

## **So What's The Difference?**

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## **From Where Did Cults Come?**

### **Introduction**

- In our postmodern age, we place a high value on \_\_\_\_\_ and the use of labels can often seem insensitive at best and arrogant name-calling at worst.
- The word \_\_\_\_\_ is often invokes images of brainwashed weirdos conducting strange rituals that sometimes end in death.
- The word “cult” comes from Latin for “\_\_\_\_\_” and is defined by Webster as “a religion regarded as unorthodox or spurious.” Webster would view a cult as an organization opposing orthodoxy (conforming to the approved form of any doctrine: fundamental Christianity).
- Christians refer to cults as those who do not hold \_\_\_\_\_ (biblical) Christian views.
- The word “cult” is not intended to be derogatory but a way of recognizing the difference between biblical Christianity and the beliefs that certain groups might hold.
- The late Walter Martin defined cults as groups which hold doctrines “\_\_\_\_\_ to orthodox Christianity,” yet claim to trace their origin to orthodox sources and may even be in harmony with some of those sources.”
- Martin goes on to state that a cult is often “a group of people gathered around a specific person or person’s misinterpretation of the Bible.”
- Fundamental Christianity would consider Jehovah’s Witnesses, \_\_\_\_\_, and Christian Scientists to be cults.

### **Five Major Characteristics of Cults**

- Cults reject the \_\_\_\_\_ (God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit being one).
  - Cults may say good things about Jesus and assign Him a certain position of importance, however they do not accept the deity of Jesus Christ.
- Cults usually believe that all Christian churches are wrong and that their group has the only real truth about God.
- Cults claim to believe the \_\_\_\_\_ but they distort its teachings to suit their own peculiar view of mankind, God, the Holy Spirit, heaven and hell, salvation and many other doctrines.
  - Cults usually find the source of their views and beliefs in their \_\_\_\_\_, who claim to have new interpretations of the Bible or even valuable additions to it.
- All cults deny that people can be saved by faith in \_\_\_\_\_ alone.

- Cults teach that one can make themselves right with God through good works and through obedience to the doctrines and requirements the cult has set down as “God’s will” for their lives.
- Cults use Christian \_\_\_\_\_ but are not talking the same language as biblical Fundamental Christians.
  - Words like God, Christ, faith, sin, salvation, etc. often mean entirely different things to a cultist.
  - A first rule when sharing your faith with someone who seems to have different ideas, is to define \_\_\_\_\_.