leader's personality and traits. Members will often quote the leader's phrases or talking points almost word-for-word and use loaded language to promote or defend the group.

Members are also spoon-fed spiritually instead of learning to be Bereans (**Acts 17:10-11**) or to think for themselves because the group leader is believed to be infallible or always right.

- E) *Us versus Them Mentality* – Anyone who is outside the group is either viewed as inferior or as an enemy. Cults often have a superiority complex because they believe that it is the group alone that has special knowledge and revelation whilst other religious groups or individuals are perceived as lacking the special revelation or knowledge that the group has.

F) *It Is Difficult For Members to Leave the Group* – In a cult there is great spiritual bondage which is caused by fear and manipulation. Therefore members are threatened with spiritual, emotional and even physical punishment if they consider leaving the group. Members may want to leave the group but they fear retaliation or harassment from the group leaders or the other members. Members may also be told that if they leave the group they may face curses from God.

Members also fear being unable to cope with life outside of the group. They question themselves if there is any group that is “better” or they fear joining another abusive group.

G) *Sexual Exploitation of Members* – In a cult, the leaders have a culture of sexual promiscuity and abuse. Therefore a leader will commit sexual immorality with many members within the group. Sex is used as a form of initiation and power over members. This exists because of the amount of spiritual and psychological control that the leader may have over individual members. (***read How Cult Leaders Use Sex to Control Followers, Page 41***)

H) *A Culture of Lying & Deception* – Many members in a cult are taught to lie or deceive on behalf of the group. Cult members are taught to behave

unethically as long as it is in the best interests of the group. Therefore in a cult, the end justifies the means. In a cult, lying and deception is not a sin if it is for the “good” of the group and its leader.

There is also a culture of deception among the group members themselves where they may spy on each other and report back to the group leader.

A new member cannot know or understand the true and dark nature of the group until he/she has been either properly indoctrinated, brainwashed or initiated.

Therefore manipulation, deception, brainwashing and coercive techniques are consistently used in order to manage and control a member’s decisions and behaviour.

- I) *Economic or Financial Exploitation of Members* – Leaders may use various manipulation and coercive techniques to financially exploit their followers for their own monetary or personal gain. Unbiblical doctrines and techniques are introduced to deceive followers out of their money for the purposes of enriching the group leaders

- J) *Salvation Can Only Be Experienced / Achieved Through The Group* – Anyone who is not part of the group is either lost or not saved. Anyone who leaves the group has lost his salvation. Therefore it is common that most cults are obsessed with deceptively

recruiting followers into the group because they believe that joining their group is the pathway to salvation.

K) *Isolation of Members From Family or Anyone Who Is Likely to Expose The Group* – Many cults do not respect marriage nor the family unit. If a member joins, they are likely to isolate that particular member from his/her family so that they may effectively control the individual's life. Some cults or cult leaders will separate marriages and destroy relationships between parents and children.

Members are also trained to avoid or smear people who may expose the group's true nature especially family or ex-members.

L) *A Culture of Double Standards* – There are standards or rules that are applied unfairly where some are expected to achieve or follow but other people are not. Therefore a culture of hypocrisy is very rife in a cult, especially among group leaders.

What Can Christians Do?

Cults are very controlling and very deceptive groups by nature. They employ different manipulative and coercive techniques to brainwash their members. They cause their members to live in spiritual bondage and they spiritually and psychologically destroy or corrupt the lives of their

followers.

Quite often, the last people to know that a group is a cult are the cult members themselves. More often it is those who are not part of the cult who can easily discern a particular group's aberrant doctrines and abnormal behaviour whilst the members themselves are either unaware or totally deceived about the group's true dark nature and beliefs.

As Christians we should always pray for people who are involved in a cult and seek to minister to them the true gospel of Jesus Christ whilst exposing any false doctrines that may be detrimental to the salvation of many people. In **Matthew 15:3** when Jesus asked the question: "*And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?*", Christ knew that there were people who had no interest in obeying the true Scriptures, but instead many people preferred to follow their religious and legalistic traditions than to follow the authentic word of God.

Matthew 23:1-39 is one of the major chapters in the Bible where Jesus dealt with the hypocritical and cultic nature of the Pharisees who sought to exploit and abuse their followers through false teachings and for the purposes of gaining power, wealth and control over the people. The Bible encourages us to test the spirits because of the rise of false prophets and teachers in the world (**1 John 4:1**).

We must also be diligent to expose any group that teaches demonic doctrines that are contrary to the

fundamentals of the Christian Faith with the hope that people will be educated and not be trapped or deceived by various cultic groups (**Ephesians 5:11-13**).

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. How does a religious cult differ from a genuine church?
2. Why are there so many false churches or cults on the rise? What does the Bible say about the rise of false prophets & false teachers?
3. Discuss or outline how you would help someone who either has joined or has been deceived by a cult?

12 Characteristics of a Cult Leader

According to many studies, cult leaders are people who tend to be narcissists and they generally exhibit sociopathic and abusive characteristics. In most cases cult leaders do not lead a legitimate Christian church, but instead they lead a cult or cultic group which they themselves created or founded.

Within Christianity they are hardly shepherds, but instead they are actually wolves in sheep's clothing (**Matthew 7:15**).

The Bible speaks of false teachers existing in the world and the cult leader is a type of false teacher who exists within the religious realm.

Many cult leaders will claim to be Christians, but in fact, they are deceived instruments of satan who seek to deceive their followers for personal gain and for demonic motives.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 says the following:

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

Throughout the world, many cult leaders will exhibit the same character traits and employ the same manipulative

and coercive techniques. By nature, a leopard cannot change its spots. A bad tree will always bear bad fruit (**Matthew 7:15-19**).

Below are at least 12 Traits or Characteristics of a Cult Leader:

1. A Spiritual Abuser

The cult leader is a false teacher who not only teaches false doctrines, but he also seeks to intimately control and abuse the lives of his followers. For example, he can control who you should and should not marry; he separates members from their families; he destroys marriages; No major personal decisions are made by various cult members without consulting the cult leader or without his knowledge; He brainwashes his members to perform unethical activities on his behalf or on behalf of the cult. The cult leader is obsessed with manipulating and controlling his followers through authoritative leadership style and coercive techniques. This ultimately leads many members of the group into a state of spiritual bondage.

2. They Twist The Scriptures For Personal Gain

Cult leaders will constantly twist and misinterpret the Bible in order to justify their scandals or justify their sinful lifestyle. For example, many cult

leaders are known to twist the Scriptures to their followers in order to justify their sexual immorality or polygamous relationships. Some will also twist the scriptures for monetary gain or for demonic mind control purposes.

2 Peter 2:3 says *“And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.”*

3. **Narcissistic Sense of Self**

Cult leaders basically believe they were born to be better than others. In fact, they are tempted to believe that nobody can be better than them. They are basically arrogant and are driven and motivated by a spirit of pride.

Eventually cult leaders tend to claim or insinuate to have power, position and authority that is exclusively godlike. They not only claim to speak for God, but they believe and teach their followers that disobeying the leader is equivalent to disobeying God. **Matthew 24:24** speaks of the rise in false christs or false messiahs. This scripture does not only refer to people who claim to be Jesus Christ, but it also refers to narcissistic people who will claim to have equal authority to Christ.

4. **Superficial Charm & Charisma**

Cult leaders are actors and pretenders. They understand that discovering your weaknesses,

needs and desires are a gateway to putting you in bondage. Projecting superficial charm and charisma to members or potential followers is a method of disarming people from seeing the true deceptive and controlling nature of the leader. In their mind, it's essential that they draw followers to themselves and therefore they feel the need to stand-out and be noticed because inwardly cult leaders consistently crave attention and recognition from their members. Therefore the charm offensive is an important part of a cult leader's act to gain trust and admiration from unsuspecting followers.

5. Lack of Guilt or Remorse

The cult leader is sociopathic by nature and is therefore incapable of showing genuine empathy, guilt or remorse for any sinful behavior. For example, a cult leader may feel no remorse for destroying marriages or for exploiting and abusing his members, because cult leaders are generally proud and arrogant at their core. Sociopaths are generally known to be incapable of showing genuine love or empathy. Instead they project superficial "love" and emotions which always has the deceptive motive of desiring something back in return for their own personal gain and agenda.

1 Timothy 4:1-2 makes reference to false teachers

who are hypocritical liars and have a seared conscience. This alludes to the fact that false teachers are incapable of having a good conscience because they feel no sorrow or guilt for sinful behavior. They also see no need to repent as a result. Instead a cult leader usually projects his faults on others such as his own members. Therefore their conscience is so seared or so deceived that they cannot truthfully differentiate between right and wrong.

6. Pathological Liars

Cult leaders are very skillful speakers and they are never at a loss for words. However, they are also pathological liars. Lying and deceit is part of their inbuilt nature and culture. Hypocrisy is their second nature. Deception is integral to achieving their objective of power and control over others. Even Jesus said of the Pharisees (who were religious leaders) *“You are of your father the devil who has been a liar from the beginning”* (**John 8:44**). In **Matthew 23:1-38**, Christ also addressed the culture of lying and the hypocrisy by the Pharisees. He not only exposed their deception but He warned them of the consequences of their wickedness. Therefore a culture of lying, hypocrisy and deception is common among cult leaders.

7. **Authoritarian Leadership Style**

Cult leaders are always authoritarian in the manner in which they lead their members. For example, some cult leaders demand obedience from their members at the expense of obeying the scriptures. Cult leaders will also equate obeying them as being equal to obeying God, therefore insinuating that God and the cult leader have equal authority. It creates fear within the cult members so that they live to please the cult leader instead of living to please God. Cult members are taught to obey the leader even if he is wrong. The cult leader therefore creates the false perception that he is infallible and that his teachings and wisdom cannot be challenged even when he is wrong. For example, many cult leaders will also lean towards teaching authoritarian and submission false doctrines such as **spiritual covering theology** or shepherding movement doctrines

8. **They Take Sexual Advantage of their Members**

The issue of money, power and sex are intertwined within a cult. When cult leaders have unquestioned power and authority, it is evident that a cult leader will begin to take sexual advantage of his members.

Cult leaders often have a history of extramarital affairs. Therefore adultery and many different

forms of sexual immorality are very common among cult leaders due to their grandiose sense of self and the imbalance of power that exists within the group.

With various cults, sex or sexual immorality is used as a method of control. Therefore the cult leader will have sexual relationships with his own followers as a method of emotional and psychological control over his members. For many cults, sexual immorality is also used by cult leaders as a method of initiating new members into the cult or for purposes of supposedly “bonding” with cult members

9. Cult Leaders Lack Boundaries & Exploit Weaknesses

2 Timothy 3:5-6 speaks of men who have the “appearance of godliness” but yet they take advantage of “weak women”. Paul tells Timothy in *verse 5* that such people should be avoided. Cult leaders do not respect individual or relationship boundaries. They feel entitled to impose or worm their way without any respect for the personal or relationship boundaries of others. They are always looking for weaknesses in an individual’s life so that they can manipulate for their own personal gain. Cult leaders also tend to look for followers who are gullible, easily exploited and weak minded.

10. They Use Sycophants to Ensure Compliance from Members

Sycophants are informers and self-seeking cult members who usually praise the cult leader in order to gain advantage. The cult leader uses them to spy on other members and to ensure that members are complying with the cult's values and traditions. Sycophants pass information upwards to the cult leader about who is complying and who is rebelling within the group. They also update the cult leader about what individual members are saying, feeling or behaving within the group.

11. Cult Leaders View Outsiders as Enemies or Inferior

Cults generally have an Us versus Them mentality where anybody who is outside of the cult is seen as inferior to the cult. This mentality also forms the basis of why cults generally tend to promote themselves under the deceptive guise of "evangelism" as they feel that anyone who is not part of the cult is not fully enlightened. Therefore cults believe that people require the cult's specific indoctrinations or to be recruited into the group. The cult leader therefore projects himself as the "best" among preachers and he presents his doctrines as the "best" among other religious

groups and anyone who is not part of the cult is considered to be “lost” or unenlightened.

Any non-members who disagree with the cult leader’s theology are seen as potential enemies and likewise cult members are not allowed to associate with any outside religious groups or individuals who are likely to discover the cult’s true deceptive nature.

The leader therefore isolates his group from ex-members or from families or from religious groups that are likely to discern and expose the true nature of the group.

12. They View People as Assets & Objects

Sociopaths do not really view people as friends. Instead to a sociopath, people are assets; people are victims; people are accomplices; people are fools who can be conned for his own personal gain.

Just like a sociopath, cult leaders are interested in only achieving the objective that meets their personal and selfish gain. As a result, a cult leader views his cult members as inferior to himself and as people whom he is meant to control, manipulate and dominate.

Conclusion: You Shall Know Them By Their Fruits

Jesus said that false teachers are inwardly like “ravenous

wolves” by nature. He also said that we shall know false teachers by their fruits (**Matthew 7:15-20**).

The character and nature of cult leaders clearly reflects that their fruits are demonic and ungodly. Ultimately the majority of cult members become deceived and fall into spiritual bondage as a result of following cult leaders. It’s important to note that cult leaders are self-deceived individuals. They are also spiritually and psychologically dangerous. Based on the strange activities and tragedies that happen within many cults such as mass suicides, mind control techniques, cultic behaviour, family separations, scripture twisting, sexual scandals and a culture of lying and deception – it is clear that cult leaders are either demon possessed or demonically inspired in their actions.

Cult leaders do not represent Jesus Christ and they preach a false gospel that is filled with false interpretations of the scriptures. Even though they read or preach from the Bible, it is important to realize that these type of false teachers are used by the devil in an attempt to deceive, distort and destroy the Body of Christ.

Titus 1:16 says the following of false teachers: *“They profess to know God, but they deny Him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work”*

It’s therefore very important that people be vigilant and aware of the false deceptions and the many deceivers who now exist in the world.

1 John 4:1 says: *“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”*

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. According to Luke 22:25-28 what style of leadership does Jesus teach for the church?
2. Discuss or outline the unbiblical & mind control techniques that cult leaders use to brainwash and control their followers.
3. Outline how the leadership style of cult leaders differs from the leadership model expected by Jesus and as written in such scriptures as 1 Timothy 3:1-3 and Titus 1:6-11.

Who Is Your Spiritual Covering? Is It Biblical?

The term *spiritual covering* is an authoritarian false teaching that is usually used by the Charismatic movement and various religious cults in relation to authority and submission.

The spiritual covering doctrine basically teaches that your leader, your pastor, your prophet or your apostle is a human “spiritual covering” over your life or the personal affairs of your life. Therefore if you are not under the spiritual covering of your leader then you are not “covered” or “fathered” or protected from spiritual curses or from problems in life.

Believers of this false teaching therefore teach that every Christian believer needs a human spiritual covering to protect the believer from deception, curses, problems and even the devil himself.

The spiritual covering doctrine also teaches that without your human spiritual covering, whatever you do will not be blessed by God unless it has the endorsement of your particular human spiritual covering.

The spiritual covering theology has its roots in The Shepherding Movement of the 1970s which came out of the Charismatic movement. The Shepherding Movement created cult-like manipulation techniques and intimidation tactics over its followers through its

emphasis on the non-biblical teaching that every follower needs a human “spiritual covering” in his life. Today the spiritual covering doctrine is either openly taught or subtly imposed by certain religious sects and cult leaders upon their followers as a method of control and manipulation over people’s lives. The acquiring of money and the control over people’s lives is at the heart of this doctrine.

Religious groups that teach the spiritual covering theology can be identified by the following teachings and practices:

- Followers cannot make any major life or personal decisions without the input, knowledge or endorsement of one’s spiritual covering
- Approval from your human spiritual covering is more important than approval from God or from God’s word.
- Approval from your human spiritual covering is also believed to be equivalent to being approved by God. Therefore if your spiritual covering does not approve, it is presumed that God does not also approve. Or if your spiritual covering approves – then it means that God also approves.
- Followers must have unquestioned loyalty and obedience to one’s spiritual covering. The doctrines or teachings by the spiritual covering cannot be questioned or challenged even by those

considered to be the “lowest” members or followers within the hierarchy.

- Followers have an obligation to confess sins and problems to their spiritual coverings, accountability partners or “shepherds”
- The group has a hierarchical system of accountability; the hierarchical system looks more like a pyramid than the Biblical church body.
- Followers must conform to the group’s traditions and beliefs even if these traditions oppose the scriptures.
- Biblical and spiritual knowledge and revelation only flows downwards from the spiritual covering to the followers. The spiritual covering is seen as the source through which all spiritual revelation flows. Therefore without the revelation and protection of your human spiritual covering – you are deemed to be “lost” or in “rebellion”.
- There is legalism, manipulation, intimidation, fear and coercive control by leadership over members. The followers are taught to be spiritually, psychologically and practically dependent on their human spiritual covering.
- There is total dependence by the followers for their spiritual covering’s approval and endorsement.
- There is information control. Followers are prohibited from information or literature that is

likely to free them from deception or from discovering the truth.

- Anyone who disagrees with their spiritual covering can be subjected to humiliation or expulsion for questioning the leadership or its teachings.
- Anyone who questions or does not conform to the standards of his/her human spiritual covering is categorized as being “rebellious” or unsubmitive.

JESUS CHRIST IS THE TRUE AND ONLY SPIRITUAL COVERING

Jesus Christ is the only true spiritual covering that any Christian believer needs. Ultimately if we do not have Jesus Christ in our lives, then we do not have any genuine spiritual covering.

We must beware of any religious group that practices “shepherding,” “submission” and “spiritual covering” concepts. Though these groups may speak about Christ, they do not ultimately point people to Christ but instead they subtly point people to controlling and manipulative men for spiritual direction instead of God. These groups can create a counterfeit Christianity or hinder a genuine relationship with God because it promotes a mere man as being a type of mediator between you and God. It promotes the concept that you should always seek the approval and endorsement of man instead of seeking the

approval of God. It also promotes the concept that the human spiritual covering is “perfect” or “infallible” in his advice or teachings when in fact every man is a sinner who is subject to error and deception.

Unfortunately many people have fallen for this spiritual covering manipulation, especially in many coercive religious groups where the followers are taught to seek the approval of their “spiritual covering” or “spiritual father” rather than the approval of God

1 Thessalonians 2:4

But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

Galatians 1:10

For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

When leaders view themselves as a “spiritual covering” over others, they also directly make themselves to become spiritual mediators between God and their followers.

1 Timothy 2:5 says: *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*

Christ died for our sins and His blood provided the ultimate covering from curses and from all kinds of sin so that because of His blood there is freedom in Christ and forgiveness of sins. We have been bought by the precious blood of Christ Jesus and “brought into the

glorious freedom of the children of God” (Romans 8:21). “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery” (Galatians 5:1).

Jesus Christ is our true protection and our only covering from all curses, bondage and sin because of His finished work on the Cross.

There is no human being who can copy or imitate the effects or results of what Christ did on the Cross and the functions that Christ plays in the life of an individual.

Without Christ we are nothing.

Jesus Christ is Lord over your life – not man. **Colossians 3:23-24** says that we are to do everything *“as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ”*.

Therefore Jesus Christ is your true and only spiritual covering because He is with you wherever you go; He resides in you and He knows you more than you know yourself.

Therefore when various leaders, false teachers and cult leaders elevate themselves to the unbiblical status of a “spiritual covering”, they’re in fact making themselves a “false christ” over the people they lead because they claim to mediate between God and man. The “spiritual covering” leaders claim that their approval or disapproval of what you do is equivalent to God’s approval or disapproval.

Matthew 23:8-12

But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers. 9 And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. 10 Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ. 11 The greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

A “spiritual covering” leader is the exact opposite of what Christ expects from a Biblical leader. A “spiritual covering” leader lacks humility but instead seeks to be served by his followers rather than to serve them. The spiritual covering leader sees himself as a “spiritual father”.

In the body of Christ there are no “spiritual coverings” or “spiritual fathers” – but instead according to **Matthew 23:8** we “*are all brothers*”.

In the body of Christ we have different gifts and different functions (**Romans 12:5-8**) but we are all brothers and sisters in the eyes of God. Nobody is more important than the other in the body of Christ. The functions and gifts may be different but we are all equal and play a pivotal role in the body of Christ.

According to **Romans 12:5** we are “*members of one another*” and NOT members **over** one another.

However, the spiritual covering or Shepherding Movement doctrines are used by cult leaders and false teachers who seek to have unbiblical control, power and influence over people’s lives for their own self-ambition

and personal gain. The spiritual covering doctrine creates a culture of manipulation, control, fear and intimidation of which the followers become the victims and false teachers become the benefactors. It also opposes Christ's leadership model of servant leadership.

Matthew 20:25-28

But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

Many religious cults and high control groups control the lives of their followers because of the spiritual covering doctrine. Many people are controlled and manipulated both for selfish and monetary gain by their leaders because of unbiblical methods of leadership that are being used. We must therefore beware of leaders who demand or coerce people into blind loyalty and submission. **1 Thessalonians 5:21** and **1 John 4:1** says that we must "test everything" or "test the spirits" because "many false prophets have gone out into the world". God's word therefore encourages us to test, question and verify whatever we are taught in order to avoid being deceived or being led astray by false teachings.

The spiritual covering teaching shifts the focus of our spiritual relationship away from Jesus Christ and His Lordship. Instead the false doctrine shifts people's focus into following man or the "spiritual covering's" personal desires instead of following God. Such an unbiblical relationship indirectly blinds people from individually exercising discernment regarding their spiritual life.

The Bible indeed teaches us to obey those who are in authority – but only as far as what they teach and say is in agreement with God's word. It's therefore important for every Christian believer to study the word of God as a Berean and Biblically research and verify the things we are taught (**Acts 17:10-15**).

Christian believers should not rely on a human "spiritual covering" for truth and revelation but instead Christians must learn to check what they are taught against the word of God to see if what they are taught is actually true.

Christians also need to get into the habit of personal study of the word of God (**2 Timothy 2:15**).

Christians need to be led by the Holy Spirit who is the revealer of all truth (**John 16:13**) and not only look to man as a revealer of truth.

The reason why so many people are led astray is because they look towards man or "spiritual coverings" to lead them instead of looking towards Jesus Christ who is the Author and Finisher of our faith (**Hebrews 12:2**).

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. Does Jesus Christ's teaching in Matthew 23:8-10 support the concept that a human being can be a spiritual father?
2. In what ways does the spiritual covering doctrine contradict the gospel of Jesus Christ and the fact that Christ alone is our only Mediator and High Priest?
3. What forms of spiritual abuse can arise from the spiritual covering doctrine? Why?

How Cult Leaders Use Sex To Control Followers

Is there a relationship between sexual immorality and the activities of demonic sects such as cults, the new age movement and even the occult? How do cult leaders use sex as a method of control over some of their members?

Jim Jones, a cult leader of the People's Temple was one of the most well-known cult leaders in the world. He had so much control over his followers to the extent of causing the mass suicide of more than 900 of his own cult members as he manipulated them into drinking poisoned Kool-aid or Flavor-aid.

The other thing that Jim Jones was also known for was his immoral sexual behavior. According to Wikipedia, *“while Jones (hypocritically) banned sex among Temple members outside of marriage, he voraciously engaged in sexual relations with both male and female Temple members. Jones, however, claimed that he detested engaging in homosexual activity and did so only for the male temple adherents' own good, purportedly to connect them symbolically with him (Jones).”*

So Jones' cultic reason for being promiscuous was that having sex with his followers would “connect” his

followers “symbolically” to himself.

Jones is also on record as telling his followers that he was “the only true heterosexual” .

In the religious world, there are thousands of cult leaders that exist. One of the major marks of all cult leaders pertains to their desire to manipulate, control and exploit their members for their own personal gain and also for the gain of the group.

Almost every cult leader is known to be abusive, spiritually corrupt and manipulative by nature (*see article: 12 Characteristics Of A Cult Leader*).

However, one of the key methods that cult leaders use to control their followers is through sex.

Just like Jim Jones and many false teachers throughout the world, it’s difficult to find a single cult leader who leads a group and yet has never had promiscuous affairs with members of his own group. It’s also difficult to find a cult leader who has not manifested any obvious signs of sexual perversion.

2 Timothy 3:5-6

Having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions

2 Timothy 3:5-6 addresses the fact that there are religious men who are predatory in nature and they deceptively

desire to “*capture weak women*”.

These men have the “*appearance of godliness*” but in fact, they are hypocrites.

They have the “*appearance of godliness*” but the truth is that they are demonic and ungodly in nature.

These men even enter into people’s homes but their intentions are never truthful or innocent. They seek to seduce, manipulate, control and exploit people.

The cult leader uses his position of leadership to take advantage of his members. He does this to satisfy his sexual lusts and to gain control over them.

Therefore under the guise of “*counselling*”, “*ministering*” and “*assisting*” women with their problems, the cult leader exploits a woman’s vulnerabilities in order to eventually manipulate her for sex.

All over the world many false teachers have been exposed for their promiscuous behaviour. This clearly points to the fact that there is a connection between the unbiblical power that cult leaders give themselves and their immoral sexual relationships.

So the question is this: Why are most cult leaders inevitably sexually immoral? Why do these leaders use sex to control their members?

The answer is found in the fact that the core inspiration behind using sex to control people is simply rooted in demonic doctrines and demonic foundations.

Sex and the Demonic

The demonic concept about sex is the complete opposite to God's original intention for sex. According to God, sex is an expression of union between 2 married people and it is to be performed only within the confines of marriage for enjoyment and for procreation. Sex is not only physical but it is also spiritual.

However, satan has corrupted the meaning of sex. The demonic concept of sex encourages fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality and even bestiality. Sexual immorality has a negative spiritual effect in that it causes a person to corrupt his soul and to sin against his own body (**1 Corinthians 6:18**).

The demonic expression of sex is not related to godly union between married couples but instead the demonic purpose for sex is to express self-gratification, domination, perversion, manipulation and initiation.

Jim Jones hypocritically preached against premarital sex and he banned his members from having sex outside of marriage. Yet ironically, Jones had both homosexual and heterosexual relationships with the very same cult members whom he banned from having sex. What Jim Jones did was an example of him using sex to control his followers.

A cult leader's motive for having sex with multiple members within his group is also a method of initiating and solidifying the member's emotional loyalty to himself and towards the group. Jim Jones claimed to use

promiscuous sex to “connect” his followers “symbolically” to himself.

Just like Jim Jones, a cult leader does not care if he is behaving hypocritically; he does not care if he has sexual relations with a man or a woman; he does not care if he is committing adultery; he does not care if he’s causing his members to commit fornication or adultery; he does not care if he is disobeying the word of God.

What the cult leader cares about the most, is that he fulfills his demonic sexual appetite and perversions whilst achieving “connection” and control over his followers through the sexual relationships. Therefore sex is one of the tools that he will use in order to accomplish his goal to control.

It’s no wonder that doctrines of demons such as witchcraft, occultism, new age movement and many other sects also include sexual immorality as part of their rites, rituals and initiations.

Even in the Bible, the worship of Baal, a fertility god, had infiltrated the Jewish people according to **Judges 3:7**. Baal worship was rooted in sensuality and involved ritualistic sex and prostitution in the temples. Even Jezebel who was a woman associated with sexual immorality, control and witchcraft was a champion for the worship of Baal.

Jezebel married and controlled Ahab who happened to be the King of Israel (**1 Kings 16:30-31**). Her exploitation

and control of Ahab caused the widespread worship of Baal and the demonic doctrines associated with Baal.

1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; Leviticus 20:13 and Exodus 22:19 all speak against sexual immorality. However, whilst these verses might be preached by the cult leader just as Jim Jones may have done, the cult leader will behave as if such verses do not apply to himself.

Anything that is demonic will ultimately meet its destruction before the Lord. The cult leader and every other false teacher will ultimately meet their demise before God's mighty hand.

Those who willfully practice sexual immorality and seek to manipulate and deceive others will face a predictable end.

1 John 4:1 tells us to test the spirits because of the existence of false prophets and teachers. The reason we should test the spirits is because false teachers are spiritually motivated by the demonic.

It is therefore imperative that those who fear the Lord should always hate what is evil and cling to what is good (**Romans 12:9**).

LIFE QUESTIONS

1. According to your observations, why is adultery & other forms of sexual immorality very common among cults & cult leaders in general?

2. List Bible verses that mention sexual immorality or God's view of sexual immorality
3. Is there a link or connection between power and sex in controlling groups or systems such as cults? Why / Why not?

How To Leave & Recover From A Cult

Nobody ever wakes up one morning and says to themselves “Today I want to join a cult”.

Very few people have been lured into a cult with the immediate understanding that the religious group that they have joined was in fact a cult.

Examples of some well-known cults that claim to be Christian include the [Jehovah’s Witnesses’](#), [the Mormons](#), [the Moonies](#), Christian Science, Scientologists and many other groups that teach [shepherding or spiritual covering doctrines](#), [antinomianism](#), legalism, [prosperity gospel](#) and [word of faith theology](#). It’s important to understand that many cults can become spiritually and mentally destructive because they rewire the brains of their members through using mind control or brainwashing techniques.

Therefore deception and manipulation techniques are essential tactics that are used by most cults in order to both control their members and to achieve their overall objective.

For more information and perspective regarding the definition of a cult and how the majority of them operate please ([read: What is a Cult? The Characteristics of a Cult](#)) and also ([read: 12 Characteristics of a Cult Leader](#))

However, what does a person do when he has discovered that he has joined a cult and has been in such a group for several years?

For many cult members, leaving a cult can be one of the

most difficult things to do. Most religious cults have a tendency to put their members into spiritual, emotional, physical and mental bondage. This bondage can make it very difficult for a member to leave the group even if the member is aware that the group is controlling or abusive. The more that a member has invested his time into the group, the more difficult it might become for that particular member to leave.

I've often spoken to cult members who would be aware of the unethical, abusive and extremely controlling nature of their group but yet the members would remain loyal to the group for various irrational or insensible reasons. The control and bondage in a cultic system can be so strong that the thought of leaving a cult may inject fear and guilt in many members even if they are aware that the group is abusive and Biblically unorthodox. The cultic system is also designed to create physical, mental, financial and spiritual dependency. Therefore such dependencies create the perception in the mind of the members whereby they incorrectly believe that they cannot "survive" or become "whole" if they were to leave the group.

The various cultic mind control techniques such as the Us vs Them mentality, the love bombing, the overwhelming service, the isolation of members and the authoritarian leadership all work together as a system in order to control the mind & life of the member so that the member remains in bondage to the group even if the member understands the abusive nature of the group

The factors that may prevent a member from leaving an abusive cult may be the following:

1. The member is fearful of the abusive repercussions or harassment from the group or its leadership if the member leaves
2. The member is so indoctrinated by the group's false teachings that he is afraid of integrating or assimilating back into society or into a new religious group which may have differing doctrines
3. Even though the member may know about the abusive aspects of the cult, the member might be enjoying various benefits of being part of the group, such as a title or position of power, money, or recognition within the group
4. The member may lack an outside support system to help him to leave the cult due to being isolated from friends and family who are non-members.

HOW DO PEOPLE GET OUT OF RELIGIOUS CULTS?

Different members will leave a cult in different ways and for different reasons. There are 5 different ways that a member usually leaves a cult. I call them "The 5 Rs"

1. The Researcher

This is a person who joins a cult but has no idea that he has joined a deceptive or a high control group. Over a period of time, he observes some red flags eg. false teachings; a culture of sexual immorality within the group or from the cult leader; hypocrisy, mind control and brainwashing techniques. Perhaps he notices that within the group there are also abnormal expectations, standards and behaviours that are not in sync with normal society or even Scripture itself.

This person then decides to research about the group or he stumbles upon information which basically explains the red flags that he has been observing within the group. The information might be specific to the history of the group and its cultic behavior or the information may generally explain, verify or confirm the false doctrines and cultic system happening within the group. Based on the confirming information, the Researcher eventually leaves the group.

2. The Rebel

This is the person with an independent mind and exercises critical thinking. However within the group he is viewed as a rebel for having an independent mind even though his critical thinking is normal and legitimate.

This person might not be initially aware that he has joined a cult but will have this gut feeling and inner sense that there is something wrong with the group's methods, the group dynamics and even the teachings. This person simply does not agree with the cultic system or specific controlling and manipulative techniques of the system and is not afraid to express his thoughts and criticisms. He sees hypocrisy and repression and he is not afraid to point it out. He also questions the doctrines and methods of the group. He may also become apathetic. Eventually the Rebel leaves because he would rather exit the group than conform to the controlling and manipulative system of the group.

3. The Rescued

This is the person who exits the group after receiving counselling and information about the true nature and hidden beliefs of the group. Perhaps an ex-member, a friend, a counsellor or a genuine Christian who is not part of the group informs and educates the member about the cult and its deceptive behavior and methods. The veil of deception is removed and the person accepts the information and through the support and encouragement of non-members is eventually able to leave the group.

The Rescued is also someone who may have had a desire to leave the cult but however was too fearful or afraid of leaving the group because of bondage or the backlash of being harassed for leaving. The Rescued then seeks outside assistance and support in order to exit the group.

The Rescued is somebody who is usually open-minded and is sincerely searching for spiritual truth even though he may be currently under the spell or deception of the cult. Therefore the Rescued's open-mindedness and his sincere search for spiritual or Biblical truth enables him to objectively accept truthful information that exposes the cult he has joined.

4. The Ravaged

This is the person who has been burnt out, abused, or victimized either by the leadership or by the cultic system itself. The person becomes traumatized by the system and exploited to the extent that he is unable to function within the group. The person is abused

spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally or financially to the point that one day he wakes up and decides that he no longer wants to be part of the group. Perhaps this person has been cheated of his hard earned money by the cult. Perhaps the person was sexually exploited by the cult leader whilst in the group. Perhaps he has lost his job or loved ones because of the group. He may realize that the group has been placing him in bondage and deceiving him all along, and this then motivates him to leave.

5. The Rejected

This is the person who has been marked, shunned and excommunicated for various reasons. He has been removed from the group and is no longer wanted as a member. The Rejected is either perceived as:

- too rebellious to control or manipulate within the cult;
- corruptive / toxic to other indoctrinated members,
- a threat to leadership or to the cultic system;
- utterly useless to the agenda or the group.

Cult members may also be told to avoid communicating or fellowshiping in any form with a marked person.

HOW TO LEAVE A RELIGIOUS CULT

It is very important to realize the following when leaving a cult: **You do not need permission from the group to leave. Do not be afraid to leave. If you have decided to leave the group – then simply leave and don't look back. Exercise your God given freewill and LEAVE and NEVER LOOK BACK.**

Generally cults do not let people go very easily. With a cult, there is no legitimate reason to leave and former

followers are always considered wrong in leaving. The cultic system is designed to put its members in mental bondage and to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation should any member decide to oppose the culture or beliefs of the group.

If as a member you decide that you want to leave a cult, here are several practical ways that you can leave:

1. Find Outside Assistance or Support

Most cults tend to isolate their members from friends or family members who are not part of the group.

Isolation of members makes it easier for the cult leaders to control their members' lives.

It's therefore important to seek the help, support and encouragement of people who are not part of the cult in order to help you with your transition and departure out of the group.

Non-members are able to provide a sense of confidence and clarity and also emotional, spiritual and psychological support. They will also help remove the dependency syndrome on the group that was created in you during your time with them.

Depending on the destructive nature of the cult, outside assistance and support can include family, friends, counselors, doctors, lawyers, police or a genuine Christian church or whoever is appropriate to help you exit and recover from the deception, trauma, abuse or confusion caused by group.

2. Receive Counselling

At times it may be necessary to receive counselling in order to help you deal with any trauma or abuse you

may have experienced in the group. It is always important to receive counselling from anyone who has no direct association with the group in order to get a clear and objective understanding of your experience and circumstance. Therefore find someone to talk to who is objective and is not part of the group. It is therefore necessary to gradually deal with the wrong belief systems and abusive encounters during your time in the group. Counselling or talking to someone outside the group gives you a better perspective.

3. Avoid or Minimize Contact With The Group

When you have left the group, you are likely to be contacted by the members in an effort to charm you or sweet-talk you into returning back to the group. Remember that cults always have a problem with letting go because of their culture of placing their members under bondage. Therefore they will use love-bombing and charm offensive techniques to draw you back into bondage. Some cults may even harass you vindictively for leaving them. Therefore when you have left the group, you have no obligation to take their phone calls or to invite them into your home especially if they have been deceptive and destructive. Remember to leave and don't look back.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE BIBLE?

Cults are a counterfeit of the true Christian church. Whilst the true church of God provides freedom in Christ, a cult will produce legalism and spiritual bondage. All cults that claim to be Christian will proclaim a false gospel and a different Jesus (or a false concept of Christ).

However the true church of God proclaims the true gospel and glorifies the Biblical Christ.

Cults mostly have authoritarian and abusive leaders and false teachers, whilst the church of God encourages leaders who are servants and do not lord over others ([Matthew 20:25-26](#)).

Cults teach doctrines of demons because they are ultimately inspired by demonic spirits, whilst the church of God is directed by the Holy Spirit through whom all Scripture is inspired.

It is important to realize that every day there is a spiritual battle between good and evil. According to the Bible, we do not fight against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of darkness ([Ephesians 6:12](#)).

Satan himself has people who “disguise themselves as servants of righteousness” but yet they are wolves in sheep’s clothing.

[Acts 20:28-31](#) – *Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*

[2 Corinthians 11:13-15](#) says the following about false teachers “*For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 So it is*

no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.”

In [Galatians 1:6-10](#), Paul says the following: *“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel — 7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. 10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”*

[2 Corinthians 11:4](#) says: *For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.*

[Jude 4](#) says: *For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

[2 John 1:10](#) – *If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or welcome them.*

[2 Peter 2:1-3](#) – *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will*

secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

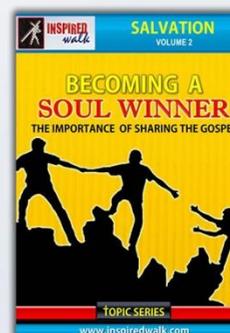
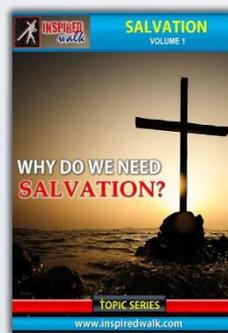
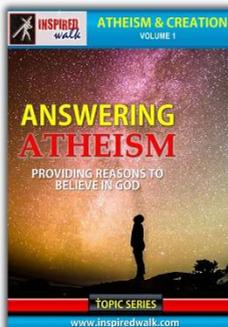
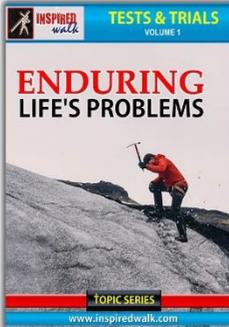
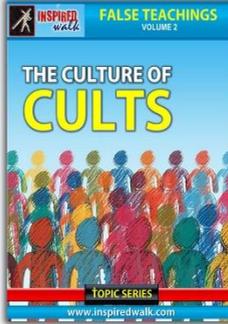
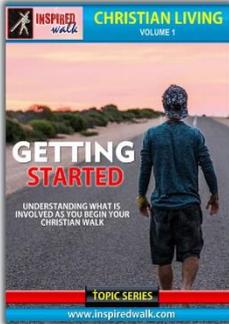
Matthew 7:15-16 – *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?*

Matthew 24:23-25 – *“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs & wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand”*

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

Philippians 3:18-19 – *For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame — who set their mind on earthly things.*

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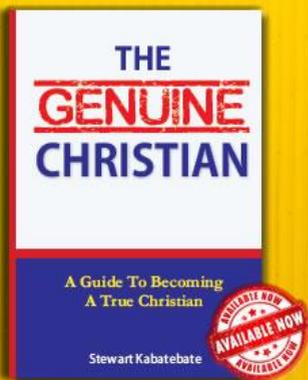
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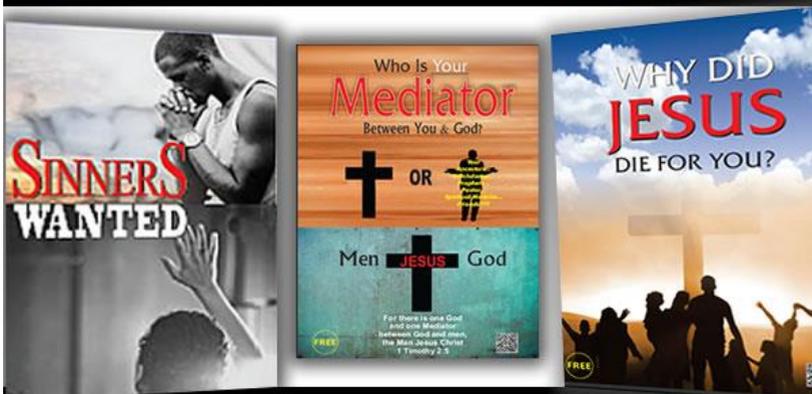
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