



## THE CHRISTIAN-CULTS<sup>1</sup> (CC)

### Preliminary Considerations, Common Ground, Strategy

#### 1. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

- 1.1. Any group/church/religion that claims to be Christian<sup>2</sup>, yet deviates from the gospel message (i.e. plan of salvation) established by the Christian Bible is a (CC) (Act 20:28-30).
- 1.2. (CC) have been around from the beginning of God's covenant community (2Pe 2:1 - "false prophets arose among the people..." w/Jud 1:5).
- 1.3. Though making the same eternal promises found in Christianity, (CC) will damn rather than save, their teachers and those who follow them. IOW: a person in a (CC) is NOT a Christian or going to heaven (Gal 1:8-9).
- 1.4. True Christians will also be damned if they continue to associate w/those in (CC) who are unwilling to listen (2Jo 1:9-11).
- 1.5. Jesus, Paul and early church history all confirm that more people will be involved in (CC), rather than true Christianity (Luk 13:23-24; 2Ti 3:1-5, 4:3-4).
- 1.6. For this reason, the Apostles not only warned their people against (CC), but also demonstrated why what they believed did not fit into that category (e.g. Act 24:5, 14, 28:22; ἀίρεσις).
- 1.7. The Apostles focused on the (CC) more than any other false religion, in their attempts to evangelize and defend the Christian Faith (e.g. 1John, Galatians, 2Peter).

#### 2. COMMON GROUND

- 2.1. At the heart of all (CC) is a rejection of Christ's Lordship as necessary to receiving Him as Savior - i.e. a rejection of LBS, the heart of the gospel message (2Pe 2:1; Jud 3-4).
- 2.2. Ignorance, isolation or poor interpretation of the Scriptures are prolific in (CC) (2Pe 3:14-18).
- 2.3. (CC) frequently violate (Heb 13:8) by what they believe.
- 2.4. (CC) are committed to utilizing the same biblical language/terminology as true Christianity yet w/different meaning (e.g. Joh 4:20-22).

"It is possible for [the cultist] to utilize the terminology of biblical Christianity with absolute freedom, having already redesigned (i.e. redefined) these terms in a theological framework of his own making and to his own liking...Through the manipulation of terminology, it is therefore obvious that the cultist has the Christian at a distinct disadvantage, particularly in the realm of the great fundamental doctrines of biblical theology...The cultists capitalize on the almost total inability of the average Christian to understand the subtle art of redefinition in the realm of biblical theology.

<sup>1</sup> Cult is simply another word for sect which itself is a transliteration of the Greek word "heresy" (ἀίρεσις). As such it refers to those groups/churches/religions who are a false representation of the original.

<sup>2</sup> The term Christian literally means "little Christ" referring to those who are followers/disciples of Jesus Christ.

The late George Orwell's stirring novel *1984*, in which he points out that the redefinition of common political terms can lead to slavery when it is allowed to pass unchallenged by a lethargic populace, is a classic illustration of the dangers of perverted semantics (i.e. changing the meaning of terms)...On encountering a cultist, then, always remember that you are dealing with a person who is familiar with Christian terminology, and who has carefully redefined it to fit the system of thought he or she now embraces...Realizing [also] that the cultist will apparently agree with the doctrine under discussion while firmly disagreeing in reality with the historical and biblical concept, the Christian is on his way to dealing with cult terminology"- Walter Martin (The Kingdom Of The Cults)

2.5. (CC) are characterized by a refusal/inability to demonstrate their position to be consistent with the entire witness of Scripture (2Co 10:5 - " We destroy arguments [lit. "baseless thoughts"] and every lofty opinion [i.e. empty speculation] raised up against the knowledge of God [i.e. Scripture]; e.g. Stephen - Act 6:9-10, 7:1-53).

2.6. Followers of (CC) tend to be people who discern truth based on their emotions - i.e. they are emotionally dominated people (e.g. Act 7:54; 2Ti 3:6).

"It is a very real ...emotional chain that has a stronghold on the cultist's ability to discern truth from error, light from darkness." - ibid

2.7. Every member of a (CC) is also under the influence of Satan himself (2Co 4:3-4).

### 3. STRATEGY (i.e. Our evangelistic apologetic)

3.1. Our strategy for reaching those in (CC) must be focused on the authority (Lordship) of Jesus *alone* to determine the Christian Faith (**1Pe 3:15 - "Set apart Christ as Lord"**; 2Co 10:5; 2Co 4:5<sup>3</sup>; Heb 12:2).

3.2 Our strategy for reaching those in (CC) must demonstrate not only the ability to biblically address the error of their (CC), but patience, unbiased love and concern for their spiritual state (**1Pe 3:15 -"always being prepared to give a defense ["apologia"]...yet do it w/gentleness and respect"**; Col 4:6; 1Th 5:14; Jud 23).

"A discerning Christian who gives every indication of being unprejudiced, reasonably learned and possessed of a genuine love for the welfare of the cultist himself (which is easily detectable in the Christian's concern for his soul and spiritual well-being) can have a devastating effect upon the conditioning apparatus of any cult system." - ibid

3.3. Our strategy for reaching those in (CC) must attempt to address the "why" behind their current beliefs/emotional connection (**1Pe 3:15 - "a defense to anyone who asks for a reason (the why) for the hope (emotional connection) within you"**; IF WE ARE GOING TO BREAK THROUGH THEIR DEFENSE WE MUST KNOW THIS ABOUT THEM AS WELL).

3.4. Our strategy for reaching them must include an understanding of/appreciation for the power of God's Word and Spirit (Isa 55:10-11; Jer 23:29; Joh 16:8, 17:17; 1Co 2:3-5; 2Ti 2:24-26).

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<sup>3</sup> Some have posited that Paul was the inventor of the Christian Faith as though what he taught/believed was different than Jesus. Nothing however could be further from the truth! Paul saw his theology as completely consistent w/the teaching of Jesus and sought to bring others into submission to Him (not himself!) (2Co 4:5).