

... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error'

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2. WHY DELUSIONS SWEEP THROUGH OUR LAND
5. WHAT MAKES THEM FALL FOR IT?
9. NEW BOOKS BY THE EDITOR AVAILABLE
10. GOD'S WORD BREAKS THE PIPERS' SPELL
13. THE WORLD HAS MANY RELIGIONS
16. PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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CONTENTS

# The DISCERNER

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John E. Dahlin, *Chairman*

Mr. Harold Dainsberg

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## WHY DELUSIONS SWEEP THROUGH OUR LAND

*Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor*

In the recent issue of *The Discerner* I pointed out that the cults were gaining followers more rapidly than the established denominational groups in the land. In the article I also stated that if the present conditions continue it is possible that the cultic group will become dominant within a few decades, numerically considered. The present article is a continuation of the discussion in a different area, however. Our purpose is to trace the causes for the phenomenal expansion of these spurious groups. It is logical, I believe, to begin the discussion by stating that some religious bodies have opened the gates for these unorthodox groups to operate without scarcely any restraint, hence deceiving millions of people.

### A MODIFICATION OF BIBLICAL STANDARDS

First of all, there has been a widening trend in recent years of retreating from the spiritual positions once held by most of the well known religious denominations in the land. The accommodation and concessions being made have weakened the influence of the major religious bodies in America. In other words, they no longer seek to counteract vigorously the cultic groups. When religious organizations soften

their position on fundamental issues, it inevitably leads people to believe that there are no absolutes. This in turn weakens the major religious bodies and they no longer are able to provide a positive influence with the people on vital issues.

Most of the well known denominations have made concessions and accommodations on the matter of divorce and remarriage. The present-day weakness of many churches in these matters contributes to expand the breakdown of the marriage relationships. A significant change has come in recent years, and many of the larger religious groups no longer maintain the Biblical position regarding these matters. Often the position taken is evasive and reveals a desire to accommodate the people who are involved in unscriptural ways on divorce and remarriage.

In addition, the weakening of the position by a number of denominations on the matter of dealing with the homo-sexuals and lesbians has serious consequences. Often such groups have extended a welcome to those whose life-styles are warped.

Certain religious leaders have become defenders of those who are guilty of unscriptural practices by trying to establish the point that those particular people have a bio-

logical situation which accounts for this abnormal behaviour. It simply means such behaviour may be excused because their physical bodies have those characteristics. I have found, however, that most clear-minded psychologists, and those who have made an extended research in the matter, are convinced this kind of mis-behaviour in the sex life is acquired, and it does not develop in a natural way. I am convinced this view is right, and it is therefore understandable why the Scriptures extend condemnation upon all who are guilty of a warped sex-life. Actually such practices are an abomination before God and are condemned in the strongest kind of language in the Scripture, both in the Old and the New Testaments. These soft-headed defenders of those guilty of this unorthodox behaviour are rendering a disservice to our nation in this hour of crisis when immoral practices seem to be on a rampage.

Moreover, the rationalization of the record of creation and man's lofty origin as given in the book of Genesis, opens the gate to a broad deviation from fundamental positions along all fronts. If man has evolved through a long process of evolution, he simply is a highly developed animal. With such concepts it is easy to understand that accommodations are made to those who manifest strange life-styles. Even certain Roman Catholic spokesmen have ridiculed the old orthodox positions on creation and miracles. With such views being tolerated within many religious denominations, we see clearly that the gate is open widely for further deviations from the Scriptural position on all moral matters. The Psalmist raises the vital question, "If the foundations be destroyed what can the

righteous do?" (Ps. 11:3). If the Scriptural guidelines on faith and morals are no longer authoritative, it is understandable that a deterioration of our whole society is unavoidable. When the church no longer upholds the Biblical position on sin and wrong practices, we lose our defense against immorality and spurious life-styles. The accommodation by church bodies of those who are guilty of sex deviation and improper human relationships will lead to a further expansion of all such unbiblical practices. This actually destroys the line of defense in the maintenance of a normal Christian society. Of course numerous enemies are created by taking such a positive stand, but it ought to be taken nevertheless. Anita Bryant has been villified as few have been abused recently for opposing these practices. Her success in Florida expanded the persecution of this brave woman in other parts of our country. I am convinced she has encouraged many others who have wondered if it is worthwhile to oppose these evil practices publically and at the polls.

#### **OTHER SCRIPTURAL PRACTICES ARE TOLERATED**

The matter of social drinking is another development which has found its way among even some conservative church people. We would expect this among liberal groups, but it has spread to others likewise. Total abstinence has been the position held by Bible-believing groups in the past. The accommodation of people who are interested in a greater freedom in the use of alcoholic beverages weakens the testimony of the church, and it allows worldliness a wider practice in the life of Christian denominations. The wise man does not accept this kind

of rationalization. Listen to his words, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1).

#### CONTRIBUTING CAUSES FOR THE PRESENT SITUATION

Behind all this interest in accommodation, lies the pragmatic philosophy. It was introduced by John Dewey in the realm of education in the early part of this century. This has led to the abandonment, more and more, of a directive type of education in our public schools. The non-disciplinary method has broken down to a large extent the effectiveness of our secular educational institutions. Pragmatism has not stopped within the sphere of education. It seems to have permeated our whole society. It is based on the rejection of certain absolutes. Such landmarks are no longer regarded as they once were in America. According to the Dewey concept truth, as regarded in the past, may not be truth today. Anything that works is acceptable, you see. If truth may be shifted around as we move mortar in a wheel-barrow, then we have reached a tragic condition. As a long time college teacher, I have been aware for some time what this philosophy has done to the thinking of millions of people. It weakens the whole fabric of our society. Liberal theology is related to this type of rationalism. If the Bible is not inerrant, then we are free to introduce our own judgment on all issues. A strong Christian society cannot be maintained without the acceptance of certain absolutes. The wise man also instructs us in these words, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). The pampering of chil-

dren, and the conforming to the wishes of the immature, are steps which place our generation on the skids, as it were, and it ultimately leads to anarchy.

With these conditions prevalent throughout our land, I see a bleak future. If we dismantle our battlements and defenses, we will become victims to false teachings such as never have been experienced in our country. The spirit of accommodation, and the de-emphasis of disciplinary methods, will leave millions unprotected. The cults have a hey day now because most religious organizations have lost the will or interest in combatting false teachings. Whenever we weaken regarding Biblical absolutes, we will make it easier for cultists to make inroads in our whole American society. This is precisely what has happened. These skillful propagandists have taken advantage of this so-called open season for their activities. At times cultic spokesmen are invited to speak in the churches, including some conservative organizations. The argument is, they may convey information to us which is needed. This is totally unrealistic; it gives the false groups status and respectability. Once they have achieved this goal, their influence will be enhanced obviously. There is ample literature available to enlighten every group on the teachings of the various cults, and we do not need their contribution in this matter.

What might be a remaining remedy against these dangerous trends which I have enumerated? I am convinced that Bible-believing groups need to re-introduce all the basic Scriptural doctrines in the preaching and teaching ministry of the church. In other words, it is necessary to restore the Biblical absolutes to their rightful place within

each church. The unBiblical groups have very few problems in overcoming those who have been victimized by the pragmatic philosophy. Even the Eastern oriented groups have swept through the land of late. They have been enabled to achieve success because people have been left largely defenseless through a lack of fundamental Biblical teaching. The Biblical battlements and defenses must be erected once

more. All the apostles emphasize the need for sound doctrine. This is the sure remedy for bewildered people who have been separated from the absolutes through pragmatism and a rationalization of fundamental issues. There is no other way to reverse the trends which I have discussed. It is doubtful that any large segment will be brave enough to move out upon such a positive Biblical foundation.

## WHAT MAKES THEM FALL FOR IT?

By Edward A. Johnson

### A Look at the Cults

In this article we shall attempt to focus upon four questions:

1. What is a cult?
2. What do they do to their followers?
3. Why do our young people fall for the cults (or, what have we done or not done that they are susceptible)?
4. What can we do about it?

### I. WHAT IS A CULT?

The best definition we have seen is one given by Dr. Gordon Lewis, a professor at Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver. A cult, he says, is any religious movement which claims the support of Jesus Christ and/or the Bible but which distorts the Christian message in two ways: (1) by adding to the Scriptures its own special revelation, (2) by displacing basic Christian teachings with some secondary teaching(s). (For further details see his *Confronting the Cults*.)

Moreover, these cults usually are built around the teachings and activities of one central figure, one leader or founder with a particularly magnetic personality whose life,

upon closer examination, proves anything but exemplary. The cults each tend to mirror their founder's particular faults and excesses, thus becoming no better and frequently worse than those whom they would "liberate."

There have been many groups around for some time which have fit this description: the Mormons with their special revelations from Joseph Smith; Christian Science, or Eddyism, built around Mary Baker Eddy; the Jehovah's Witnesses, or Russellites, founded by Russell and Rutherford; the Seventh Day Adventists, built around the writings of Ellen B. White; and The Way, based in Ohio and founded by a former United Church of Christ pastor, Victor Paul Wierwille. Other groups have arisen still farther out: the Children of God, the Moonies, the Love Israel cult, Hare Krishna, TM (nothing but revamped Hinduism), and various hippie communes, to name a few. They are described by OUR Founder, Jesus Christ Himself, in Matthew 24:23-25: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or, there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs,

and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before."

## II. WHAT DO THEY DO TO THEIR FOLLOWERS?

What we've read about this by now has been pretty gruesome. They use a kind of mind — and will — conditioning which reminds us of Communist brainwashing, only a lot more sophisticated and subtle — the victim scarcely realizes what is happening. These converts are kept in complete isolation from the outside world and from family and friends, whom they are taught they must renounce as "instruments of the devil." A key Bible passage used here is Luke 14:26, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Also Hebrews 6:4-6, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance . . ."

"Persons held in thrall by these groups are often in effect imprisoned just as though they were being held in a cell — except that in cases of physical imprisonment, one normally retains one's mental and spiritual independence" (Richard H. Rosichan, of Miami, in *Civil Liberties*, ACLU, May 1977, p. 2).

The cults keep their followers hungry on a scanty, low-energy diet and fatigued and tense from lack of sleep. There is no privacy. The individual is nothing, the cult and its

Leader everything. New thought patterns are hammered into the subjects' heads through constant repetition, veiled threats, and appeals to their darkest fears. They must study diligently; they must attend lengthy lectures with no questions asked. They must engage in lengthy self-criticism sessions reminiscent of what the Communists are doing with the officers and supporters of the former regime in Vietnam. There is no opportunity to hear any other point of view or to compare notes with those outside of the cult. The cultists hear constantly of their own past wrongdoing and that of their forefathers. They are made to feel that they must atone for all such wrongdoing by sacrificing all family ties, selling all their possessions, and abandoning any earlier life goals they may have cherished. They must then get out and "do and dare" everything for the Great Leader. (Moonies are required to earn at least \$100 per day for their cult; they live in poverty while the Rev. Sun Myung Moon lives in baronial splendor on a 22-acre millionaire's estate along the Hudson River above New York City.)

"Why," one might ask, "don't they just get out from under all this?" They can't. Not without outside help. They have been reduced to slaves unable to think for themselves, make their own decisions, or function alone. And their cults not only have no Christian compassion for those outside their group, they show little genuine Christian concern for their own members either — just the opposite of the true Christian church!

What the cults are doing to their involuntary slaves is totally unconstitutional, for it violates their freedoms of thought and association. Yet groups like the American Civil

Liberties Union are fighting the deprogrammers and other anti-cultist groups, claiming that it has not been shown or proved that such sects employ coercion (what do they need?). They also worry — and here they may have a valid constitutional point — that the use of the deprogrammers' tactics might set a precedent for future efforts by the parents of, say, young Protestants who convert to Catholicism or young Jews who convert to Christianity to try to woo them back by force to their original allegiance. We have not heard the last of the debate on this question.

### III. WHAT MAKES YOUNG PEOPLE FALL FOR THESE CULTS?

Kenneth Martin of Denver lost his daughter Rachel to one of these cults for a time (she was recaptured from them about a year ago on a street in St. Louis). He has written and lectured widely on these questions, saying that society has set the stage for the cultists by teaching young people to question everything: their parents, their churches, their pastors, their teachers, even the Bible. He feels that this simply makes youths sitting ducks for the powerful cult leaders with their easy, simplistic answers to youth's questions. I must respectfully disagree. My limited experience has been that these same youth, taught to question and think for themselves, have learned to see through deception. I suspect that it's the youth who have been rigidly indoctrinated and taught to accept all authority without question who become easier marks for the cultists, who only substitute their own authority for that of the home and the church.

But the youth who do fall for the cults are usually depressed, disillusioned, uncertain of their future

in a chaotic world, at odds with their parents, and generally disoriented. They reject parental authority because they see their parents as hypocrites, not to mention their schools, churches, government, and society generally. Think of the successive shocks which young people in America have suffered since 1963: political assassinations which struck down some of their heroes and father figures; Vietnam, Cambodia, and with them Kent State; the resurgence of extremism in American life; two Presidents in a row who proved unworthy of their trust; Watergate; environmental pollution; unemployment; the rise of crime; urban decay; the energy shortage; and the basic rootlessness and hypermobility of modern American life. The answers to which young people have turned have proved to be no answers at all, but only producers of more disillusionment: alcohol; the drug scene; hard rock; free-wheeling sex; the New Morality (nothing but the ancient immorality); grade school pupils' addiction to drugs and to alcohol; astrology (the "Age of Aquarius"); devil and demon worship; witchcraft and the occult — and much, much more. The number of youths in our mental hospitals and psychiatric clinics has skyrocketed as the bills for all this reckless living have come pouring in. Finally, enter eastern mysticism and the cults with their aggressive, attractive recruiters and great leaders who know exactly how to reach those youth who are most vulnerable, most easily swayed, most depressed and alienated — persons who will latch onto anything and anybody who promises them a sense of personal worth, of belonging to *something*. If only Biblical Christianity would organize itself as well as these cults and go out as aggressive-

ly as they do to win such susceptible young people!

Let this also be said: Many youth have no sense of belonging to or counting for something because, in our affluent society, everything has been handed to them. Their parents have gone to great lengths to spare them for the struggles and trials which made men and women out of their parents. What the parents couldn't provide, "Santa Claus" — the United States government — could (only now that avenue of freewheeling bounty is also drying up). And the churches? For many years they were building bigger and bigger cathedrals on Main Street and grander and grander ecumenical mergers. They gave the masses who were begging for bread from the Word of God only the stones of rationalism, humanism, and political action. The false teachers have arisen in the vacuum and have thrived because God's people all too often taught next to nothing, and did nothing.

#### IV. WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Eugene Wyman of Omaha, chairman of an anti-cultist group and the uncle of the youthful cultist referred to under III, has written: "The most important thing you must do is warn your teenagers and other young adults. . . . If you don't and one of these groups captures your loved one, the chances are great that you might never see your son or daughter again." Those GIs who best resisted the Korean Communist Brainwashing were the ones who had received a strong, Biblically-grounded set of religious convictions during childhood, who knew what they believed and why. Those who gave in to the brainwashers believed in little or nothing, and proved the truth of the late Peter

Marshall's prayer: "Lord, help us to see that unless we stand for something, we shall fall for anything."

We read: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 3:14-15). Just how well do you know your Bible? How long is it since you've read it and really studied it?

Several years ago the parents of a girl who had gone into a commune asked me to help them get her out of it. They felt that the effort would require someone who knew the Bible well enough to refute the arguments which she and the commune leaders would put forth. Sure enough, she quoted Jesus' words about not being worthy to be a disciple if one didn't hate one's own parents and family. It was right after Easter, and I remembered something from the Seven Last Words on the Cross. "Barbara," I said quietly, "did you realize that the same Jesus who spoke those words also told John, when He was dying in the throes of the worst agony every experienced by mortal man, to look after His mother Mary when He was gone? He provided for His own mother and He expects us to do the same." The girl's defenses crumbled. She wanted out of the commune anyhow; she came with us willingly; and today she is a missionary nurse headed for service in Africa. But one must KNOW the Bible in order to refute the devil's misuse of it in pushing his program. Do you know the Bible well enough to withstand him?

Let every Christian congregation



take every Sunday School class, confirmation class, VCS class, and youth group meeting with the utmost seriousness. Let no teacher take or keep a class for which she is not prepared to work diligently in the class materials every week. The stakes are too high for sloppiness! Let every parent maintain an active interest in his (her) children through confirmation and beyond, so that they may remain true to the faith and to the Savior they have promised to hold to and to serve. And let every young person regard the study of the Bible and the Christian faith as a lifelong adventure, a lifetime commitment and challenge handed to him/her not by the church or the pastor but by Jesus Christ Himself!

But parents have the greatest responsibility of all. All else falls flat if the parents lie down on the job spiritually. Martin Luther said: "The highest privilege any boy or girl could have is to be raised in a Christian home." I'm grateful to my own parents for many things, but above all for the fact that every Sunday church and Sunday School came first; and they didn't send us there, they TOOK us and they STAYED with us. My parents taught one or

another class during most of those years. But some of my saddest experiences in the ministry have been the time I've helplessly watched young people from religiously indifferent homes regress from their earlier eagerness for Christ, gradually losing interest and enthusiasm and dropping out because of parental indifference or opposition. I fear for what such parents must answer on the day of judgment!

We can also refuse to give money, not only to these cults, but to any group — no matter how spiritually or cleverly phrased it appeals — that cannot tell us where our contribution will be used. The Pallottine Fathers are but one of a number of doleful examples that could be cited.

May the Holy Spirit lead us to become mature people spiritually, "No more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:14-15).

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## NEW BOOKS BY THE EDITOR ARE AVAILABLE

About a year ago the book, *Glimpses and Reflections of a Ministry*, by Prof. John E. Dahlin, was published. It reviews his 50 years of ministry in wide areas. The material is both biographical as well as providing an overview of his experiences and observation during a long ministry. The introduction is written by Dr. John W. Walvoord, President of Dallas Theological Seminary. It is cloth-bound. The

price is \$4.25 with .40¢ postage.

The book, *Living and Serving*, became available February 1st. It is a selection of 28 important radio messages given over Northwestern College Network of Christian radio stations during these many years. It is a devotional book and is well received. The price is \$3.45 with .30¢ postage. Order from Religion Analysis Service, 2708 E. Lake St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55406.

# GOD'S WORD BREAKS THE PIPERS' SPELL

by Lorraine J. Pakkala

Lurking everywhere are evil forces waiting to entice and trap unsuspecting, dissatisfied and seeking young people who are looking for a cause to follow. God's Word is the solution to this phenomenon.

The music of the "pied pipers" blares across the land, and young people by the tens of thousands march off to follow the hundreds of mushrooming cults. The list includes the Unification Church, Children of God, Forever Family, UFO, Divine Light Mission, Hare Krishna and many "one-man" egomaniacal groups of 30 or 40 members.

Young people everywhere should be made aware that in Smalltown, USA, and in huge metropolitan areas alike, the scourge is widespread and growing. They should never think that they are completely safe from the influence of these groups. More than 30,000 youth, mainly from the ages of 18 to 25, have been swept off their feet through the enchantment of Moon's Unification Church alone. Young adults are cutting lifelong family ties and are abandoning their education to blindly follow a cult or master.

What can one do to gird himself against the claims of the various cults? First, he can examine the fallacious claims of the cults. Being sucked in through emotional and hypnotic meetings when far from home is a common experience among young people. Unfortunately they do not carefully evaluate what they really want to do with their lives and fail to consider the alternatives which are not possible if they do join a group.

Second, he should learn Bible doctrine so that he can recognize cult leaders' false assertions of being equal with God or being greater than Christ. Acts 4:12 clearly states: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Only Christ can say, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30).

Third, he should reject self-proclaimed "prophets" who claim to possess exotic revelations and exclusive visions. Many of these deceivers have very magnetic personalities, and some former followers of gurus have even testified of seeing auras of light surrounding these persons and that this was a reason why they accepted them so completely. Paul warned of this very thing in II Corinthians 11:13-14: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

**HERE WAS FATHER MOON, THIS BIG FATHER IMAGE WHO WANTED TO TAKE OVER ALL MY DECISIONS.**

Diane, a former Moonie, tells the story of her three year-trip on the Moon route:

"If I had to sum up my experience in the Unification Church using one word it would be 'confusion.' I was at the end of my freshman year at a big, prestigious northeastern university, far from home and family, under a terrific amount of pressure to excel in grades and in popularity.

"One day I started talking with a couple of 'Moonies' on a corner near the college. They were smiling and they seemed so happy. I realize now it may have been a cop-out, but here was Father Moon, this big father image who wanted to take over all my decisions and iron out all my problems. They convinced me that it was a good cause. And the kids were so clean-living compared to my college friends—no drinking, no sex, no drugs. I was very disillusioned over the Watergate affair and really felt that Moon was out to make a better world. I really believed at that time that he was Christ returned.

"Although my relationship with my mother (my father had recently died) was very good—no hassles at all—I renounced all family ties and joined the Moonies.

"Looking back I can see that the recruitment techniques were far from rational decision-making atmospheres. The indoctrination period included weeks of nonstop yelling and hypnotic chanting until I was emotionally and physically exhausted. On some nights I got as little as three hours of sleep. We were taught to empty our minds and chant until we'd get high. It was almost like taking drugs. We were taught the Unification Church method of meditation, emptying, detachment and surrendering personal and worldly desires. Even our families were included in this renunciation, and in its place there was this feeling that all of us Moonies were one big family, and that Moon was our father. We were completely released from the pressure of making any decisions at all. One night a gang of us went to see the movie 'Snow White.' We held hands and walked home singing,

'Heigh Ho, Heigh Ho,' just like a bunch of 12-year-olds. Maybe that was the whole thing—an escape back into childhood with someone else making decisions for us—all we had to do was follow the leader.

"We all had this strong conviction that Moon would rule the world and make it a perfect place. No sacrifice seemed too great to help make it happen. When I joined the Moonies, I gave them everything—all my clothes, my suede coat; all the stuff kids have at college—my stereo and typewriter. At first I decided not to give them my clarinet for it was very special—made of silver; my mother and I had saved money together for two years to buy it. I felt that I couldn't part with that, but it ended up that I did anyway—the room where it was stored was broken into, and it was stolen. It was the only thing taken from that room though; maybe they decided I should renounce that too.

"After a month of indoctrination I went out on the street selling candles, peanuts and flowers and begging for money, usually working 15 hours a day. My daily quota was \$100, but I usually took in \$135 to \$150. Every penny went for 'The Cause' and I lived on less than 70¢ a day. Since we ate mostly rice I was starved for fresh fruits and vegetables, but it never occurred to me to take any of the money. During this time I owned only my sleeping bag and the clothes on my back plus one change.

"I have bad feet and I was wearing somebody else's boots so my feet gave out for street work. I was then put in a Unification street workers headquarters to cook and keep house for 20 men. Later I was transferred to a grainarium (decora-

tive grain plaques) factory in the Midwest. Our quota for three people was 500 grainariums a day which sold for \$5 each. We received no pay so it is no wonder that Moon can purchase 115 million of property in New York City at one time.

"Yet I didn't see any consistency in Moon's living in his 25-room mansion and having two yachts while we lived frugally in sleeping bags. I believed that he was going to take over the world and needed a nice place to entertain 'high-level' people. I also thought of Moon as a very moral and holy person.

"From the day I joined the Moonies in 1973 when I was 19, I got home only three times; one of these times was to collect a sizable inheritance from my grandparents. It was intended for my education but I turned that over to 'The Cause' too. I especially wanted to be with my family at Christmas, but that was the biggest selling time of the year and it was absolutely out of the question. I remember Christmas Eve. I was on a street corner selling candles and I was very cold and a little hungry while all these families kept walking by, happy and together. My feet hurt.

"In fact it was my bad feet that finally brought me home—they broke down from all that walking and street work. The Unification Church wouldn't get me hospital care and I knew I needed it. Earlier I'd been in the hospital for my feet a few times at home. The Moonies kept promising to take me to one of their hospitals but they didn't. I hitch-hiked home thinking I'd go back as soon as my feet were better, but after a few weeks at home the confusion started to fall away.

"Also, I started reading the Bible again. Comparing Scripture with what Moon told us I found that the

Bible states, 'Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he [Christ] is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil' (I John 3:7,8). I found out through an article in *Time* magazine that Moon's righteousness was said to have included two divorces, a multimillion-dollar network of industries (pharmaceuticals, air rifles, titanium, tea) and arrests in Korea for adultery and promiscuity after persistent reports that the church practiced ritual sex (Sept. 30, 1974).

"After three years I'm back where I started, trying to sort out the pieces, trying to sift out 'cunningly devised fables' (II Pet. 1:16) from truth."

The Bible is the authority for all Christians. How do the claims of *Divine Principle*, a book published by the Unification Church, hold up under close Bible scrutiny?

*Divine Principle*: Moon himself is Christ returned (p. 206).

Bible: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matt. 24:4, 5).

*Divine Principle*: Christ's death on the cross was not a part of God's plan. Death represented Christ's failure (pp. 142, 143).

Bible: "Him [Jesus] being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

*Divine Principle*: The New Testament words of Jesus and the Holy Spirit will lose their light in later times as new truth is revealed (p. 118).

Bible: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35).

*Divine Principle:* Jesus was not resurrected from the dead bodily, but spiritually. (pp. 211, 212).

Bible: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).

Counterfeit Christs continue to lure young people from their families, their education and even their own personal identities. Jesus warned of this very thing when He said, "And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ: or, lo, he is there; believe him not: for false

Christs and false prophets shall rise and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect" (Mark 13:21, 22).

The gurus, masters and self-styled leaders urge their followers through deprivation, hard work, begging and abstaining from drugs, drink and sex to obtain a magical path to God. But Jesus authoritatively declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

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## THE WORLD HAS MANY RELIGIONS

by Muriel Larson

All religions, except Christianity, make man's salvation dependent on man. But no man could ever become good enough for fellowship in eternity with the holy God who made him.

Why should Christians send forth missionaries to convert people to Christ? Have you ever thought it a foolish waste of time, effort and money? Just about every tribe and nation in the world has some kind of god. Is it not enough if people are sincere and try to live according to the rules of their culture?

Representatives of leading religions in the world are meeting to see if they can find common ground for unity. Before long they hope to have a great world church composed of all religions.

From a strictly human standpoint, there may perhaps be some good in the various major religions of the world, the founders of which have, for the most part, stressed the need for living good lives. But there is quite a variance as to what is considered good.

In the Bible, by inspiration of God, the Apostle Paul gave a concise definition of Christianity: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3, 4).

Christ's beloved disciple John also defined the Christian gospel in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

### Answers Sin Problem

True Christianity is different from other religions in that it is the only faith that answers the sin problem.

Few people would deny that sin is the cause of the major problems in the world. Mankind is beset with wars, crimes, disease, alcoholism, hunger, injustice and guilt—all because of sin.

Men have tried to get rid of sin

and all that goes with it, but they haven't succeeded. They cry, "Peace, peace," and all the while there's hatred in their hearts. A former hippie, who had talked of the need for people to love one another and live in peace, admitted that his mind had been filled with hatred toward others. He could not change himself; how could he change the world?

Many strive to live good lives. But because of the sinful natures with which individuals are born, not one person can succeed in being perfect. Somewhere along the line people do transgress, no matter how hard they try not to. The Bible says, "There is none righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:10).

However, this book which Christians know to be the Word of God says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (5:8).

Men could never succeed in becoming good enough for fellowship in eternity with the holy God who made them. Therefore God became a man in order to care for the sin problem and to reconcile to Himself those who would accept His sacrifice on the cross for their sins.

The Bible says that God made Jesus, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that "we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21).

That same chapter also says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

#### Salvation by Faith

True Christianity is the only religion that teaches that salvation is by faith rather than by works.

All other religions make man's salvation dependent on man. But just as has been shown, man's efforts to be good and to do good are feeble at best. One need only look at his own life to find that this is true. Everyone has failed many times.

Who can bridge the gulf between the holy God and sinful man? Only God can do it—and He did. Even the rich young man who told Jesus that he had kept all Ten Commandments had failed to keep the first one: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). His god was money.

Has anyone kept what Jesus Christ said were the first two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" (Matt. 22:37, 39). If each person is honest, he will have to confess that he has failed miserably.

The Bible says that people are not saved by works of righteousness which they have done but because of God's mercy, by spiritual rebirth and renewing of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ our Saviour (Titus 3:5, 6).

Romans 4:25 says that Jesus Christ was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," which means to be freed from blame or guilt.

The Apostle Paul testified that more than 500 people saw Jesus Christ after His resurrection from the dead (I Cor. 15:4-8). Christ was then caught up into heaven, where He now intercedes for His people (Heb. 7:25).

#### Changes Lives

True Christianity is the only religion that gives evidence of its truth

by the changed lives of its adherents.

Acceptance of Jesus Christ has changed many a self-centered sinner into a saint. It changed the harlot Mary Magdalene into a woman of God. It changed Saul, a killer and persecutor, into a great missionary—the Apostle Paul. It changed the extortioner Zachaeus into a generous and honest man.

It has changed drunkards and drug addicts into sober, productive citizens. It has changed self-centered people into selfless servants of God and others. It has changed cannibals and other pagans into godly Christians.

Christianity has sent self-sacrificing missionaries all over the world

to help heal the sick in body and soul. It has established hospitals, orphanages and schools.

But the main reason it is important to reach all people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that believing on the Son is the *only* way whereby they can be saved from the wrath of God and can obtain eternal life in heaven (John 3:36). The Apostle Peter said concerning Jesus Christ, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

If Jesus Christ is not your Saviour, trust in Him now.

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## PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*John E. Dahlin, Editor*

**QUESTION . . .** Which of the cults will likely gain the most followers in the years that are ahead?

**ANSWER . . .** While it may seem that the new eastern oriented groups are making a phenomenal progress, it is extremely doubtful that they will continue the present momentum for any considerable period of time. They do not fit the American culture and the general pattern of life here. Several of these have moved into a position of extremism, and such groups usually lose their appeal in time. It is our belief that the experienced old-line cults, with all their resources and capabilities, will continue to attract more followers than some of the fly-by-night groups. For example, the Mormon cult achieved a greater success last year than any other group. This does not mean that the newer cults will disappear; they simply won't have the ability to match the experience and the propaganda of the old-line cultic groups.

**QUESTION . . .** Is there a possibility that the cultic groups will diminish and weaken in their great struggle to gain followers?

**ANSWER . . .** We read in the Scriptures that such false groups will take on a greater dimension as we approach the end-time. Paul writes, "But evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13). Jesus also points out that "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Mt. 24:24). This answers the question with regard to the expansion or diminishing of cultic activity as the age draws to a close.