

Cults

Defining the term cult is far more difficult than is often appreciated for several reasons:

- The term cult was used by the heretics in reference to the followers of Luther, Puritans and Bible believing Christians.
- The development of evangelical negative attitude against such groups which they have seen as heretical in practice and beliefs.
- In the last 20 years, a large number of books written by cultic writers accusing a particular religious group as cults.
- A transition has occurred from theological arguments to nominal a psychological argument which focuses on brainwashing and scheming leaving out doctrinal issues.
- Modern evangelical writers have created unqualified distinctions between true Christians and cults.

At present, evangelical writers focus only on three issues related to the cults:

- The fraudulent claims of the cults
- Immorality of their leaders
- The schemes they use to deceive their followers

There are unseen problems related to the existence of the cults in the world:

Major cult groups have growing and progressive propaganda against genuine Christianity. They are using every form of media and resources to advertise their programs and beliefs.

They are utilizing the marketing strategy of the world to sell their religion. They are trying to demolish true Christianity by their wide spread programs that cater to humanistic and cosmic needs, hiring the most expensive experts on black propaganda.

The reliable statistics of the rapid growth of the cults is never considered as threat to the society but contribution to the nation as a whole. The government will react only after these cults have become violent or have been criminally involved.

Politicians are supporting the cults because of the votes they can get. The politicians are competitors for seeking the so-called blessing, endorsement or electoral support of the biggest cult groups in the countries.

The cult leaders exaggerate or increase the number of their membership in order to get higher bidding price. Political endorsement by a religious group violates the separation of church and state.

Religious freedom is replaced by religious toleration of even the most threatening cult groups. In some country, religious cults are banned or restricted from any open activities. But where there is massive corruption in the government sector, such cults flourish and easily expand.

They use money to bribe government officials to get what they wanted like permits, licenses, visas, and use of public facilities.

The term cult has become neutral by the academic practice of calling the cults as the *new religious movements. The new trend in journalism provides free access for the cults to enter the homes without intruding privacy.

The modern writers are making it easy for the cults to be recognized and accepted by the public. These writers are ignorantly serving the devil by disseminating demonic and humanistic doctrines contrary to Bible doctrine.

And since the cults are well provided by the cosmos system, they are financially capable of using any medium or technology available in the world even those owned by the government.

The genuine Christians who oppose the cults on doctrinal grounds must use the term heretics or spiritual counterfeits on such groups. This procedure would move the debate away from psychological theories that can be used by secularists against true Christianity to the arena of theological discussion and religious arguments.

Cults are always related to apostasy and heresy, and these three are inseparable. Apostasy (falling away from faith) in all cases involved the decision of the soul to reject Bible doctrine and embrace false or demonic doctrine.

The cults reject the authority of the Scripture (1 Peter 1:12, 2 Peter 1:20-21). Some agreed with the infallibility of the Scripture but honors their religious leaders above the word of God.

Some partially rejected the authority of the Word and at the same time recognize the authority of their leaders above the Scripture. Some totally reject the authority of the Word and accept nothing but the authority of their leaders or gods.

The cults reject hermeneutics or the science that deals with the principles. They interpret the Scripture without going through the process of historical, categorical and exegetical studies (1 Cor. 2:6-8, 10-14). They interpret the Scripture from ignorance (1 Tim. 1:7, Hosea 4:6-9, James 3:1-5) and from arrogance (Phil. 1:15-17, 1 Tim. 5:22, 2 Tim. 3:6-7).

The cults reject all or some of the biblical doctrine and the systematic theology. They publicly claim that the Word of God is important, but by practice they reject it. They have selectively adopted the Word of God.

The cults welcomed and embraced some or all man-made doctrines and practices without carefully examining them (1 Tim. 1:3-4, 2 Tim. 4:4).

The cults adopted and practiced some popular religious pattern and legalistic mannerism in their services and worship (Gal. 4:7-10, 2:16, Col. 2:8).

The cults preach a different Jesus which is often mistaken for the same Jesus of the Bible. (Col. 2:8). The cults are good in making an impression that their teaching is similar to that of the genuine Bible doctrine. The ignorant and passive believers are always deceived.

The cults proclaim another Gospel with another way of salvation (2 Corinthians 11:4). Salvation by means of hard-work and self-righteousness is easily accepted than salvation by the grace of God.

The cults emphasizes on human emotion over Bible doctrine. Majority of the cults are trained to give their services, love and sacrifices under the compulsory and coerced atmosphere under the Mosaic regulations.

The cults have mystical and questionable method of receiving truth like from their so called conversation with God or seeing vision or direct revelation from God (Jeremiah 5:31, 14:14, 23:1, 16:21), messages revealed by angelic beings, some receive truth after prayer and fasting, others after a prolonged praise and worship.

Majority of the leaders of the cults have deep desire to be known as great man of God (Jude 16-17), and will do anything to build their pseudo-spiritual profile. Deep in their souls, they have the desire to be worshipped by their people.

The cults have a burning desire to do great things in the name of God (James 4:6). Their aggressiveness is mistaken for zeal. The cults have replaced the truth of the Bible doctrine with their mad-made teachings and practices.

They easily accept and adopt new strange doctrines but refuse the old tried and proven teachings of the Bible. Their zeal for God is denied by their lack of respect and concern for Bible doctrine.

They are building their own kingdom and not the kingdom of God. They are always busy for God always attempting the great and marvelous things that glorify them and not God.

The cult leaders always tend to abuse and misuse their power since they are not called by God. God will never call a person to preach a different doctrine other than what Christ had proclaimed. They lord over their flocks while calling themselves as servants of God.

They are dictators behind the disguise of faith and brotherly love, capitalizing on human weaknesses (1 Peter 5:3). They are men-pleasers, always striving not to hurt the feelings of others, while dragging them to hell (Galatians 1:10).

The cults are deceitful workers that hide behind the mask of self-righteousness, ignorant of their doctrines or teachings, without the spiritual ability to know the differences between the truth and lies (2 Corinthians 11:13).

They are lovers of money, disregarding things with eternal values and always asking money from their congregation (Proverbs 30:15, 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 19). They have endless programs, church activities, love gifts, donations, pledges, contributions and fund raising all in the name of God. They pressure and compel people to give, to serve or do something apart from their free will volition.

To be classified as a cult, not all of the following characteristics have to be present, but in most cases, in one form or another, all of them will be:

- Extra-biblical authority works
- Legalistic system and code of conduct
- No Assurance of salvation
- Absolute authority guru type leader
- Prophet type leader
- Vacillating, ambiguous doctrines
- Spiritual Deception
- Exclusivity: denunciation of other groups
- Claims of Special discoveries
- Additional revelation
- Defective teaching of Christology
- Defective doctrine on human nature
- Out-of-context Scripture usage as proof-texts
- Segmented biblical attention
- Erroneous doctrines concerning life after death and retribution
- Entangling organization structure
- Financial exploitation
- Hyper Pseudo spiritual
- Mystical and occultism
- Money hungry



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Tract No. 66
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