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That's A Good Question - Cults -

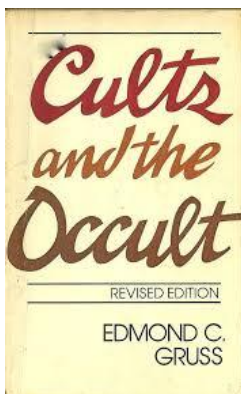
Question: How do we identify a cult and what can we help someone who is in it and to reach out to him or her effectively for Christ?

Answer: That is a relevant question. We need to address a pressing issue today as cults abound and are growing and infiltrating churches even in our country and in Asia.



Definition of a Cult

How do we define a cult? It must be said from the onslaught here that though there are many religious movements, it can be classified into 2 main categories, the one that finds salvation as a work of man or man's co-operation with God and a radically different view of God and the person and work of Christ from the Bible. **The other which is true Christianity attributes salvation to God alone that which is accomplished by God through Christ atonement for fallen man** (Ephesians 2:8–9; Titus 3:5).



What is a cult then? Dr Waiter Martin, an authority on cults, gave this definition,

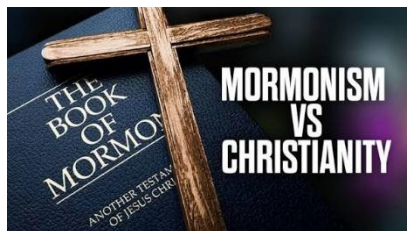
The adherence to major doctrines which are pointedly contradictory to orthodox Christianity, yet which claim the distinction of either tracing their origin to orthodox sources or being in essential harmony with those sources. Cultism, in short, is any major deviation from orthodox Christianity relative to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith (Edmund Gruss, *Cults and the Occult* [Presbyterian Reformed Publishing Co., 1974], 3).

In short, **a cult is a religious movement which claims the support of the Scriptures but clearly distorts or change the central message of historic Christianity by an additional doctrine or revelation or by subtracting a**

fundamental tenet of faith from it. To put it more sharply and clearly, I will enumerate the following here as the distinctive features of a cult:

1. An Extra-Scriptural Source of Authority
2. The Denial of Justification by Grace Alone (i.e. salvation by works or the sacraments)
3. The Devaluation of Christ (i.e. denying either the deity or humanity of Christ)
4. The Group as an Exclusive Community of the Saved (sometimes even secretive)
5. The Group's Role in Prophecy or Eschatology

For example, the cult of Mormonism is a rapidly growing movement today with 17 million followers. Joseph Smith, the founder was born in 1805, and in the year 1823 purportedly, an angel named "*moroni*" appeared to Joseph Smith. Joseph was told by the angel to uncover ancient gold plates. He apparently found those so-called gold plates and translated them into the Book of Mormons. Three witnesses originally testified to seeing the actual gold plates. Later, each of these either left the church or discredited Joseph or disavowed ever seeing the plates. In 1830, the 1st edition of the Book of Mormons was published which is claimed to be on par with scripture. After Joseph Smith died, a man by the name of Brigham Young took over and later built Salt Lake City in Utah, USA. From there, the world-wide empire of Mormonism came to be known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Today, Mormons claim to have 17 million members in over 90 countries and take in millions of dollars from its members annually. JW's was founded by Charles Tazeel in the 19th century with more than 6 million followers worldwide and has its strange teachings of denying Christ as God and not taking blood transfusion and making false predictions on exact date of the second coming of Christ among other errors. There are the Korean cults as well and the World Mission Society of God is operating here in Singapore with teaching of baptismal regeneration and that Ahn Sahng-Hong, the founder was the reincarnation of Jesus Christ among others. (The author has spoken to a former cult member that prompted the writing of this article to help him and thank God that he is receptive after reading it and seeking to know the truth.)



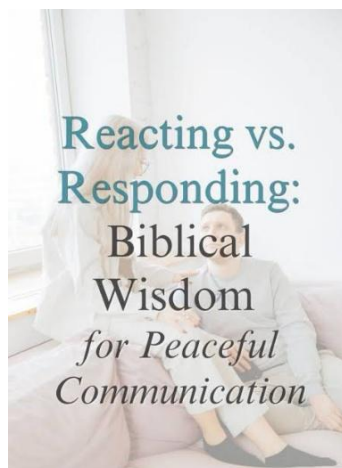
Witnessing Tips

The people who want to reach out to the cults members have to be generally well-read and knowledgeable of the word of God. It may be useful to ask them thought-provoking questions to enable them to examine what they believe. When the Bible is used by cults, it is rarely read in its entirety. Most verses are either taken out of the context or interpreted in an erroneous manner. **It is important then to know your Scriptures well especially on those relevant doctrines that deal with the belief system of that cult. It cannot be emphasised strongly here that one's witnessing attitude is as important as the content of the witness.** One may easily win the

argument and loses the soul. Present facts gently, lovingly and prayerfully and be prepared to listen to them and not just dominate all the time.

Here are some helpful pointers given by Frederick R Harm in his book *"How to Respond to the Science Religions, 21–22"*.

1. Realise that the cultic adherent is spiritually blinded (2 Cor 4:3–4) and need Holy Spirit's enlightenment.
2. Show personal interest and be genuinely concerned for their salvation and well-being. Do not argue to embarrass or to run done a person
3. Remember you are out to win a person and not an argument. Be gentle and gracious but yet uncompromising
4. The greatest force in winning a cult member is speaking the truth in love in the power of the Spirit.
5. Ask questions such as: *"How did you become a member of this cultic group"*, *"Has it really satisfied your deepest spiritual need?"* Do read and find out about the errors of his cult first and do your homework for you cannot speak in ignorance. Facts not feelings should be basis of your sharing
6. Give a witness of your personal faith in Christ and why you believed in the Lord.
7. Show him the Scripture in its context, pointing out the differences between the Bible and that cult. Bring your Bible always
8. One of the problems is semantics. Get him to define his terms (ie born again or regeneration) or you will not be able to communicate effectively.
9. Point out from the Bible could it be that his faith is based on the writings and experience of a human leader, while the Christian faith is in the final authority of the Word of God inspired by God.
10. Pass them something relevant to read and ask for his view on it. (ie tract or article or book)
11. Finally, pray for him that the Lord will open his eyes and illumine his mind and heart to the truth in the Scriptures. Only Jesus can transform and save a soul



Conclusion

Cults like the Mormons, Scientology, JW's, Eastern Lighting Group, Freemasons and Christian Science's teachings are the antithesis of orthodox Christianity. No Bible believer can consistently accept both the teachings of these aberrant groups and the Scriptures at the same time. **For they oppose or misrepresent one or more of the cardinal doctrines of historic Christianity and has not the support from the Bible. Each cult has to be assessed carefully based on its respective teachings, its practices and its fruits.** Our Lord Jesus have already, warned us in Matt 7:15–16, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

Be ever equipped with word of God and prepared to share and to defend the faith (Jude 3-4, 1Pet 3:15) and propagate the true gospel of Jesus Christ to them. Today, there is the teachings and practices of the New Age Movement as well. There are many who still adhered to these unbiblical doctrines and they parade under the banner of fitness or stress relieving exercise, health with transcendental meditation, yoga and feng shui, necromancy, witchcraft, crystal, wizardry and magic, the use of charts of astrology, horoscopes, zodiac signs, geomancy among others.

Remember that this a spiritual battle and we need to pray and seek the Lord for discernment, spiritual wisdom and grace and the right words and manner to reach out to members of this various cult groups. For without Him, we can do nothing.

Jack Sin

SIGNS of a "Christian" Cult



They add to the Word of God. It's never the Bible alone as its authority. Publications such as The Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, Science & Health, and AWAKE and Watchtower magazines are given equal and greater importance over Scripture.



They subtract from the **Diety of Jesus**. They will say he's a prophet, a teacher, the devil's brother, Michael the archangel, the son of God - but never God in the flesh. They may also subtract from the personhood of the Holy Spirit by reducing Him to an impersonal force used by God.



They multiply works to gain salvation. It is never grace alone. You must join them, be baptized, you must go door to door, you must strictly obey commandments, no one is saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.



They will divide your loyalties. They are an antichrist group. You are deceived into placing your primary loyalty toward the cult and its leaders instead of the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, you are discouraged from associating with non-members, and forbidden to have anything to do with ex-members. Where true Christians are encouraged to maintain contact and closeness with unbelieving family members, these groups do not.

**Invite your family and friends to
the Gospel Sunday Worship Service
on 27 Sep 2026!**



福音日

主日
九月廿七
上午十点正

27 Sep 2026 | Gospel Sunday | 10AM

LIVING LIFE UNDER THE

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NOT JUST UNDER THE SUN

1 John 1:1-10

孙友强牧师
Pastor Jack Sin



约翰前书 1章1-10节

不只活在日光之下，更要活在圣子之下。

160 Paya Lebar Road #04-06, Orion @ Paya Lebar, Singapore 409022
For any enquiries, please call Elder Tan @97450311



***Come & Join Us!
Door-to-Door Evangelism
on Sun 13 Sep
at Macpherson Estate.***

A Word from Australia!

Thank you, Rev Jack for your kindness and encouragement for Mrs Lim (Tow) Siew Yong, a faithful senior believer who enjoys reading SH Weekly and listening to the GAES sermons.

We appreciate your sending the GAES sermon "Nurturing the Fear of God in Our Evening Years" to us.

We are very blessed by this vital message to fear God, to know His character, live in His presence and cultivate the reverential fear of God as we age. Amen. Malachi 3:16.

As time is flying, we need to all the more live well, and then leave well. This is our aim, to please God when we meet Him. Praise and thank the Lord for your faithful ministry. May God continue to bless you and use you for His glory. 🙏

***Rev & Mrs Edward Paauwe
Hope BPC, Adelaide, Australia***

The Gloria Patri

The Gloria Patri, which means “***Glory be to the Father,***” has a rich history of use in the Christian church. It is also known as the lesser doxology, in comparison to the greater doxology, the Gloria in Excelsis Deo. The text of the Gloria Patri is simple, but profound:

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.***

It was originally written in Greek and used in the early church. When we compare the translation of the original Greek version to the modern version, we can see how little it has changed through the centuries. This short acclamation was often used in worship and has been used in the worship of English-speaking churches at least as far back as Thomas Cranmer’s 1549 Book of Common Prayer.

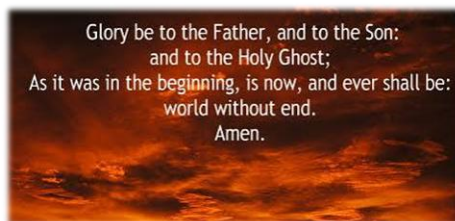
The line “*as it was in the beginning*” was added in the 4th century to respond to the Arian heresy which claimed that the Father alone was the eternal God. To which **the orthodox church responded by affirming in the Gloria Patri that the Son and Spirit were coequal with God in glory from the beginning.** This is clearly taught in Scripture in Jesus prayer in John 17:5, “*And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.*”

God’s glory was in the beginning (before anything was created), is now (despite all the schemes of the world, the flesh, and the devil), and ever will be, world without end (God’s glory is certain and unending). **This move to contemplate the eternality of God’s glory calls us out of ourselves and our times, out of our “pressing” needs, out of our current anxieties, to meditate on the most sure and unwavering reality: the eternal glory of God.**

When we sing this hymn as Christians, we sing it as those who already now have a taste of that glory (2 Cor. 3:18) and who are awaiting its unveiling in us at the resurrection (Rom. 8:18). In other words, as we contemplate God’s eternal glory we are contemplating our eternal joy.

The hymn ends with the pronouncement, “*Amen*”. The word “*Amen*” comes from Scripture and means “*truly*,” though it is often used as a pronouncement whereby the speaker gives his assent, essentially meaning, “*Let it be so.*”

To sum it all up, the Gloria Patri is a short, profound ymn that is firmly grounded in both the teaching of Scripture and the orthodox theology of the church and directs our attention and praise to the glorious triune God.



Adapted from <https://servantofthesovereign.wordpress.com>

Sovereign Hope BPC Annual Congregation Meeting 30 Aug 2026



The Church Session
(Rev Jack Sin, Eld Yue Kay
& Dn Paul Tan)
presented reports
recapping God's
Goodness and
Faithfulness in leading
and providing for the
ministry of the church.



A Blessed Lunch Fellowship!

Memory Verse

Deut 23:5 Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Dr Tim Yates brings us God's Word this morning on "***The Case of Balaam [Deut 23:5-23]***", continuing the quarterly series on "***Precious Insights from a Veteran Prophet - the Book of Deuteronomy***".
3. Next Sunday, Pastor will preach on "***Making Major Decisions in Life (Deut 30:1-20)***".
4. Dr Yates will conduct a seminar on "***Biblical Counselling in a Mentally Disturbed World***" after the brunch break.
5. Chinese Fellowship meets every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom. [Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178]. Join us for time of learning on the Book of Hosea (Thirdmill video lessons) and Heroes of the Faith (messages).
6. On **12 Sep (Sat)**, Pastor will preach at **Goshen BPC at 4pm in Chinese**. All are welcome. Venue is at Block 212, Hougang St 21, #03-353.
7. There will be **Door-to-Door evangelism at Macpherson Estate next Sunday 13 Sep** after lunch. Come and join the team to invite the residents to our **Gospel Sunday on 27 Sep**.
8. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. [Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551].
9. Pray for:
 - **Dr Sam**: New job in Ningbo, **Yusong**: Master's program at King's College, London from mid-Sep
 - **Joseph & Rachel**: Gospel Peace Station Mooncake Festival Outreach on 19 Sep and void deck outreaches
 - **Medical**: **Simon** [hospitalization, depression], **Kin Hoong's daughter Joyce** [chemotherapy], **Ps Babu's father-in-law** [treatment options for pancreatic cancer]
 - **Lily Almon** [citizenship application]
 - **Mission Trip to Myanmar [10-17 Nov]**
10. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church**
 - **Fund transfer** to Church UOB Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.