



CELEBRATING 16 YEARS OF MINISTRY

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Reachout Trust is an international Christian ministry that upholds biblical truth and builds bridges to people in the cults, occult and new age. We aim to:

Examine and reconcile with the Christian gospel the beliefs and spirituality of people within the cults, occult, new age and all not upholding biblical truth.

Train and equip Christians to explain the Christian gospel in a relevant way.

Provide a complete service of counselling and help to all enquirers.

Present the Christian gospel.

Work with organisations who will help achieve these aims.

A detailed information pack that shows how you can be involved in this ministry is available from head office.

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The Internet

When the *Quarterly* editorial committee took the decision to write a leader about the World Wide Web we did not realise how topical it would be.

As I write this article the dust has yet to settle over the 39 cult members involved with an Internet site, who committed suicide. As you listened to the tragic tale of believing there was a better future without their bodies. As you heard the young man thank the leader for giving him an opportunity to be involved in death, you were acutely aware of the power that such cults have. Many possibly had been recruited via the Internet.

Originally I was going to begin the article by underlining the number of sites that spread the message of the cults, and the tragic story above is a perfect illustration. This world-wide network of computer sites that can be accessed so simply with a modem, a telephone line and a computer, can be

the means of bringing young and old into the bondage of the cults.

Another example was reported in The Mormon publication *Church News* on 1 March 1997. One headline read, 'Church enters the World Wide Web "carefully and methodically"'. Amid the report we discovered the following statistics. In the week beginning 2 February, when the church added family history information to their site, they received nearly 90,000 visitors. The average weekly visits is between 50-60,000. They discovered that they'd received visitors from 93 different countries. The top country was obviously USA and Britain was fifth in the list.

A third example of the dangers came from an article in Focus magazine March 1997. It was reporting on the way that witches were using the personal computer. Part of it read,

Witches from all walks of life can be found surfing the net at high tide... Search their hard-drives and you'll be sure to find a

vast database of cures, rituals and spells... Witches make no distinction between white and black magic. Instead they believe that the spell-caster is subject to the power and influence of the spell cast. If it is a spell for good, then good will rebound on them... If, on the other hand, it's one of those nasty wicked... spells, then the three-fold return law says it will rebound back to spell-caster.

Most major cults and many minor ones now have excellent sites. With the money to develop the technology they can produce, all-singing, all-dancing sites, that are attractive, multimedia presentations.

There are also a number of 'anti-cult' sites if you will pardon the expression. Ours is one of them and we are certainly seeking to develop our pages. If anyone is qualified and able to assist in this please let us know as we want our site to be of the highest quality in order to help combat the inroads that some of the other sites are making.

There is no doubt that even at the moment we are mak-

(Continued on page 3)

Inside . . .

A Course of Miracles - p.2.

Christian Science - p.4.

Martial Arts - p.5.

Watch The Tower - p.6.

Truth Restored - 11 - p.8.

Witnessing to Cults - 1 - p.12.



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The Upside-Down World of " A Course Of Miracles "

by Paul Architetto

This is the final part of the article that was first published in the *Christian Sentinel*, P.O.Box 11322, Philadelphia, PA 1913, USA, Spring 1995 and is reproduced with their permission.

Misquoting seems to be systematic of *A Course in Miracles*. Misquoting the Bible and taking it out of context seem to be par for the Course. For example, in the Preface, page xii, it states that, only minds can really join, and whom God has joined no man can put asunder and specifically references the *Text*, page 356. But on that page we read,

God's Son is one. Whom God has joined as one, the ego cannot put asunder.

Not only is this a direct misquoting of the text, but the context is different. Furthermore, this is just one example of many feeble attempts to sound Christian in nature. Certainly this reference is a distortion of Matthew 19:6 where Jesus said, clearly talking about marriage, therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate. The twisted interpretation of God's word in the Bible is characteristic of most cults.

Clearly one of the most despicable aspects of the Course is the wholesale attack on Jesus Christ by redefining who He is. Although many false religions lower Christ's position from that of deity to just a mere person, the Course goes one step further. It reduces Jesus to that of a 'term,' an ideology, the so-called Christ Consciousness (whereby one can be like God by getting over his or her spiritual amnesia, achieving this enlightenment through various methods like meditation). It states:

The name of Jesus is the name of one who was a man but saw the face of Christ in all his brothers and remembered God. So he became identified with Christ, a man no longer, but at one with God. The man was an illusion. And Christ needed his form that he might appear to men and save them from their own illusions. - Manual/Clarification of Terms 5.

Of course, the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is God incarnate and came into the world to save man from sin, not from

illusions. The Course, however, denies that sin exists in the world. This point cannot be overemphasised. The Course also dismisses the reality of death and the devil. The Course teaches that there is only error, and error can be corrected. Without sin, there is no guilt, and thus one can achieve peace of mind. This is the Miracle. The ramification of this denial of sin is that man's atonement through the blood of Jesus Christ on Calvary is effectively eliminated. Indeed, who needs a Saviour to save us from imagined evils? Striking at the very essence of the cross, the Course boldly states that

the crucifixion did not establish the Atonement; the resurrection did. Many sincere Christians have misunderstood this.

More to the point, it states,

sacrifice is a notion totally unknown to God - Text 3.

This is blasphemous.

The Course continues to malign Christ on various levels. It impugns the Christ that Christians have accepted into their hearts and lives, as well as belittling its own 'illusionary Christ.' Discussing Christ, it states:

It is possible to read his words and benefit from them without accepting him into your life - Manual, Clarification of Terms 5.

The Course preaches its very own fabricated 'Jesus', and yet contradicts itself by downplaying his importance! It even has the audacity to proclaim that it is Christian in statement - Preface, ix.

During a second session with the group, while others were reading aloud from a section called *The Choice for Completion*, I silently read on. I discovered what I thought to be something sexual in nature. My suspicion was soon confirmed when the group came upon this particular section. Karen started a discussion about the exchanging of power in relationships between men and women. Then she got sexually explicit, and as I sat there aghast, Karen spewed

forth some profanity which really spiced things up. I was shocked!

After completing the group reading, *Sayings from the Course*, and sharing time, Karen suggested group meditation. She whimsically stated that she was not sure if she could 'get a channel tonight' but here goes. With meditation being more evil than television but just as dumb, I knew to start praying heavily at his point. Karen asked everyone to close their eyes, relax, and then led the group on some ten minute astral journey. She started the trek by telling everybody to focus on a ball of light above their heads. She ended up with everyone sitting around God's feet.

I silently prayed the entire time, ignoring the evil nonsense around me. I prayed for protection from evil. I prayed that Jesus of Nazareth would reveal himself and deliver these people from their bondage. After the demonic crescendo had passed, I actually felt refreshed from fellowshipping with the true Lord of the universe.

Finally, everyone stood up and joined hands in a circle. There was prayer for miracles in the upcoming week. Then the group drew closer, everyone resting their arms atop of everyone else's shoulders. Names were called out as there was prayer for healing for the friends and family of the group. Wanting to have a little fun, I yelled out 'Gus!' (Gus is a friend's dog who had recently been stung in the nose by a bee after attacking a hive). I figured that Gus the dog would not be opened up for any spiritual attack by me naming him. I nearly lost my composure at the thought of this mockery of their 'holy circle.' When it was all over, hugs were going around. I tried to maintain my distance. But Karen made sure to get me, saying I had to get one since I came out, and 'everyone gets a hug.'

A Course in Miracles is a New Age religion that claims to have all of life's answers. Unfortunately, there is nothing new under the sun. [Ecclesiastes 1:9] Its followers have embraced the same old lie from Satan, that they can be like

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 1)

LEADER

ing a small impact as our e-mail responses show and I know others in the field report the same encouraging signs.

One of the main reasons we wanted to highlight this matter is to ask you to take this whole area on as a matter of prayer. There are many sites that carry material that is anti-christian but to ignore the Internet because of that is giving ground to Satan. We want to see raised up, a network of sites that carry the positive message of the gospel as well as the warning of the danger of the cults. Please will you make this a matter for prayer and do contact us if you feel that you can be involved in this adventure in anyway.

Other interesting things have happened in relation to the Internet. At the end of February I received an e-mail from someone calling himself 'The Liberal Elder'. Apparently still an elder within the Jehovah's Witnesses he has set up his web pages to comment on the problems on the ban on blood. Some of the information on these pages we will comment on in our regular *Watch the Tower* pages in this issue and the next. In this e-mail he says,

A growing number of Witnesses, including many elders, oppose the blood ban, and are now advocating change from within the organization.

(end of article)

BUDDHISM IN BRITAIN

Buddhism is one of the fastest growing religions in the West, and one of the largest influences in our society. There are a possible six reasons why Western people are turning to Buddhism:

1. A negative experience of Christianity. It's either been forced on them as children, or it is seen to be and experienced as irrelevant (it doesn't work).
2. Bad family experiences that find the idea of a loving, caring Father God difficult to accept.
3. It is very experiential - try it and if it works, it must be right for you;
4. Eclectic - a pick and mix religion you can take what you want of any religion and make it your own; nothing is necessarily wrong;
5. No accountability to a God, no judgement, no fear;
6. It is mystical, spiritual and alternative. It fills the spiritual vacuum of our post-modern, post-Christian materialistic

society. There are many New Age practices that have roots in far eastern Mysticism and Buddhism.

There is much within Buddhism that we could agree with, many of the basic undergirding philosophies are good and commendable but ultimately we need to ask ourselves do they lead to eternal life, that for which we were created?

Britain has a great variety of Buddhist groups and communities, far more than in any one Buddhist country. No one order has a predominance in the West, although there is a more general familiarity with Theravada Buddhism due to the influence of the British Empire in countries like Sri Lanka (Ceylon) and Myanmar (Burma). The Pali Canon was the first Buddhist scriptures to be translated into English.

The last 20 years has seen a fourfold increase in Buddhist Centres in the UK of which Asian Buddhists form only a small part. The number of centres does not give any idea of the number of members, as each group has its own membership rules. It is estimated that there are 160,000 Western Buddhists in Britain. Although this is only a small percentage of the total population the influence of Buddhist ideas and thought on contemporary cultural life is much greater than these figures would suggest.

Western Buddhists tend to be both more antagonistic towards Christianity and more evangelistic in their endeavours to spread their particular form of Buddhism. *The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order* was established in Britain in 1967 by the Venerable Sangharakshita (Dennis Lingwood) who believed it was necessary to develop a form of Buddhism adapted to the circumstances of the modern world.

(Continued on page 10)

Doug's Diary

Doug Harris will be involved in training at the following seminars. Others may have also been added since publication. If you are interested in attending please ring Head Office for further details. Those marked * may have a restricted attendance.

If there is not one near you but you feel that your area would benefit from one, why not talk with us about organising it. Contact Head Office for our information leaflet on seminars.

JUNE

- 1 Dagenham
- 3 Moorlands Bible College *
- 10-11 Liskeard Cornwall
- 13 Wolverhampton
- 14 **WARLEY TRAINING DAY**
- 17 Sudbury
- 27 Richmond
- 28 Southampton

JULY

- 13 Buckhurst Hill Essex

SEPTEMBER

- 26-30 Ireland

OCTOBER

- 1-5 Ireland
- 11 Area Director Day - Suffolk
- 18 Coventry
- 20-22 Manchester Area
- 23-25 **MANCHESTER CRE**
- 26 West London

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

WHO ARE THEY?

Christian Scientists accept the works of Mary Baker Eddy as being authoritative and in some cases inspired. Christian Science is **neither** Christian nor Scientific. The heart of its teaching is 'healing' and mind over matter. In her lifetime Eddy could not prove one healing and at the end of her life even she turned to doctors for a regular supply of morphine. Christian Science is apparently losing ground these days with a 50% decline in practitioners in recent years. The majority of current members are American women.

HISTORY

The founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, was born in 1821. Youngest of six children she lived on a farm in New Hampshire, USA. She grew up as a Congregationalist but rejected the strong Calvinistic teachings as a teenager. Her often poor health, it is said, caused her to question why the healing's of Jesus were not manifest in her day. Her health caused her to experiment with homeopathy and hypnotism among other cures but nothing worked.

She was married at 22 but her husband died after only seven months. Her second marriage ended in divorce. Her third marriage was to Asa Eddy in 1877 and he would become her first disciple. However, it was during her second marriage in 1862 that she visited Phineas Quimby to find relief from her spinal illness. Quimby 'healed' through hypnosis and autosuggestion and was involved in starting other cults, such as, *Unity*. The man and his methods obviously made an impression on Eddy. At one point she wrote to a local newspaper comparing Quimby to Jesus Christ.

In 1866 she claimed healing from a serious injury that she was to declare later left her with only three days to live. The story goes that she was miraculously cured after reading Matthew 9:1-8 especially verse 2.

And behold, they were bringing to Him a paralytic,

lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, 'Take courage, My son, your sins are forgiven.'

The physical healing was however insignificant compared with the conviction that she had received the revelation of spiritual truths for which she had longed searched. Her study led her eventually to publish the first of her 16 writings, *Science and Health - with Key to the Scriptures* [S&H], in 1875. She claimed that God was its authority.

I would blush to write of Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures as I have, were it of human origin and apart from God its author, but as I was only a scribe echoing the harmonies of Heaven in divine metaphysics, I cannot be supermodest of the Christian Science textbook. - *Christian Science Journal*, Jan.1901

S&H is now in 18 languages and has been joined by other regular publications, such as, *The Christian Science Journal*, first published in 1883, *The Christian Science Quarterly*, 1890, and *The Christian Science Sentinel*, 1898. Many will also be familiar with *The Christian Science Monitor*, a newspaper that was first published in 1908. It has a daily edition in the USA and a weekly edition in 147 other countries. The first Christian Science church was founded in Boston, Mass., USA on 12 April 1879. Today there are some 2,500 branches in 68 countries governed by the *Manual of the Mother Church* first published in 1895.

MAIN BELIEFS

Hardly one major Christian doctrine is left untouched. Their Tenets, found in, *Christian Science: A Report For The 90's*, p.79, need to be read closely as at first glance some may appear Christian.

1. As adherents of Truth, we take the inspired Word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal life.
2. We acknowledge and adore one supreme and infinite God. We acknowledge His Son, one Christ; the Holy

Ghost or divine Comforter; and man in God's image and likeness.

3. We acknowledge God's forgiveness of sin in the destruction of sin and the spiritual understanding that casts out evil as unreal. But the belief in sin is punished so long as the belief lasts.

4. We acknowledge Jesus's atonement as the evidence of divine, efficacious Love, unfolding man's unity with God through Christ Jesus the Way-shower; and we acknowledge that man is saved through Christ, through Truth, Life and Love as demonstrated by the Galilean Prophet in healing the sick and overcoming sin and death.

5. We acknowledge that the crucifixion of Jesus and his resurrection served to uplift faith to understand eternal Life, even the allness of Soul, Spirit, and the nothingness of matter.

6. And we solemnly promise to watch, and pray for that Mind to be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, to do unto others as we would have them do unto us; and to be merciful, just, and pure.

Her writings clearly show however that Eddy believed that Christian Science was based on Scripture;

The Bible has been my only authority. I have no other guide in 'the straight and narrow way' of Truth. - S&H, p.126.

GOD

Eddy tried to say that her God was not pantheistic, that is in everything, but her teaching shows the contrary.

[God is] The great I Am; the all-knowing, all-seeing, all acting, all-wise, all-loving and eternal; Principle; Mind; Soul; Spirit; Life; Truth; Love; all Substance; Intelligence. - S&H, p.587.

JESUS CHRIST

Christ is the ideal Truth, that comes to heal sickness and sin through Christian Science. Jesus is the name of the man who, more than all other men, has presented Christ, the true idea of God - S&H, p.473.

(Continued on page 10)

MARTIAL ARTS

Doug Harris

This article is an abbreviated form of our new publication, *A Look Into Martial Arts*. These are available from Reachout Trust [See enclosed *SPECIAL OFFERS* leaflet].

DEFINITION

The term Martial Arts brings diverse reactions to people. Soft or hard? Oriental philosophy or western power? Harmless or dangerous? What are they? All this we aim to answer along with questions such as,

Should a Christian to be involved with martial arts in any form?

Do those involved open themselves to demonic spirits?

Where does the power come from?

Martial means "warfare, suited for warfare, appropriate for war" and *Arts* is used because it embraces the whole ethos of Eastern Philosophy. We are receiving an all inclusive spiritual and physical training for warfare.

BACKGROUND

There are many different theories concerning the origin of the Martial Arts but in general the following is accepted.

- Traces of martial arts lead back to the earliest civilisations in India
- The religious philosophy of martial arts is based on *I - Ching* [a book of divination dated around 2700 BC]
- By 1000 BC they were well established in China.
- About 540 A.D. Bodhidharma brought Buddhism to China. He developed a system of exercises known as *I - Chin Sutira* which brought the philosophical principles of Zen to martial arts and so developed a weaponless form of fighting.
- Sometime after this came the division into soft and hard arts.

Hard martial arts are based on the external school of Buddhism and soft arts on the internal school of Taoism.

CATEGORISING

The soft martial arts are Chi Kung (chee goong), Hsing I (sing gee), Pa Kua (ba giva), Tai Chi (tie chee).

By country the list of martial arts, although not exhaustive, is as follows:

JAPAN & OKINAWA - Aikido, Aiki-Jutsu, Judo, Ju-Jutsu, Karate, Okinawa-Te, To-De, Shintai-Do, Kendo, Ken-Jutsu, Iaido, Iai-Jutsu, Kyudo, Katori Shinto Ryu, Kobudo: (Jo-Do, Bo-Jutsu, Kama, Nunchaku, Tambo, Manriki-Kusari, Sai, Tanto-Jutsu), Nin-Jutsu, Shorinji Kempo, Kiai-Jutsu, Sumo.

KOREA - Hwarang-Do, Tae Kwon Do, Hapkido, Kong Soo Do, Kuk Sul, Shim Gum Do, Tang Soo Do.

CHINA - Kung-Fu: Chuan Fa Or Wu-Shu, Wu-Te, Wing Chon, Tai Chi Chuan.

INDIA - Vadha or Vajra Vashta, Kalaripayit.

THAILAND - Thai Kick Boxing.

VIETNAM - Viet Vo Dao, Kung Fu.

PRINCIPLES

The soft arts all work on the same principles. Are these principles opening a person up to a foreign 'spiritual' power? Is this power able to control me and if so is it for good or bad? Are there any principles that clearly show that martial arts are incompatible with Christianity?

Answers may apply differently in the various practices. But if wrong principles are there, even in a small way, they could still have a 'spiritual' effect. Many believe there is a 'spiritual' or inner dimension.

More important, though, the soft arts lead you to new levels of self-knowledge and awareness, and teach you how your body relates to your mind and to your inner being, your soul. - *The Book of Soft Martial Arts*, Howard Reid, 1994, p.9.

THE KI TO LIFE?

The Bible tells us that human beings

were made from the dust of the earth, and that our spirit (God's breath) gives us life. The combination of the two gives each person their own individuality referred to as soul, heart or mind.

Most of man's time on earth is given to looking after his body but some try to find the key to spiritual life. In the Martial Arts the basic philosophy and power source is 'Ki', pronounced key but spelt in a variety of ways!

Different Spiritualities often refer to their 'power base' as coming from the 'belly' and tell similar stories about particular experiences and feelings that seem to emanate from the stomach.

Our human spirit which emanates from God, and will return to Him, is given to us in order that we may know God, who is Spirit, and have a spiritual relationship with Him both now and then for ever after we physically die. Having said that, we can see that man can open himself up to receive spiritual input from God or Satan.

The 'world view' behind the Martial Arts is based on and in, Taoism, Hinduism, Zen Meditation and Buddhism. The philosophy underlying all these is one of seeking to yoke or join the human spirit to the universal spirit.

As can be seen even from looking at the names of the various martial arts, Ki or Chi plays a vital part. It can, potentially, have an affect, whatever martial arts we are involved in. We should therefore know what we are involved with.

Talking about soft martial arts we read,

Deeply rooted in Eastern culture, they are all devoted to developing and balancing your inner energy (called Chi - or Qi, the new revisionist spelling - by the Chinese), in order to gain greater control over your destiny, and to achieve a happier, better balanced life. - Reid, p.16.

And again, in broader terms,

Many people... will begin to scoff at even

(Continued on page 11)

WATCH THE OWER

The 'Liberal Elder's' pages can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.visiworld.com/starter/newlight/home1.html>. As we do not know his identity we must assume what he says is true and it is not some sort of con trick. However even if these pages were written by someone who is anti Jehovah's Witness the arguments within them are sound and compelling.

The pages begin with the following explanation,

Clearly, as Jehovah's Witnesses the Biblical perspective is the paramount issue. Just how compelling of a case can be presented for a scriptural injunction regarding the use of blood? The word "blood" occurs 540 times in the Bible. It is not practical nor necessary for us to review every verse where this word occurs. We will instead focus attention on those texts that have been used in support of the doctrine, as well as a few other relevant verses that appear relevant. We will attempt to be brief and focus attention on the most relevant points. We have by no means endeavored to be exhaustive.

BIBLE ALONE

This attitude is not one that Jehovah's Witnesses take very often. Looking at the Bible in one hand, without Watchtower publications in the other hand, is very rare. What is also interesting is to note the outcome. As soon as someone studies Scripture alone, they take a view that differs from that of the organisation.

What are some of the points he makes with regard to Scripture, especially the New Testament quotation in Acts 15:21?

James himself states that these four injunctions were issued because the Torah was read in Jewish synagogues every Sabbath (Acts 15:21)... The four requirements listed in Acts 15:20,29 are exactly the same as the compulsory rules for foreigners living in ancient Israel, and are listed in the same order (Lev 17:1 to 18:27)...The words themselves are not in the form of a command, as a number of Greek experts have emphasized. This fact

alone undermines the Societies argument completely... Later, James repeated that the letter was sent to avoid stumbling Jewish Christians, and recommend that Paul perform a Jewish ritual for the same reason. Abstaining from eating blood was then no more a Christian obligation than performing a Jewish ritual was. (Acts 21:23-25)... Paul emphasized in his letter that the Christian freedom gave them a right to eat meat offered to idols, one of the things explicitly mentioned in Acts 15. However, even Paul noted that to avoid stumbling weaker brethren they should abstain (1 Co 8:1,4,7)... Jesus stated that nothing coming from outside the body could defile a person, which would necessarily include meat with blood in it (Mr 7:15).

A clear presentation that as is stated, undermines the Watchtower argument.

EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

Not only do the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society twist Scriptural meaning but they also twist the writings of the Early Church Fathers. The 'Elder' makes a very interesting comment on these writings and their use by the Society.

The Society finds it useful here to appeal to certain early Christian writings. This is surprising since it teaches that the great apostasy occurred right after the death of the apostle John, and it always refuses to accept the word of the Church Fathers as authoritative on any other question. Moreover, those who investigate these writings find that there was hardly ever agreement on any question, not even on the essentials. This is particularly noteworthy for Witnesses, who engage in 'trinity' debates, and appeal to these texts as historical evidence for their position, only to experience that their opponents find other proof-texts showing the opposite.

Specifically here on the matter of blood though they will quote texts such as,

Early Christians abstained from eating any sort of blood. In this regard Tertullian (c. 155-a. 220 C.E.) pointed out in

his work Apology (IX, 13, 14): "Let your error blush before the Christians, for we do not include even animals' blood in our natural diet. We abstain on that account from things strangled or that die of themselves, that we may not in any way be polluted by blood, even if it is buried in the meat. Finally, when you are testing Christians, you offer them sausages full of blood; you are thoroughly well aware, of course, that among them it is forbidden; but you want to make them transgress." Minucius Felix, a Roman lawyer who lived until about 250 C.E., made the same point, writing: "For us it is not permissible either to see or to hear of human slaughter; we have such a shrinking from human blood that at our meals we avoid the blood of animals used for food."-Octavius, XXX, 6. - *Insight on the Scriptures*, 1988, vol. 1, p. 346.

This is an example of a type of quotation that often is found in the Society's 'Bible Dictionary/Commentary' *Insight on the Scriptures*. It is simply a smoke-screen to hide the truth of what is being taught.

The 'Elder' comments,

The question of blood was hardly central to the Christian faith in the early years. We do not find it expressed at all as an article of faith, and the few references the WTS has found merely document the practice of not eating blood as an argument against widespread accusations that Christians drank the blood of children (probably this popular myth originated in the ceremony of the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper). It must be observed that in none of these cases would it have been helpful for the Christian writers to give the background for this practice because it would have invalidated their argument.

It is very interesting hearing a Jehovah's Witness saying that their publication is misleading its members over the issue of the blood. It of course raises the pertinent question of how many other misleading statements are there in this book that is regarded as having come

from 'God's mouthpiece'?

Developing further the whole subject of the early manuscripts and what was meant in them by 'abstaining from blood', we read this conclusion.

So a significant number of early writers the Society appeals to used a text indicating that when the apostles spoke of abstaining from blood they were talking about murder – shedding blood – not eating blood. It is no surprise, then, that these writers argued that the ruling of the council was still binding on Christians! The Society distorts the evidence when it appeals to Cyprian and Tertullian to support its interpretation of the apostolic council. Therefore when some early writers said they abstained from blood, this had nothing to do with the text of Acts 15, because as far as they knew it was forbidding murder, not the eating of blood. It is evident, of course, that the practice of not eating blood, at least among some early Christians, was based on the early decree from Jerusalem to avoid upsetting the Jews. But there is no explicit Biblical prohibition, merely a cultural development.

Once again a phrase jumps out at you, 'The Society distorts the evidence.' I have never heard a Jehovah's Witness say that before and again it opens up a minefield of unexploded 'distortions' to be uncovered by any willing enough to check them out.

I wonder if our 'Liberal Elder' has worked out that if the Society distorted the evidence here then they can no longer be counted as reliable. Once it is evident that this has happened in one place then every argument becomes suspect and needs to be scrutinised. They can no longer be the organisation that preaches 'The Truth'.

EARLY HISTORY

We have looked at the New Testament Biblical texts and the Early Church Fathers and we will end this article with a look at the early writings of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society itself. What is interesting is the fact that the whole blood issue is another change of heart for the Society, or should that be that God changed His mind?

The current application of certain Bible texts, notably Acts 15:28,29, to support a blood prohibition for Christians was not shared by our founder, Charles Taze Rus-

sell. In a commentary about the apostolic council of Acts 15, Russell said:

He [James] further suggested writing to them merely that they abstain from pollutions of idols (verse 29), and from things strangled and from blood – as by eating such things they might become stumbling blocks to their Jewish brethren (See 1. Cor. 8:4-13) – and from fornication" (Zion's Watch Tower, Nov. 15, 1892, p. 1473 reprints)

So even though blood transfusions were not yet in use, Russell was clear that he does not even consider the dietary law on blood as binding for Christians.

After Russell's death the Society gradually changed its view. The Watchtower of Dec. 15, 1927, page 371, hinted strongly that the "blood prohibition" in Genesis 9:4 applies to all men. Nevertheless, as long as only dietary law was being considered, this was not a controversial question.

Things began to change in the 1950's as the following shows.

THE WATCHTOWER of July 1, 1951, p. 414, in an extended "Question from Readers" column, argued strongly that JWs must abstain from blood transfusions. In light of the obvious fear of legal responsibility, the remark preceding the section is interesting:

"A recent court case in Chicago involving Jehovah's Witnesses and their stand concerning blood transfusions caused widespread comment in the public press and among the people generally. Many questions were raised. The following were most frequent, and came from various localities."

The blood prohibition gradually became an institution. A long series of rules and regulations concerning blood has been issued over the years, of which these are examples:

JWs are obliged to check with their butcher if there is any chance that the meat sold comes from animals not properly bled. Further, they will have to find out which words are used for blood products in their local area, and check with the manufacturer if in doubt. (The Watchtower, Nov. 1, 1961, p. 669) The JW must ensure that fish is properly bled (ibid.) JWs cannot feed their pets with food that contains blood, neither can a pet receive a blood transfusion

(The Watchtower, Feb. 15, 1964, p. 127) JWs cannot allow a leech to feed on their own blood (The Watchtower, June 15, 1982, p. 31) JWs cannot use fertilizer containing blood (The Watchtower, Oct. 15, 1981 p. 31) A JW owning a store is not allowed to sell blood products (The Watchtower, July 15, 1982, p. 26) JWs can not store their own blood before an operation (The Watchtower, March 1, 1989, p. 31)

Add to this the fact that over the years a number of specialized rules have been issued specifying which blood components are not permissible and which are a "matter of conscience," and which medical procedures involving blood are wrong and which are a "matter of conscience." All of this has become quite complex for the average Witness who often doesn't even know which fractions are permitted and which are not. Doctors too are often confused and uncertain about what treatments Witnesses can and cannot have.

That the Society has put teeth into their prohibition can be seen in that if a JW decides to save his, his spouse's or his children's lives contrary to Watchtower rules, he could be disfellowshipped from the congregation.

"In view of the seriousness of taking blood into the human system by a transfusion, would violation of the Holy Scriptures in this regard subject the dedicated, baptized receiver of blood transfusion to being disfellowshipped from the Christian congregation? The inspired Holy Scriptures answer yes." (The Watchtower, Jan. 15, 1961, p. 63)

In the midst of talking about the historical perspective of the blood ban, comes an interesting statement,

A key to the development of the current blood doctrine was the appointment of Clayton J. Woodworth as editor of the Golden Age Magazine. As we have already learned in the section on Quack Medicine, Br. Woodworth used the magazine as a voice to air his extraordinary personal views on science and medicine. It is here amidst the lunacy and paranoia we find the seeds of the Societies blood doctrine.

Next Quarterly we will look at these views of Clayton Woodworth.

(end of article)

TRUTH RESTORED - 11

by Mike & Ann Thomas

A False Message and a Double Standard

In speaking to Mormons we are often charged with being 'contentious', which we are told, is of the devil. If we are truly Christian then we will show a little charity and tolerance in our approach to the Mormon church. "Why do you attack the church?" many ask. "We don't attack you. We would never presume to tear down another person's religion. Why, then, do you do it?"

In the Mormon book, *A Marvellous Work and a Wonder*, by Legrand Richards, under the heading *A Catholic Utterance*, the story is told of a meeting between Mormon Apostle Orson F. Whitney and "a learned man, a member of the Roman Catholic Church". The learned Catholic asserted that the controversy over the true nature and authority of the Christian faith is a straight contest between the Catholic church and the Mormons. Either the former was right and enjoyed an unbroken line of apostolic succession from Peter, or the Mormons were right and there was a need for a restoration. Either way all Protestant claims were invalid as these all represent schisms from Catholicism.

This is a favourite tale amongst Mormons and represents very well the true Mormon attitude to other churches. Far from being the tolerant and understanding people they claim to be, they adhere to a faith whose very foundation is the teaching that

all [churches] are wrong... all their creeds [are] an abomination in the sight of God. Those professors [are] all corrupt. They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof - Joseph Smith-History 1:19, Pearl of Great Price.

Here is a double standard. A Mormon will gladly give his 'amen' to the foregoing. He considers himself fortunate to have been saved from such corruption, and when sharing his faith with his neighbour this is the truth he will gladly

testify to. Yet when a challenge to his own faith arises he holds to a different line, claiming that "we learn from each other" and insisting upon an ecumenical approach. But these are mutually exclusive views and cannot logically be held at the same time.

Mormons ask why we try to convert church members who are, after all, already Christians. We might ask the same question of Mormon missionaries. When they meet a Christian do they leave saying, "you already know Jesus"? No, because they believe that there is no salvation outside the Mormon church. We believe there is no salvation inside the Mormon church and so, while we are able and willing to meet Mormons with mutual respect, we pretend to no other view.

The following, used by permission, is from the *Sept/Oct 1995 Evangel*, official publication of Utah Missions Inc. It was written by Robert McKay, assistant director of UMI.

Evangelist

In the January 1995 issue of the *Ensign* an article discusses the meaning of the three Greek words *euaggelistes* or evangelist, *diatheke* or testament, and amen (pp.28-30). The discussion of the first word reveals a problem in Mormonism. The problem is an appeal to paganism to prove the point. The word itself literally means a "proclaimer of good news." Thus, an evangelist in the New Testament is someone who preaches the Gospel as his calling from God.

According to the Mormon church, "An Evangelist is a Patriarch" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p.151). "One of the ordained offices in the Melchizedek Priesthood is that of patriarch or evangelist" (Mormon Doctrine, p.559). "The Prophet Joseph Smith explained that an 'evangelist' (as in Ephesians 4:11) is a 'patriarch'" (Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Vol.3, PATRIARCH, PATRIARCH TO THE CHURCH). "A patriarch is what is termed in scripture an

evangelist" (Gospel Kingdom, p.149).

Obviously this is not the actual meaning of the word. Therefore the *Ensign* turns to the use of the word in the temple of Apollo, the ancient Greek sun god, in Rhodes. Because scholars believe that in this temple a *euaggelistes* (pronounced you-ang-gel-is-tays) was someone who delivered oracles or prophecies to worshippers, the magazine says, the LDS use of the word to designate one who gives prophetic patriarchal blessings is proper. The article says, "of all the meanings attributed to the word evangelist over the years, the Prophet Joseph Smith's identification of this office as that of a patriarch who gives spiritual and prophetic blessings to individuals still comes closest to the meaning of this term in its earlier known occurrence." Thus, the church turns not to the lexical meaning of the word in the New Testament or to the practical meaning attached to the word by the apostolic church, but to the usage of a pagan temple to justify its misdefinition.

This is not the first time that Mormonism has utilized ancient paganism to justify its teachings. Elder Milton R Hunter, in *The Gospel Through the Ages*, declared that the LDS doctrine of eternal progression was also taught by the mystery religions which competed with Christianity. I submit that any religion which turns to non-Christian ideas to support its doctrine rather than to the Bible is not Christian, no matter what it may claim.

America's Most Influential People

In June 1996 *Time Magazine* published a special report listing America's 25 most influential people. The report is not about simple, vulgar power, but about the creative ability to make an impact, to influence lifestyle and thinking. Among the great and the 'not-so-great' we discover Stephen Covey (pronounced Kuv-ee) the 'Human-Potential Guru'. His *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* spent 250 weeks on the New York Times best

seller list. The Covey Leadership Center, founded in Provo, Utah, in 1983 with a staff of two, now employs 700 and in 1995 grossed \$78 million.

Covey, 63, is a devout Mormon, has served as a Regional Representative, as President of the Irish Mission, as a Bishop, and on many Church committees. His other best seller, *Spiritual Roots of Human Relations*, is standard issue in many missions of the church and his 'Positive Thinking' message is a model for Mormons everywhere.

Traditionally we think of cults as being isolationist in their thinking. The classic model is the Jehovah's Witnesses who will have nothing to do with - anyone! Mormons put down the burden of isolationism at the turn of the twentieth century and have been reaping the benefits ever since. While others have struggled in the quagmire of separation Mormons have learned the art of courting the culture around them.

If we must draw parallels then Mormons are more like Muslims. Like Islam, Mormonism claims exclusive authority and, like Islam, it is aware of its public image. Like Islam, Mormonism seeks to be 'part of' the community, sitting on parish councils, standing for Parliament, supporting moral initiatives and even getting involved in ecumenical movements. Unlike Witnesses, Mormons are not usually 'in your face'. Their message is not 'take-it-or-leave-it' and 'Armageddon-will-prove-us-right'. They are subtle and easily adapt to make themselves acceptable. Muslims will happily sit on Racial Equality Councils while Iranians are being persecuted and killed for becoming Christians. Mormons will happily sit on ecumenical councils alongside people that their own scriptures describe as 'corrupt professors'.

Mormonism has been described as potentially the first world religion to emerge since Islam. The parallels are striking and it is noteworthy that, alongside Stephen Covey, another of the 25 most influential people in the US is Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam and organiser of the Million Man March in Washington.

I Have a Question

Is the Book of Mormon prophesied in

the Bible? There are two places where Mormons claim the Bible speaks about the Book of Mormon. We will look at Isaiah 29 next time. Perhaps the most popular text used to back up their claim is Ezekiel 37:16-17 which reads in the King James Bible:

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And Join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

The argument goes that, as the sticks are written on, they must be records of some kind. These records are to be brought together to become one. The bringing forth of the Book of Mormon through Joseph Smith is seen as fulfilment of the Ezekiel prophecy. The stick of Judah is the Bible and the stick of Ephraim the Book of Mormon. Since 1981, when the new editions of Mormon scripture were published with the four 'standard works' of the church cross-referenced to each other, the sticks have been regarded as 'one in thine hand'. Does Ezekiel mean the Book of Mormon and the Bible?

The word for stick is the Hebrew *etz*, variously translated tree, wood, stick or rod. The prophet is told to take one *etz* and write upon it "For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions" and take a second *etz* and write upon it "For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions." The words in quotes are the words written on the sticks (according to the KJV) and literally mean "This *etz* represents Judah" and "This *etz* represents Joseph". They do not mean, as Mormons seem to think, "This is the record for Judah" and "This is the record for Joseph". God is saying the 'sticks' represent the two kingdoms.

God is graphically showing his people what he is going to do. In verse 20 the sticks are clearly objects in the hand of the prophet being held up before the eyes of Israel, "Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on..." (NIV).

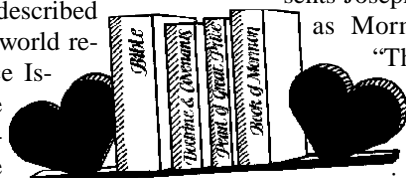
The Good News Bible carries the thought very well when it says in v.17 "hold the two sticks end to end in your hand so that they look like one stick." The promise of God is that He "will take the children of Israel from among the heathen... And [He] will make them one nation... and one king shall be king over them all: and they shall be no more two nations" (vv 21-22). God is saying that, just as the sticks become one in the hand of the prophet, so the two kingdoms will become one in the hand of God.

Has the prophecy been fulfilled? There are key points in the remainder of the chapter that show where we should look for its fulfilment. The first is that they will have one king over them forever who will be David (vv 22,24,25). Clearly this is not literally David, who is dead, but a descendant of David, one who occupies David's throne. Next God will "save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them" (v.23). God's provision for the cleansing of sin is Jesus, the promised Messiah who will sit on David's throne.

The last point is that God "will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant" - verse 26. Jeremiah spoke of a time when God was to make a new covenant with Israel and Judah (Jer.31:31). In Hebrews 12:24 we read of Jesus being the mediator of a new covenant and, in Hebrews 13:20, we are told his is the blood of an eternal covenant. Paul said that "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand" (Rom.5:1-2). This is a Messianic prophecy.

It is worth remembering that the first Christians were Israelites. It is also noteworthy that Israel is to be called out "from among the heathen, whither they have gone". As the gospel is preached "to every nation, tongue and people" surely there is a gathering from out of every nation of both those who are literal Israel and those who are Israel by adoption. And, by faith, they are the true Israel of God.

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(Continued from page 2)

COURSE MIRACLES

God, and surely they will not die (Gen. 3:4,5). They deny reality. Even a five year old child is capable of understanding the difference between good and bad, and that evil is a real thing. The Bible asks,

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? - 1 Corinthians 1.20.

A five year old can understand the simplicity of the gospel, where the message of the cross is that Jesus Christ died for our sins (1 Peter 2:24). But the Course is confusing and altogether burdensome in its complexity. The course itself is the illusion. It has much to say about absolutely nothing. With faithful study, it will scramble your mind, turn your world upside-down, and get you to believe the absurd. It is a lie from Satan who is a liar and the father of lies (John. 8:44). It is intellectual as well as spiritual death to all those unfortunate enough to be caught in its snare.

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(Continued from page 3)

BUDDHISM

Tibetan Buddhism is probably the largest and fastest growing of the schools of Buddhism in the West, and under the leadership of the Dalai Lama it has gained widespread attention. Here it is often linked to other issues like politics, human rights, environment, and world peace.

The practice of Buddhism in the West centres around the idea of

...a fundamental shift in the way we view ourselves and the world around us. It is not merely an intellectual understanding, however profound, but rather a turning about in the very depths of our being. - Change Your Mind - an introduction to

Buddhist Meditation, Paramananda

Surely our Christian faith should stir us to view ourselves and the world around us in a new and different way, to hold everything in the light of God's Word and His revelation through Jesus Christ. We may try and in trying recognise the limitations of our humanness, and realise that only when we live and move in the power of the Holy Spirit can we achieve that for which we were created. We cannot do it, only Christ within us can. ☐

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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

This 'Christ idea' or 'Christ consciousness' comes from eastern religions and appears in many new age cults. Eddy also makes it plain that,

Jesus Christ is not God, as Jesus himself declared, but is the Son of God. - S&H, p.361.

She further claims that Jesus did not make full atonement for sin. Our effort is still needed.

Final deliverance from error... is not reached... by pinning one's faith without works to another's vicarious effort... One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin. The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part. That God's wrath should be vented upon His beloved Son, is divinely unnatural. Such a theory is man-made. - S&H, pp.22/23.

Finally Eddy goes on to tell us that,

His disciples believed Jesus to be dead while he was hidden in the sepulchre, whereas he was alive, demonstrating

within the narrow tomb the power of the Spirit to overrule mortal, material sense. - S&H, p.44.

JESUS AND HEALING

Our Master... practised Christian healing... but left no definite rule for demonstrating this Principle of healing and preventing disease. This rule remained to be discovered by Christian Science. - S&H, p.147.

The cornerstone of Christian Science is healing. They alone have discovered the secret of Jesus' healing ministry. Many testimonies can be read claiming miraculous recovery from illness. Some would appear genuine and this should not surprise us. The test of something is not whether it works but where it comes from. There may be a power in some of Christian Science but it certainly does not come from God as their beliefs clearly show. They have another Jesus and another Gospel.

SIN, SICKNESS, & DEATH

All these things are unreal to the Christian Scientist. We are to pretend they are not real. Hell is the bad things within us and effects of sin. [See S&H, p.588.]

. . . the only reality of sin, sickness, or death is the awful fact that unrealities seem real to human, erring belief, until God strips off their disguise. - S&H, p.472.

SCRIPTURES

Eddy considered her writings were inspired.

No human pen nor tongue taught me the Science contained in this book - S&H, p.110.

Christian Science goes beyond the Bible and seeks to restore what was lost. It puts its own meaning into the Scriptures.

A more detailed overview of Christian Science is available in Cult Critiques, along with many other groups. Available from Reachout Trust.

(end of article)

MARTIAL ARTS

the mention of *ki*... However, true masters in all martial arts are well aware of its existence and many are able to demonstrate it. Many feats of the Karate, Aikido and Judo masters cannot be accounted for except by explanations involving *ki*. - Zen Judo - a way of life, Brian Bagot, 1989, p.111.

The evidence is that in soft martial arts the 'spiritual' side is held to be vital and as we have seen, it is a 'spiritual' side that does not come from the Living God. If this is true of the soft is it as equally true of the hard martial arts?

Always more vital to karate than techniques or strength is the spiritual element that lets you move and act with complete freedom. In striving to enter the proper frame of mind. Zen meditation is of great importance... The man who wants to walk the way of karate cannot afford to neglect Zen and spiritual training. - Mastering Karate, Matsutatsu Oyama [*The All-Japan Karate Champion 1947.*]

Some will counter that this is just one man's ideas. But there are many, and masters at that, in martial arts who recognise the clear spiritual emphasis. We ignore this aspect at our peril.

BREATHING

Many martial arts put heavy stress on correct breathing and you could think that this was a perfectly natural action. However when you dig a little deeper you find this is not strictly true

According to the Chinese, Chi has a centre or storehouse in the body known as the Tan Tien, located about 2 inches (5 cm) below the navel. If you are breathing correctly... you can feel the Tan Tien moving with your breath. - Reid, p.24.

The belief is that only when you are standing correctly and your belly is relaxed can the chi flow properly. Sustained, deliberate breathing in the correct manner is, in itself, meditation.

YIN YANG

They originally referred to the dark (Yin) side of a mountain and to the sunlit (Yang) side. To the Chinese, Yin qualities are more female, dark, solid, substantial, negative, cool, and tending to move downward. Things that are Yang are the

reverse - more masculine, light, immaterial, positive, warm, and tending to move upward. People's characters can also be interpreted according to Yin and Yang. - Reid, p.150

There is a close link between the Ki and the Yin Yang.

The Tao is the natural law or Way of the Universe, and at its base lies the following progression: all things are backed by the Shade (Yin) and faced by the Light (Yang), and harmonized by the "immaterial breath", or Chi. - Reid, p.124.

To be healthy and fit there must be a balance of Yin and Yang. The movements and especially the breathing in martial arts is all to this end. But when we are dealing with a dark side, can this have anything to do with the Living God? Again we see one of the basic principles of all martial arts is against a basic teaching of Christianity. The two are incompatible.

ZEN

Zen was introduced to China by a Buddhist monk who had studied Buddhism in India. Several of the quotations above have referred to Zen or Zen Buddhism as a basic principle of martial arts and so what is it? In summary we could say that Zen is directing the participant toward self-realisation. In other words to receive some form of enlightenment without any limitations of doctrines or religion. One encyclopaedia sums it up in four short statements,

(1) "(a) special transmission outside the [orthodox] teaching"... (2) "nondependence on [sacred] writings" and (3) "direct pointing [to the] human heart"... leading to (4) realization of [one's own] nature [and] becoming a buddha" - The Rider Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion, 1986, p.442.

Zen is the peculiarly Chinese way of accomplishing the Buddhist goal of seeing the world just as it is... This is called "no-mind" (Chinese wu-hsin), a state of consciousness wherein thoughts move without leaving any trace. Unlike other forms of Buddhism, Zen holds that such freedom of mind cannot be attained by gradual practice but must come through direct and immediate insight (Chinese tun-wu; Japanese satori). Thus, Zen

abandons both theorizing and systems of spiritual exercise and communicates its vision of truth by a method known as direct pointing. - Microsoft Encarta, 1994, Alan Wilson Watts

This article goes on to show that the Zen philosophy has clearly affected Eastern arts such as the Martial Arts.

Zen has had a strong influence upon Far Eastern arts and crafts because its point of view is connected with action rather than theory and with direct vision of nature rather than interpretation. According to Zen the mind serves properly as a window glass rather than as a reflector, that is, the mind should give an immediate view instead of an interpretation of the world.

TAO

The concept of Tao is again apparent from a number of the quotations we have used. But how can we describe this concept. As mentioned Tao, Yin, Yang and Chi are all interrelated.

Taoism is based on very ancient beliefs that were 'formalised' by Lao Tzu and his successors between 600-300 BC.

At the heart of Taoism lies the conviction that human beings are part of nature, and that the key to understanding ourselves and the world we live in is through increasing our understanding of nature. Tao, the Way, is that single force which gives being, form, sense, and energy to all things. - Reid, p.12.

The relevance of Tao to martial arts and especially the soft variety cannot be overestimated. Tao is the 'all', with the Chi being the Way, the driving force.

To be continued in next Quarterly

WITNESSING TO THE CULTS

There are many Christians who want to be able to share their faith with the cults but, for a variety of reasons, they just do not know how.

Some are fearful that they will be 'out argued', others wonder if they can be affected by some spirit from the cults. Still others just have a 'blank' about the whole issue. Whatever category you are in, help is at hand.

Over the next few issues of the Quarterly we will be teaching lessons that we have learnt over the years, which although carry no '5 year guarantees', have helped many to be positive and effective in sharing Jesus with cult members.

As the basis for these articles we will use two of our books, *Open The Door, Kingsway 1996*, which gives detailed teaching on how to share your faith with the cults. And, *Don't Close The Door, Reachout Trust, 1991*, which gives the testimonies of those who have been reached. By the use of these two books we will see this subject from 'both sides of the door'.

[A special offer to purchase these two books will be found in the enclosed leaflet.]

Overview

This initial article is to be seen as an overview and summary. In headline form we will mention the areas that we will be looking at in detail in the months ahead.

In order to share our faith with the cults effectively I believe we need to have an awareness of the following four areas, know the Lord, know our faith, know our enemy, know our weapons.

Know the Lord

This is not just knowing *about* the Lord but knowing Him in a manner that makes a difference to the way we live our lives.

The Jehovah's Witness change John 17:3 to read, "This is eternal Life, the *taking in knowledge* . . ." But we are not just to know about or take in knowledge. We are not just to read Scripture as the dead

letter of the law. We read,

You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me - John 5:39.

Through the Word we are to come to know Him. His character, His actions, His desire. We will then begin to act towards the cults the way that Jesus would. The people we are talking to would see something different to what they have at present and they would want that 'difference'. Former Mormon Anne Thomas put it like this,

When I began to question and sincerely seek the truth it was like the floodgates opening, and within a very short time my husband and I both came to realize that although we had believed in Jesus Christ and tried to follow Him, we did not have a living relationship with Him... Yet now, in our discussions, my husband and I had come to realize that something vital was missing in our lives... 'Who do we know who has got it?' The answer was immediate - our Christian friend John. - *Don't Close the Door*, p.45.

Know our faith

First do we really know what we believe as a Christian? If so, can we express it in a way that a cult member will understand? Both aspects are vital.

There is no substitute for the word of God delivered in the power and safety of the Holy Spirit. The dead letter kills and we should not be using it in such a way. Teaching of the word of God should be empowered and enabled by the Holy Spirit, and then it will bring life. There is no substitute for theology whatever we are doing in the Christian life and more so when dealing with the cults. - *Open the Door*, p.65.

Know our enemy

On two occasions in the New Testament we are encouraged not to be unaware of the schemes of the Devil.

. . . in order that no

advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes. 2 Corinthians 2:11

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. Ephesians 6:10,11

All members of the cults are of course blinded and deceived by Satan, although in themselves are not necessarily devilish. We need to be aware of what the devil is doing and how he is doing it so that we can have the advantage in 'battle'.

In any battle, intelligence is vital. That's why so much money is spent on reconnaissance aircraft and spy satellites. We too should not 'go blind' but know a little about the group we are dealing with and what we are likely to face.

Know our weapons

What has God given us in His armoury that enables and equips us in this fight? What is available that will assist us in the task we have before us?

We have already referred to the armour in Ephesians 6. This is not a game where we try and put on the armour each morning, this is a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Stay tuned to this channel to find out the answer to these and other vital questions.

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