

**Tarrant County College District  
District Master Syllabus**

*At Tarrant County College the District master syllabus documents the content of a course. A District master syllabus is required for every course offered. District master syllabi are prepared by teams of faculty and approved by instructional administration.*

**COURSE RUBRIC, NUMBER, TITLE, AND DESCRIPTION**

**PHIL 1304 – Great Religions of the World**

History, beliefs, ethics, and practices of the major world religions: such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

**COURSE TYPE**    **Academic Core**

**COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Course goals are linked to required Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies, Perspectives, and Exemplary Educational Objectives as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Specific course goals are linked to the class schedule.

1. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the principal characteristics of religious institutions and the study of those institutions. (CCIC 1,2,4,5; CCP 1,2,8; EEOSB 1,2,3,4,5,11,12). The student will be able to
  - a. evaluate selected approaches to the study of world religions and religion in general;
  - b. describe the origins, historical development, and global expression of religious institutions;
  - c. give examples of general beliefs, ethics, and practices found in religious institutions;
  - d. compare selected expressions of ancient and modern religious institutions.
  
2. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the principal features of selected religions originating in the Near East. (CCIC 1,2,4,5; CCP 1,2,8; EEOSB 1,2,3,4,5,11,12). The student will be able to:
  - a. trace the origins and historical development of selected religions that originated in the Near East;
  - b. explain the general beliefs, ethics, and practices of selected religions that originated in the Near East.;
  - c. identify the principal writings/scriptures associated with selected religions that originated in the Near East;
  - d. identify key figures associated with selected religions that originated in the Near East.

3. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the principal features of selected religions originating in the Far East. (CCIC 1,2,4,5; CCP 1,2,8; EEOSB 1,2,3,4,5,11,12).  
The student will be able to
  - a. trace the origins and historical development of religions that originated in the Far East;
  - b. explain the general beliefs, ethics, and practices of selected religions that originated in the Far East;
  - c. identify the principal writings/scriptures associated with selected religions that originated in the Far East;
  - d. identify key figures associated with selected religions that originated in the Far East.
  
- 4.. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the principal features of selected religions originating in the Middle East. (CCIC 1,2,4,5; CCP 1,2,8; EEOSB 1,2,3,4,5,11,12). The student will be able to
  - a. trace the origins and historical development of religions that originated in the Middle East;
  - b. explain the general beliefs, ethics, and practices of selected religions that originated in the Middle East;
  - c. identify the principal writings/scriptures associated with selected religions that originated in the Middle East;
  - d. identify key figures associated with selected religions that originated in the Middle East.

## **COURSE ASSESSMENT**

Student success is measured by assessment techniques aligned to course goals and learning outcomes. Assessment will include questions in objective and/or subjective form; pencil-and-paper, word processed, and/or electronically scanned tests may be used. Assessment from completed projects may include but will not be restricted to classroom experiential activities (such as role-playing), guided class discussions, written journals, small group interactions, impromptu recitations, and student self-evaluations. Each qualified instructor will select appropriate objective and subjective assessment and/or project assessment techniques, depending on the cognitive domain of each goal and the composition of the class.

Performance will be considered satisfactory when the student can recite, enact, recognize, perform, and/or write about concepts or information designated by the instructor under class and/or test conditions and when the responses are consistent with course text, references, and/or lecture presentations. All tests and projects must be completed within the time span designated by the instructor and meet the point and/or percentage standards set by the instructor. In their own way, instructors may emphasize course content and related topics so long as all content goals are presented and evaluated.

Individual faculty members are responsible for designing evaluation instruments to measure student mastery of course goals and learning outcomes and for indicating the nature of such instruments in the instructor's class requirements.

### **SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY**

Students are responsible for adhering to the TCCD policy on scholastic dishonesty as stated in the online Student Handbook at the address below.

<[http://www.tccd.edu/district/handbook/student/sthandbook\\_frame.htm](http://www.tccd.edu/district/handbook/student/sthandbook_frame.htm)>

Tarrant County College District - Instructor's Class Requirements

PHIL 1304-41244 Great Religions of The World	
Instructor: Derengowski, Paul	Office: SE ESED 2302
Phone: 817-515-3405	E-mail: PAUL.DERENGOWSKI@TCCD.EDU
Term: Fall 2011	Last Day to Drop: 11/19/11

Office Hours						
Day	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End
Mon						
Tue	08:20 PM	08:35 PM				
Wed						
Thu	08:20 PM	08:35 PM				
Fri						
Sat						
Sun						

District Course Requirements

<b>Text(s)</b>
Lewis M. Hopfe and Mark R. Woodward. <i>Religions of the World</i> . 11 <sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2009. ISBN: 0-13-606-177-X

Special Materials

V. Further Recommended Reading

A. Sacred Texts

1. The Bible (Christianity)
2. Qur'an (Islam)
3. Bhagavad Gita (Hinduism)
4. Jaina Sutras (Jainism)
5. Tao Te Ching (Taoism)
6. The Analects (Confucianism)
7. The Dhammapada (Buddhism)
8. Adi Granth (Sikhism)
9. The Book of Mormon (Mormonism)
10. Dianetics (Scientology)

B. Books on Religion

1. David S. Noss. *A History of the World's Religions*. 12th ed. Prentice Hall, 2008.
2. John Bowker, *World Religions: The Great Faiths Explored & Explained*. London: DK Publishing, 2006.
3. Michael D. Coogan. *Eastern Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto*. Oxford, 2005.
4. Arvind Sharma. *Our Religions*. New York: Harper Collins, 1993.

Focus

This class is an introductory course which covers the history, beliefs, ethics, and practices of the major religions of the world, including, but not limited to, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

**Requirements**

**Required Internet Reading**

*Christian Apologetics Project* <<http://capro.info>>

1. Cultism
2. What is a Cult?
3. 10 Reasons Why People Join a Cult
4. Scientology
5. Mormonism
6. Jehovah's Witnesses

**Course Assignments**

**Course Assignments Explained**

1. There will be two 100-point exams, inclusive of the final, which will cover the reading and lectures from the start of the semester or from the previous exam. Content may include questions involving true-false, definitions, multiple-choice, fill-in the blank, or short essay. **Total points: 200.**
2. The student will take 20 objective quizzes, worth 5 points each, covering the previous reading/lecture material. Quizzes that are missed will not be made up. **Total points: 100.**
3. All students will participate in two mock trials worth **200 points.**  
  
Details about the trial will be discussed at the time role assignments are given.
4. The student will be expected to produce two (2) five-page papers reflecting on a field experience, after visiting a religious setting that is totally foreign to anything he/she has experienced before. Calling ahead is advisable, if possible. Going with a fellow-student is permissible, but each individual must still write his/her own paper and do his/her own presentation. Visiting a satanic or witches coven is not advised. **This is not a book report!**

The papers are to follow the latest edition of *Turabian's* for style. It is to be in 12-point Times-New Roman font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, with footnotes (if necessary). The papers must be thoughtful, concise, and grammatically sound. The papers are worth 50 points each. The paper will be due on the assigned date at the start of class, or on the date of the presentation. Each student will give one presentation, taking about 3-4 minutes, involving a field experience. Please plan accordingly. Students failing to turn in their paper on their scheduled date, which includes the presentation, will be penalized 20 points, and then 10 points per calendar day thereafter. There will be no rescheduled presentations for failure to miss a regularly scheduled date. **Total points: 100.**

Tarrant County College District - Instructor's Class Requirements

**Grading Criteria**

**Grading by Total Points**

600-537 = A    536-477 = B    476-417 = C    416-357 = D    356-0 = F

**Class Dates**

**V. Course Schedule**

Date	Content	Assignment
Tues., August 30	Class Introduction	
Thurs., Sept. 1	What is Religion?	H&W 1-10, 30-46
Tues., Sept. 6	Hinduism	H&W 77-97
Thurs., Sept. 8	Hinduism	H&W 97-113
Tues., Sept. 13	Jainism; Field Experience Sign-ups	H&W 122-130
Thurs., Sept. 15	Buddhism	H&W 134-144
Tues., Sept. 20	Buddhist Development	H&W 144-156
Thurs., Sept. 22	Sikhism; 1st Field Presentations	H&W 163-172
Tues., Sept. 27	Exam #1	
Thurs., Sept. 29	Chinese Religions	H&W 179-192, 200-203
Tues., Oct. 4	Japanese Religions	H&W 213-225
Thurs., Oct. 6	Confucianism	H&W 192-200
Tues., Oct. 11	Zoroastrianism	H&W 234-248
Thurs., Oct. 13	<b>MOCK TRIAL #1</b>	<b>Nidal Malik Hassan</b>
Tues., Oct. 18	Judaism I	H&W 253-267
Thurs., Oct. 20	Judaism II	H&W 267-284
Tues., Oct. 25	Christianity I	H&W 292-307
Thurs., Oct. 27	Christianity II	H&W 307-331
Tues., Nov. 1	Christianity III	H&W 331-334, 342-344
Thurs., Nov. 3	Islam	H&W 345-361
Tues., Nov. 8	Islam	H&W 361-372

Tarrant County College District - Instructor's Class Requirements

Thurs., Nov. 10	MOCK TRIAL #2	TBA
Tues., Nov. 15	Cults & Cultism: Dangerous Devotion Part I; Video	CAPRO.info article: <i>What is a Cult?</i>
Thurs., Nov. 17	Cults & Cultism: Dangerous Devotion Part II; Video	CAPRO.info article: <i>10 Reasons Why People Join a Cult</i>
Sat., Nov. 19	Drop Date	Last day to drop class
Tues., Nov. 22	Scientology	CAPRO.info article: <i>Scientology</i>
Thurs., Nov. 24	THANKSGIVING	No Class
Tues., Nov. 29	Mormonism	CAPRO.info article: <i>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints</i>
Thurs., Dec. 1	Mormonism	CAPRO.info article: <i>What is Mormonism?</i>
Tues., Dec. 6	Jehovah's Witnesses	CAPRO.info article: <i>Jehovah's Witnesses</i>
Thurs., Dec. 8	The New Atheism	Video; <i>The Church of the Non-Believers</i>
Tues., Dec. 13	FINAL EXAM	7:00-8:50 p.m.

**Additional Class Information**

V. Attendance Policy

"Regular and punctual class attendance is expected at Tarrant County College. In case of absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor. Students absent on official school business are entitled to make up school work missed. In all other cases, the instructor will judge whether the student will be permitted to make up work and will decide on the time and nature of the makeup. However, the student is expressly responsible for any work missed regardless of the cause of the absence. The student must discuss such work with the instructor and should do so immediately on returning to school. Communication between the student and instructor is most important, and it is the student's responsibility to initiate such communication. If students do not appear at the prearranged time for makeup work, they forfeit their rights for further makeup of that work." (*Tarrant County College Student Handbook, 2010*).

VI. Expectation of Students

A. In addition to regular and punctual class attendance, students need to come to class on-time and remain in class until the class is dismissed. If a student is unable to comply with this, then the student should drop the class. It is a student's responsibility to obtain any handouts from the instructor for work missed and class notes from another student in the class. The instructor will not lend out his notes. Each student is expected to devote at least six hours per week in preparation for the class. Attendance, reading of the texts, doing assignments and class preparation are essential. **Please remember to turn off and put away beepers and cell phones before the class begins.** Thank you for your courtesy to the instructor and to the rest of the class.



## Tarrant County College District - Instructor's Class Requirements

B. As far as classroom protocol, although most of the class period will revolve around lecture, the student is highly encouraged to participate by asking questions and/or interjecting thoughts and observations. The student will raise his/her hand to be recognized to speak. Talking over someone else, including the instructor, is not conducive to constructive conversation, and hence will not be allowed.

C. Unless a student becomes violently ill during class, all students are expected to remain in the classroom, with attention paid to the subject matter under discussion. Restroom necessities should be taken care of prior to class. Those leaving during the classroom period are expected to remain absent, and will be counted as such on their attendance record.

### VII. Special Arrangements

Those with documented impairments who need to make special arrangements for examinations, classroom participation or assignments should contact the instructor at the beginning of each semester.

### VIII. Plagiarism

Tarrant County College does not tolerate plagiarism, which is defined as "to take (ideas, writings, etc.) from (another) and pass them off as one's own" (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1031). Therefore, if plagiarism is suspected, the instructor will make a copy of the work for consultation with the department chair.

### IX. Cheating

Tarrant County College does not tolerate cheating either. Anyone caught cheating will receive an immediate zero for "the paper, project, exercise, or test." A second offense will result in being referred to the dean of students development and educational services or his or her designated representative for disciplinary review subject to possible disciplinary action as listed in the Tarrant County College *Student Handbook* under section titled "Disciplinary Procedure" (Student Handbook).

### X. Final Exams Week, December 12-15.

World Religions will take the Final Exam on Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 to 8:50 p.m.

The instructor of this course reserves the option to make changes to this syllabus with proper notice to the students

TCDD Academic Calendar for important College Dates.

TCDD Student Handbook for information on attendance and withdrawal policy, dishonesty and plagiarism, and disability support services.

Access Course Evaluations for instructions on evaluating courses.

**HAYGOOD, ANNE**

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**m:** COAN, BARBARA  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 18, 2012 4:07 PM  
**To:** HAYGOOD, ANNE  
**Subject:** FW: screenshots  
**Attachments:** CapScreen 2.jpg; CapScreen.jpg; CapScreen4.jpg; CapScreen5.jpg; CapScreen6.jpg; CapScreen7.jpg; CapScreen8.jpg; CapScreen9.jpg

*Barbara Coan, PhD*  
*Vice-President of Academic Affairs*  
*Tarrant County College Southeast Campus*  
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*Arlington, Texas 76018-3144*  
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**From:** COAN, BARBARA  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 18, 2012 3:39 PM  
**To:** LANIER, BILL  
**Subject:** screenshots

These screenshots are of Capro.info website written by Mr. Derengowski. They were required reading material for the students in his class from November 15-December 6 on his ICR. The textbook was no longer used after November 8 according to his ICR.

- Reading assignment November 15, 2011 "What is a Cult" Capscreen 1 (lists religions considered as cults by the professor) Capscreen 4 is reading assignment
- Reading assignment November 17, 2011 "10 Reasons Why People Join a Cult" Capscreen 5
- Reading assignment November 22, 2011 "Scientology" Capscreen 6
- Reading assignment November 29, 2011 "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" Capscreen 8
- Reading assignment December 1, 2011 "What is Mormonism" Capscreen 8
- Reading assignment December 6, 2011 "Jehovah's Witnesses Capscreen 9

Capscreen 2-on website, not included as reading assignment, but shows terrorist activity with child and gun as well as burning twin towers  
Capscreen 7-on website, video of speech at Ridglea Baptist Church

You will notice that only on the Islam page capscreen 2, instead of showing the historic founders of the religion, you see terrorist activities.

Website was used in place of the approved textbook and was written by the professor. Material on website was not reviewed or approved for course material. Material on website could be considered controversial and opinionated regarding some of the religions with only one viewpoint shared.

*Barbara Coan, PhD*  
*Vice-President of Academic Affairs*



HOME

APOLOGETICS

CULTS

PHILOSOPHY

WORLD RELIGIONS

EMAIL

## Islamic Articles

THE CULT OF ISLAM

DOES THE BIBLE PREDICT  
MUHAMMAD'S REVELATION?

THE "RADICAL MUSLIM"

"ISLAM: EXPOSED"

NIDAL MALIK HASSAN

YES! JESUS REALLY IS GOD:  
REBUTTING ISLAM'S FALSE  
VIEW OF JESUS' DEITY

JESUS, THE SON OF GOD

## Islamic Media

ISLAM INTERVIEW ON TALK  
BACK WITH TROY  
DERENGOWSKI

CHRISTIAN NEWS TODAY ON  
THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

THE FACE OF ISLAM IN  
CONTROL

DALLAS BOMBER'S MESSAGE  
TO 'BELOVED' BIN LADEN

TENNESSEE MOSQUE  
"SUPPLANTING" THE  
CONSTITUTION?

60 MINUTES ON "THE PEOPLE  
BEHIND THE MOSQUE"

MSA/HAMAS & JEWISH  
HOLOCAUST

DRAW MUHAMMAD DAY

COLONEL ALLEN WEST ON  
ISLAM

PROTECTING ISLAM'S NAME?

TERROR OVER DETROIT

CAIR DOESN'T CARE FOR  
PROFILING MUSLIM

ISLAM: WHAT THE WEST  
NEEDS TO KNOW

ARAB FESTIVAL 2009:  
SHARIA IN THE US

OBSESSION: RADICAL ISLAM'S  
WAR AGAINST THE WEST

MUSLIM DEMOGRAPHICS

## Islam: Religion of Submission

Paul Derengowski, ThM

### Founder

The founder of Islam ("to submit") is none other than the person of Muhammad (571-632 A.D.). He was born in Arabia, where his father was a member of the Quraysh tribe. His father died before Muhammad was born, and his mother passed away when he was only six years old. After his mother's death Muhammad was cared for by his grandfather ('Abd-al-Muttalib), and then by his uncle (Abu Talib). Muhammad would eventually marry a woman of wealth in commerce by the name of Khadija when he was 25 years-old. She was 40. From that union four daughters would be born, but only Fatima would survive him.

The religious climate in Arabia during Muhammad's day could best be described as pagan. The Quraysh tended to venerate several different deities and pagan idols, including the sun goddess (al-Lat), the goddess of fate (al-Manat), and the morning star goddess (Uzza). The men of Mecca believed that Allah was the father of the gods and goddesses, so even before Muhammad took control of Mecca, Arabia, and beyond, the belief in Allah was already in existence. Also the Arabians and Meccans believed in angelic beings called the *jinn* which could be either be good or evil.

Because the religious paganism disturbed Muhammad greatly, perhaps because he subscribed to the Jewish and Christians influences that were also prevalent in the area, he would frequently seek solace in private meditation beyond the city. One evening while in private prayer in a cave, outside Mecca, on Mount Hira, Muhammad was visited by an angelic being. The angel Jibril (Gabriel) imposes upon Muhammad to "Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created (all that exist)" (Sura 96:1). Muhammad, in a state of shock, asks what he must read, only to be physically strangled by Jibril (Haykal, *The Life of Muhammad*, 73). Gabriel, inspired by Muhammad's question proceeds to strangle him again, and again, each time with more force, until Muhammad finally recites what Jibril was stating, including that "[Allah] has created man from a clot (a piece of coagulated blood)."

At first Muhammad believed that he had been visited and possessed by a demon (Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, 106). However, after some tender loving counsel from both Khadija, who consulted with her "Christian" cousin Waraqah, Muhammad becomes convinced that Jibril was God's messenger, and that he (Muhammad) was now God's prophet. For the next 23 years Muhammad would record further revelations from Allah, which when gathered after his death would become the *Qur'an*.

When Muhammad approached the people of Mecca within three years of receiving his newfound revelation and pleased with them that they should repent of their idolatries and accept Islam. The initial reaction was met with strong resistance, with the exception of those within his immediate family. Muhammad's uncle, Abu Talib, had a "high and lofty position" among the Quraysh, managed to keep the insulted Meccans from physically attacking Muhammad, otherwise they assured him that "we will rid you of him" (Ishaq, 119). Muhammad would not relinquish his preaching, though, and the gap widened between he and the Meccans. Finally, they approached Abu Talib a second time and warn him that, "By God, we cannot endure that our father should be reviled, our customs mocked and our gods insulted. Until you rid us of him we will fight the pair of you until one side perishes," or words to that effect" (Ibid, 119).

The second appeal manages to get both Abu Talib and Muhammad's attentions, but not without further consolation, as the Quraysh bribed Abu Talib to make an exchange for Muhammad so that they could put him to death. Abu Talib balks at their offer, who is then compelled to protect Muhammad from the Quraysh incitement to violence. Although subsequent appeals were made to Muhammad, finally in 622 A.D. he and his uncle Abu Talib flee to Medina, where

Muhammad is welcome, in what is known as the *hijra*. This begins what is known as the Islamic era.

From Medina Muhammad orchestrates a series of caravan raids against the Quraysh. Not only do such raids help to finance his growing power structure in Medina, it weakens the Meccan resolve. After eight years of repeated attacks and counter-attacks, Muhammad amasses an army of approximately 10,000 men and march upon Mecca itself. His plan was to conquer Mecca by surprise, hopefully averting as much bloodshed as possible. After seeing Muhammad's army approach all but a few of the city's inhabitants fled to their houses and living quarters. Those who did put up a fight were quickly overcome. Mecca was conquered with absolute ease, the idols were destroyed, as "Muhammad had called for during the last twenty years" (Haykal, *Life of Muhammad*, 409).

Within two years, however, Muhammad, while preparing for a long trip to Palestine, became seriously ill. He began complaining of a headache, yet continued to perform the prayer service at the mosque. The headaches persisted for a short period of time, and even seemed to subside to the point where everyone was convinced that the illness had finally passed. Yet, after prayer on June 8, 632, Muhammad retired to his daughter Aisha's hut where he decided to lie down. As he lay in Aisha's lap vigorously chewing on a toothpick, he gradually passed from this world, unbeknownst to Aisha what was going on until it was too late.

## Holy Books

### Islamic Research

INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT ON  
TERRORISM

JIHAD WATCH

MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH  
AMERICA

MUSLIM STUDENT  
ASSOCIATION

ISLAM ONLINE

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For the Muslim the holy book above all other holy books is the *Qur'an* (sometimes spelled *Koran*), which means "recite." Sura 2:2 reads, "This is the Book (the Qur'an), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are *Al-Muttaqun* [the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism who fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)]." Muslims not only believe that the Qur'an is inerrant and eternal, but also believe that it is comparable to the person of Jesus Christ. Moreover, Muslims believe that the *Qur'an* is the final revelation of God to man, as is noted in the above Qur'anic reference.

Closely associated with the Qur'an are the *Hadith*, or "traditions," which are records of what Muhammad said, did, and approved. There are literally thousands of Hadith sayings, with perhaps the most famous of them bound up in the efforts of *Al-Bukhari*. What makes the Hadith extremely important is that they help one to interpret the disjointed and anachronistic suras found in the Qur'an. In fact, one cannot properly understand the *Qur'an* without the Hadith.

Finally, Muslims recognized the importance of the *Sunnah*, which means "custom" or "well-trodden path." The *Sunnah*, in other words, are additional sayings and deeds of Muhammad that are also found within the Hadith. As the *Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law* explains,

Rather, the sunna of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) is his way of acting, ordering, accepting, and rejecting, and the way of his Rightly Guided Caliphs who followed his way of acting, ordering, accepting, and rejecting. So practices that are newly begun must be examined in light of the sunna of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) and his way and path in acceptance or rejection (w29.2).

## Religious Observances

Within Islam are five obligatory religious observances that all Muslims must fulfill either daily or at least once during their lifetimes. Those observances are the *Shahada* (the creed), *Salat* (prayer), *Zakat* (almsgiving), *Saum* (fasting), and *Hajj* (pilgrimage). Failing to observe these essential aspects of Muslim life is ultimately to fail in one's recognition and worship of Allah.

### *Shahada*

Known in the vernacular as "The Creed," in order for a person to rightfully claim to be a Muslim, that person must acknowledge or profess *la ilaha illa Allah; Muhammad rasul Allah* or "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah." The importance of this confession cannot be underestimated. No one, nor anything, is comparable to Allah, whether it be "an angel, apostle, prophet, Jesus, son of Mary, Ezra and Muhammad, saint, idol, the sun, the moon and all other kinds of false things and deities (Khan, *The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhari*, 1:xliv). This leads to the second part of the confession, and that is that Muhammad is Allah's supreme prophet or "apostle." As Al-Bukhari points out, "that means that none has the right to be followed after Allah, but the Prophet Muhammad as he is, the last of His Apostles" (Ibid., 1:xliv). The *Shahada* exemplifies what it means to be a Muslim, and without complete adherence to it, one cannot be a Muslim.

### *Salat* (also *Salah*)

Muslims are obligated to praying at least five times a day during regularly schedules times. There are no exceptions. The *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an* reports

Muhammad as saying, "Order your children to perform *Salat* (prayers) at the age of seven and beat them (about it) at the age of ten" (Sura 2:3). It continues by asserting that "One must offer the *Salat* (prayers) as the Prophet used to offer them with all their rules and regulations, i.e., standing, bowing, prostrating, sitting as he has said: 'Offer your *Salat* (prayers) the way you see me performing them" (Ibid.). Friday is a special day of prayer for all Muslims, as well as is Ramadan. According to Muslim convert Suzanne Haneef, "The practice of regular *salah* is the most fundamental requirement in Islam, without which a Muslim is not fulfilling even his most basic obligation to God and may well have lost the most important and precious thing in his life, his perspective and sense of relatedness to his Creator" (Haneef, *What Everyone Should Know About Islam and Muslims*, 139).

### **Zakat (also Zakah)**

Zakat represents the almsgiving that all Muslims are to participate in. "In Sacred Law it is the name for a particular amount of property that must be payed to certain kinds of recipients under certain conditions mentioned below" (*Reliance of the Traveller*, h1.0), namely the poor, those short of money, zakat workers, those whose hearts are to be reconciled, those purchasing their freedom (slaves), those in debt, those fighting for Allah, and travellers needing money. Moreover, zakat is obligatory for every free Muslim "who has possessed a zakat-payable amount...for one lunar year" (Ibid., h1.1).

### **Saum (also Sawm)**

Obligatory to all Muslims who have pasted the age of puberty (with some health exceptions), Saum, or fasting during the month of Ramadan, is intended help its practitioners learn "discipline, self-restraint, and flexibility on the material level" (Haneef, 145). Of course not all Muslim fasting occurs during Ramadan, but the same guidelines apply regardless. What is important are the intent of the person and refraining from things which would break the fast (like eating, "inserting a finger or something else into the anus or vagina further than the area disclosed when squatting," or "swallowing saliva that has left the mouth" after moistening and remoistening thread for a needle—*Reliance of the Traveller*, i1.19). Other things that would invalidate a fast are momentary insanity, being unconscious all day, and the appearance of menstrual or post-natal flow (ibid., i1.23). For those who miss fast-days an obligatory offering of one meal per day is to be offered to the poor during the year of Ramadan. Those waiting until the next period of Ramadan to make -up their offerings are obliged to pay double that amount.

### **Hajj**

The *Hajj* is the pilgrimage that all Muslims are obliged to make to Mecca at least once in their lifetimes. According to the Qur'an, "And *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka'bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses (for one's conveyance, provision and residence" (3:97). The *'Umra*, which is a lesser pilgrimage to Mecca as well, may be performed, except at the Muslim's convenience, with the exception that a Muslim must go on the *Hajj* first before proceeding with the *'Umra* later. Yet, in neither instance must a Muslim make more than one pilgrimage in a lifetime to Mecca. The whole idea behind the *Hajj* is that it is seen as the ultimate form of worship, obedience and sacrifice. The *Hajj*, according to the Hadith, is also seen as kind of *Jihad*, "since one endures many difficulties and has to control one's desires and spend money on performing *Hajj*" (2.26.3.n1).

### **Some Beliefs**

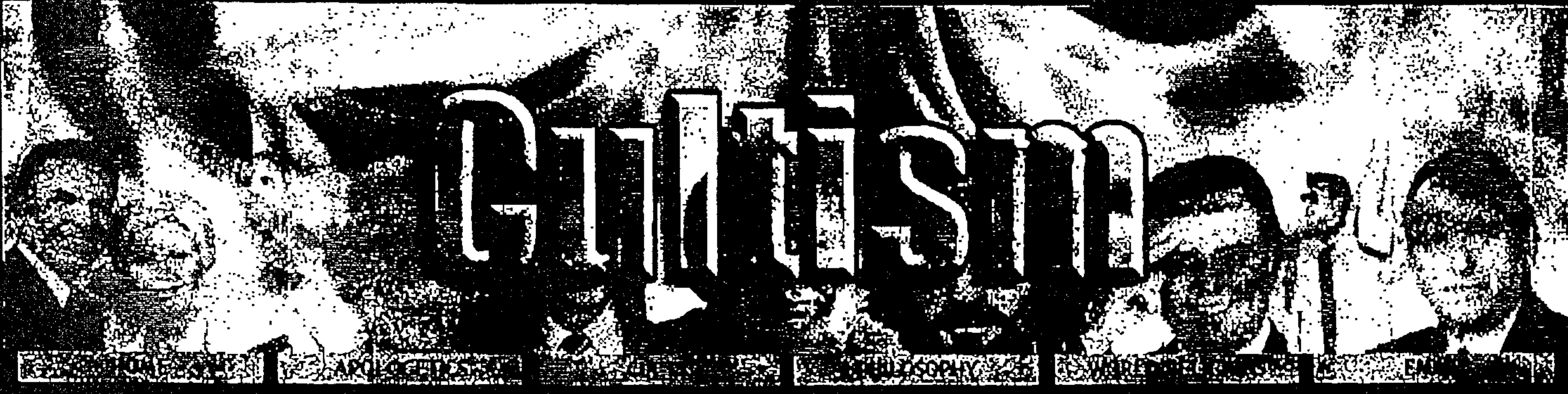
1. Strict monotheism. Allah is God and there are no others.
2. Muhammad is God's final prophet to mankind, and he supercedes all previous prophets and their pronouncements.
3. The Qur'an is God's holy book and final revelation to mankind. It supercedes all other holy books, including the Bible.
4. Jesus was not God's son, for God cannot have a son. Jesus also did not die on a cross, but was substituted for by someone else, while Jesus was transported to heaven.
5. Original sin is denied, while individual free will is promoted.
6. The only absolute assurance of salvation unto a heavenly paradise is through martyrdom. Aside from martyrdom salvation is based strictly upon the works of the Muslim.
7. There will be a resurrection for all human beings. Heaven is depicted as a beautiful garden, and hell is a firey place of torment.

### **Islamic Factions**

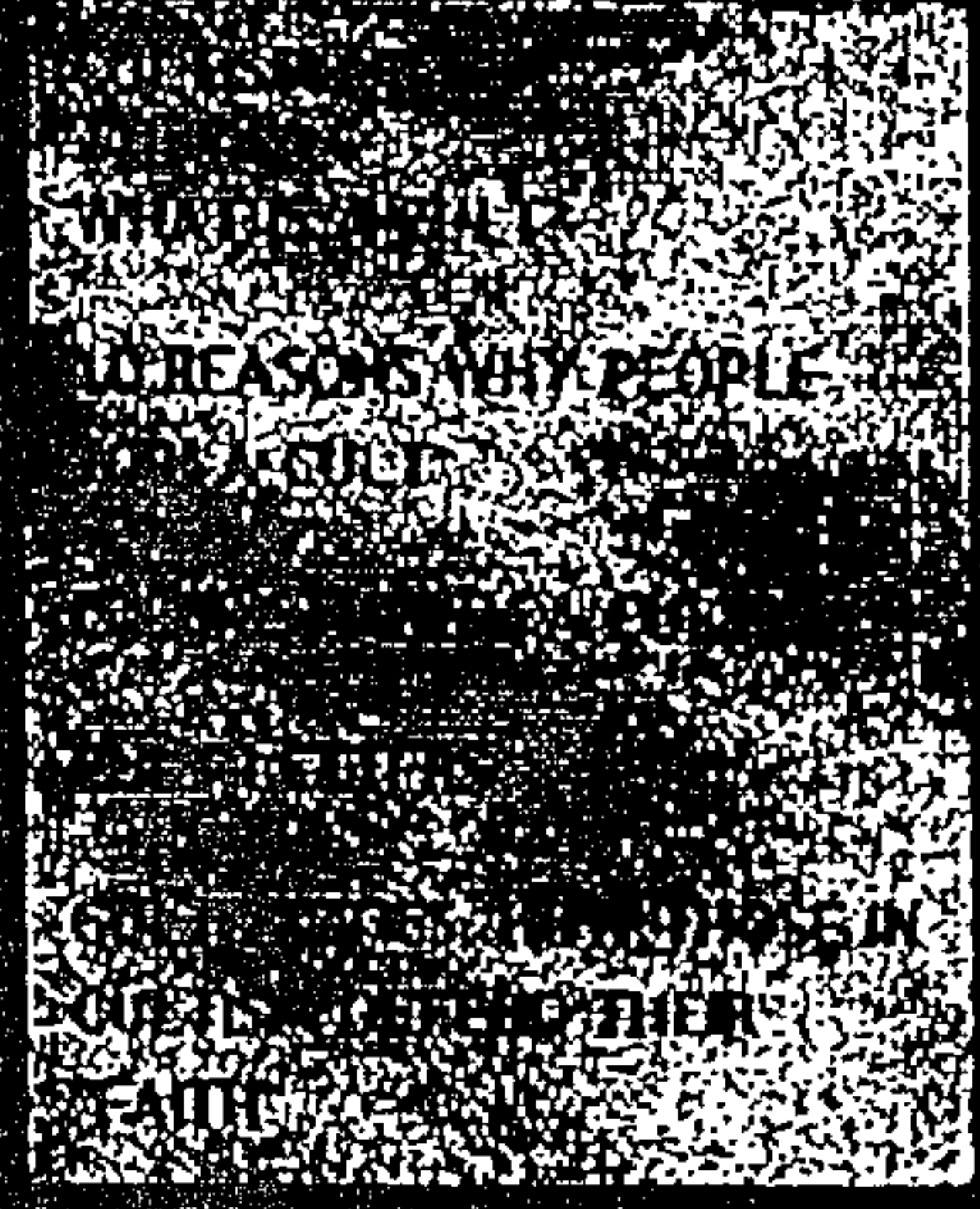
**Sunnis** are the traditionalists in Islam. Their membership extends back to the original Quraysh tribe of which Muhammad was associated. Today they comprise about 85% of all Muslims worldwide.

**Shiites**, which means "faction," is the second largest groups of Muslims, who view their ancestry extending back to Ali, which was Muhammad's nephew. Most Shiites are found in the country of Iran where the *ayatollahs* are the chief interpreters of Shari'a law.

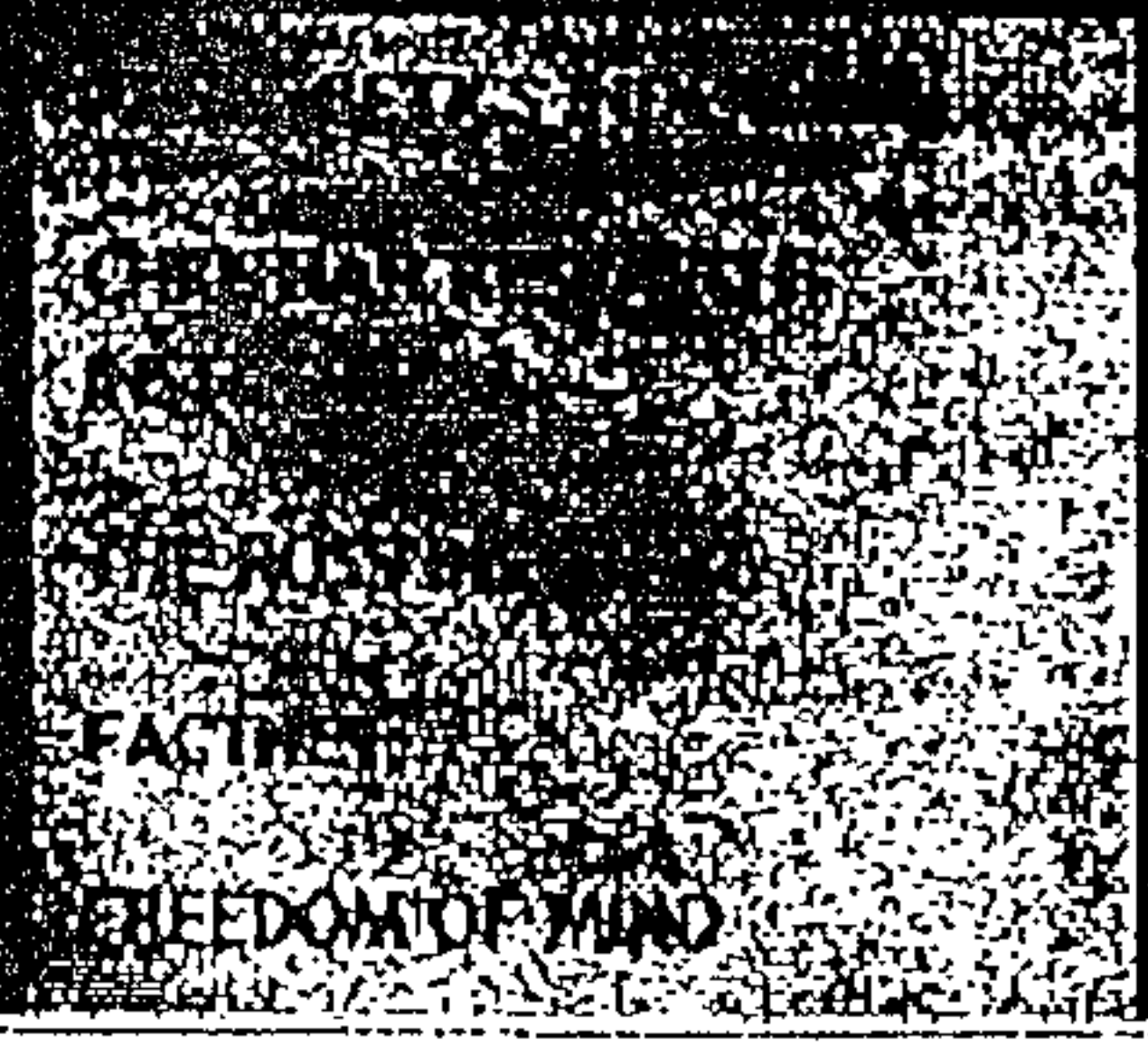
**Sufis**, which means "mystic," are the third faction within Islam, and are known for their mystical experiences with Allah. Their formation was a reaction to the more worldly expressions of Islam, with a recitation of Allah's names (there are 99 in all) from the Qur'an seen as particularly devotional forms of worship.



Cultism Articles



Cultism Help



# 10 Reasons Why People Join a Cult

Paul Derengowski, ThM

The world of the cults is thriving. Everywhere a person turns someone is either promoting a cultic philosophy, a faddish product, or inspirational guru to entice the populace to follow their outlook on life. Have you ever wondered why the cults are so successful, though, in doing what they do? Below are ten suggestions as to why people join the cults, which are also ten warning signs that the reader can use to examine his/her life to determine whether he or she is vulnerable to be recruited into a cult.

## 1. Biblical Illiteracy

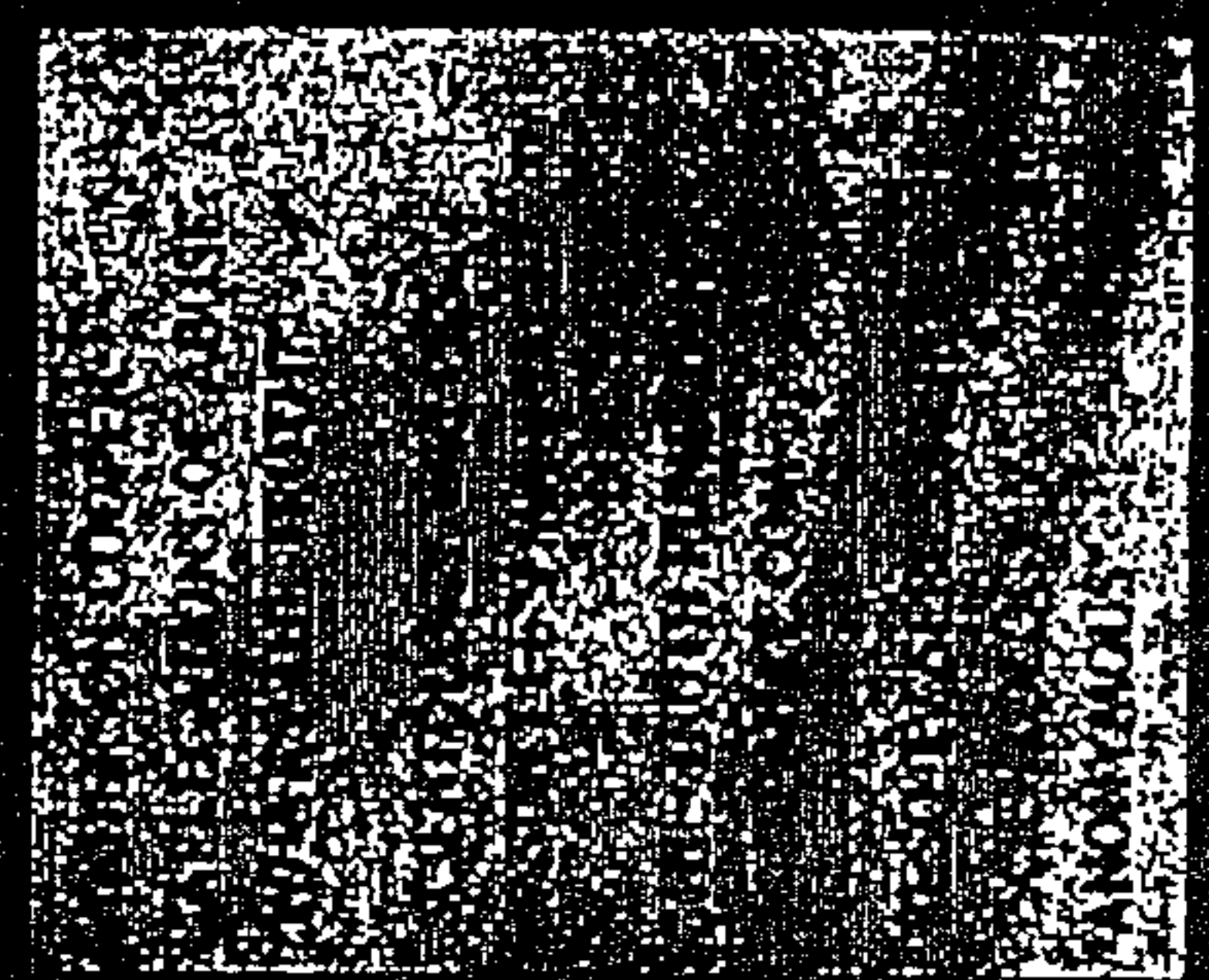
Since all cultic activity is a product of an attack upon biblical principles, in one form or another, it should come as no surprise that the number one area that cults focus on in its recruitment effort is a person's personal acuity when it comes to biblical knowledge. Typically the strategy is to recruit those who have little or no basic understanding of the Bible by inviting that person to a "Bible study" where a distorted or twisted view of reality is taught which promotes either the religious leader's or organization's skewed world view. Jehovah's Witnesses are notorious for this kind of recruiting effort as it is not uncommon for them to schedule in-home personal Bible studies to advance the teachings of *The Watchtower* or one of its leaders.

Conversely, those who have a working knowledge of the Bible and a sound hermeneutic (interpretive method) are virtually immune to cult recruitment. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to conclude that as soon as the cultist discovers that a person has a solid biblical understanding of what he believes, the cultist often flees, files a report at the cult's main field office (particularly if out and about mapping a neighborhood), and does not return.

# SCIENTOLOGY

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## The Church of Scientology

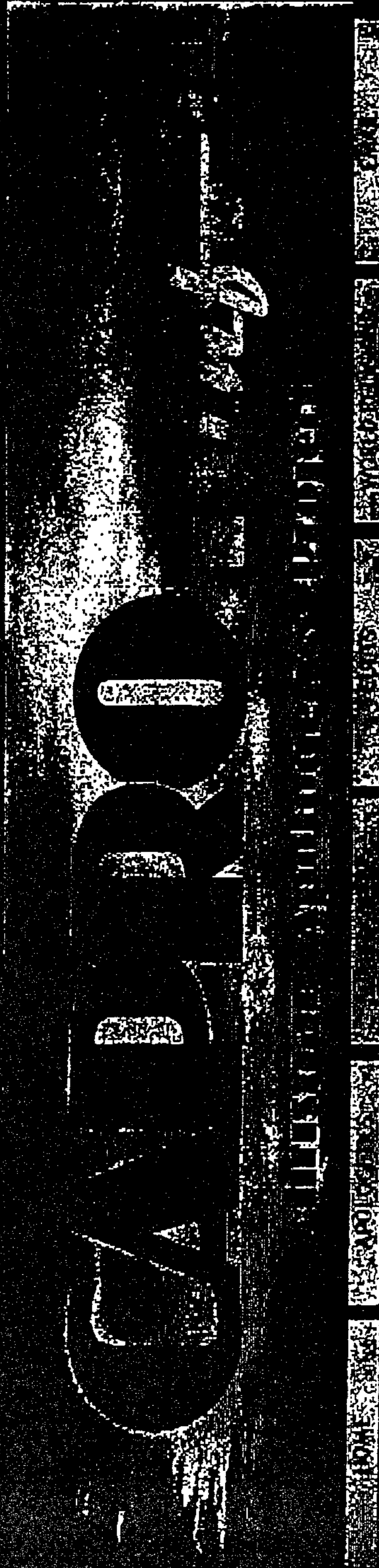
Paul Derengowski, ThM

The Church of Scientology is the product of the vivid imagination of its founder L. Ron Hubbard. Originally a pulp science fiction writer, Hubbard transformed his Freudian-based, human potential, quasi-pop psychological "technology" that he earlier labeled *Dianetics* into what is more commonly known as Scientology. In fact, Dianetics is still the undergirding philosophy of Scientology beliefs to this day.

Dianetics was originally published in 1950, with the Church of Scientology being officially incorporated in 1954. According to Hubbard's son, L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. (aka Ron DeWolf) and former Scientology Bent Corydon, his father's self-help therapy was actually borrowed from several other sources, including Sigmund Freud, Abreaction psychiatry (which is where Hubbard derived his "reactive mind" theory), and Richard Simon (also "Semon"), who wrote *The Mneme* (which where Hubbard derived the term "engram"). Couple those ideas with L. Ron Hubbard's interest in the occult (he adored the famed occultist Aleister Crowley), the psychological theories of Polish mathematician Alfred Korzybski (who created General Semantics), and hypnosis, and one readily begins to see that what Hubbard created in Dianetics, and practiced in Scientology, was anything but original.

Prior to Hubbard's venture into "religion," though, Hubbard not only wrote voluminously, but traveled the world, served in great capacities in the Navy, attended George Washington University, was an inventor, motion picture producer, and then authored Dianetics, using all his life experiences and skills. What very few Scientologists realize, however, is that all the grandiose claims about Hubbard were bogus. In exhaustive detail *Russell Miller* outlines the life of L. Ron Hubbard in his book *Bare-Faced Messiah*; in which he debunks one claim after another made by Hubbard, and Scientologists themselves. Despite the facts, Scientologists





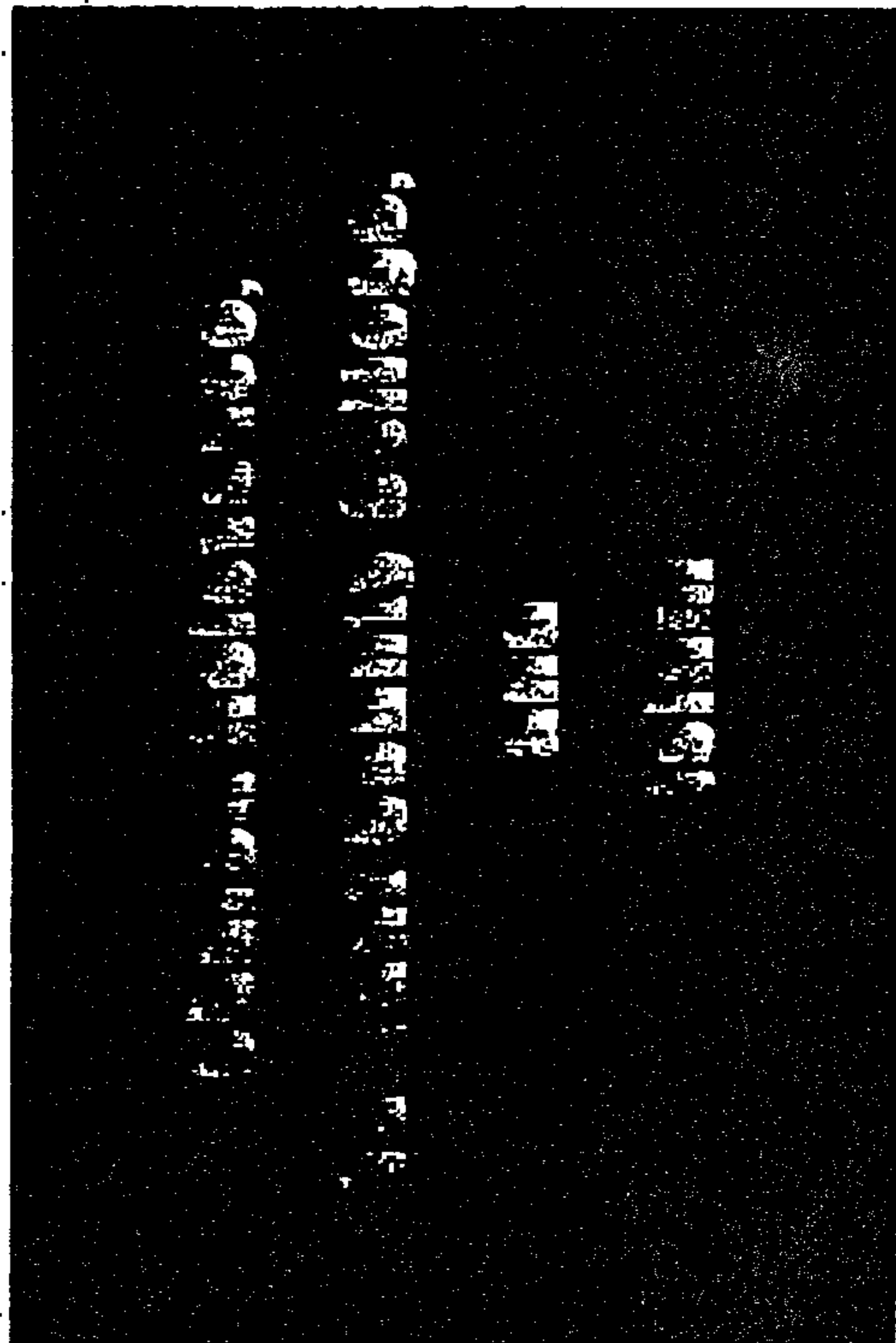
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### Church Relevance, TCC, and Islam



Paul Derengowski spoke at Riglea Baptist Church in Fort Worth on how the church can be relevant in the world, and then detailed what occurred at Tarrant County Collage when two Muslim students became enraged over how he taught on the subject of Islam. (Audio only)

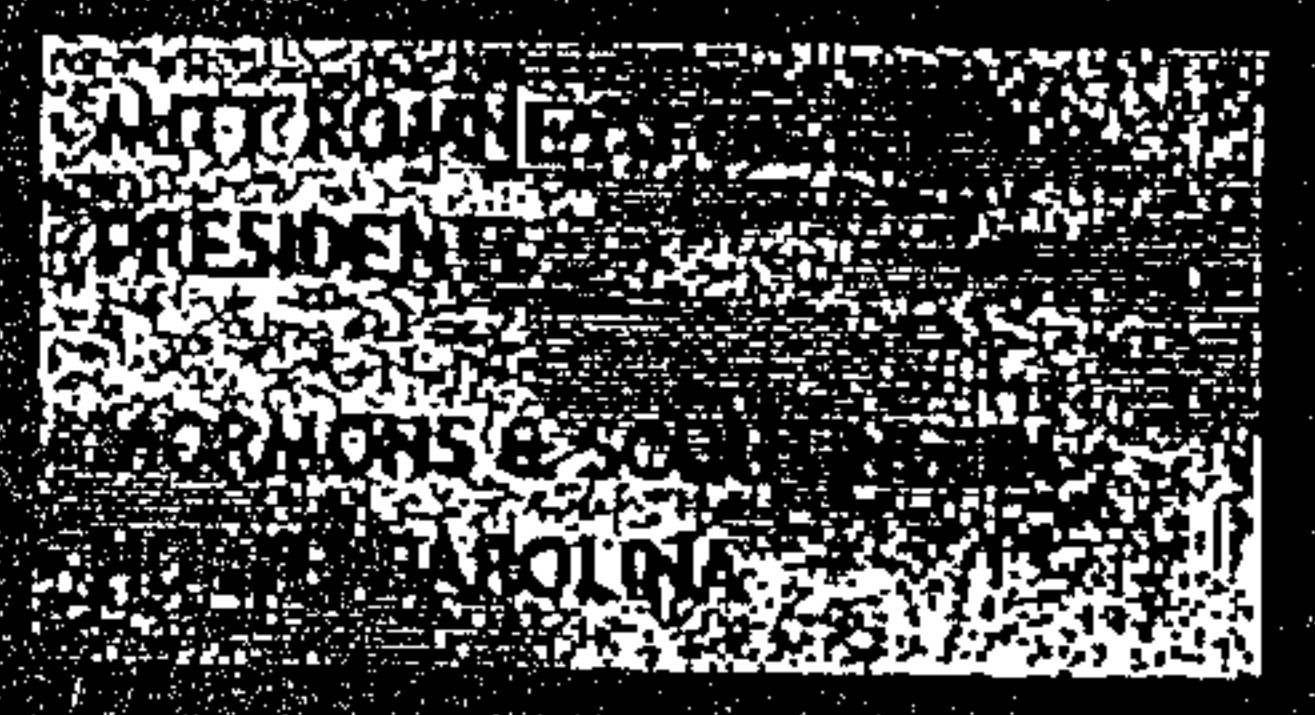
### Religion News Headlines

# MORMONISM

## Mormon Articles



## Video & Audio on Mormonism



## The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Paul Derengowski, ThM

### Introduction

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the product of the efforts of Joseph Smith, Jr. He was born in Tunbridge, Vermont to Joseph Smith, Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith on December 23, 1805. Although he was raised with little formal education, a vivid imagination coupled with an association with those who were formally educated, as well as a liberal "borrowing" from several literary sources, involvement in Freemasonry and the occult, eventually led to the development of one of the United States' most popular home grown religions: Mormonism

### Location

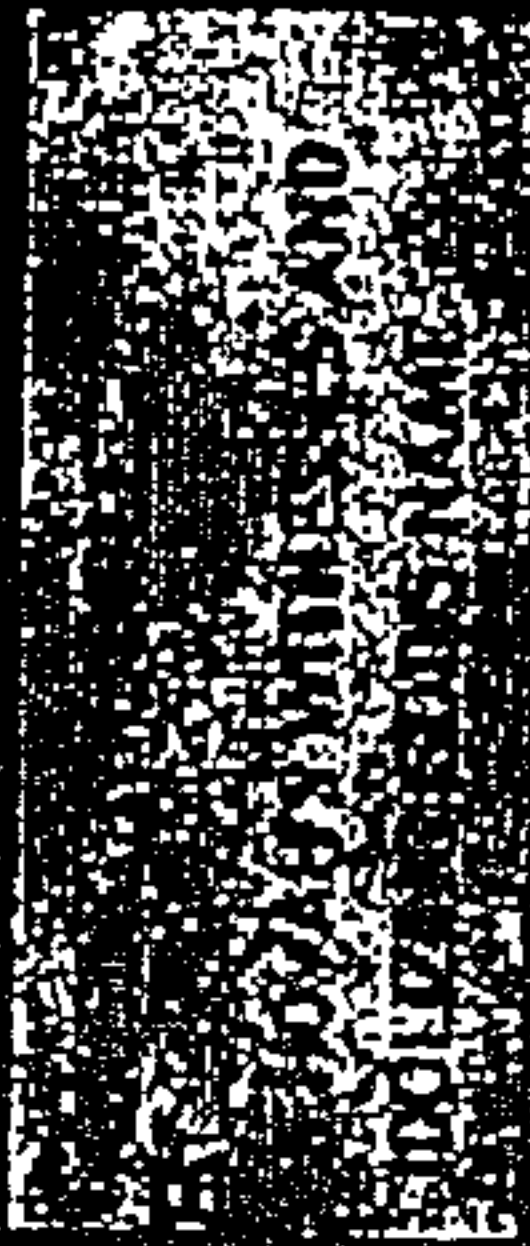
The main headquarters for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is Salt Lake City, Utah. Prior to establishing its headquarters in Salt Lake City under the leadership of Brigham Young, the church was founded in Palmyra, New York (1830) by Joseph Smith, Jr., who then moved the church to Kirtland, Ohio, Far West, Missouri, and Nauvoo, Illinois. While in Illinois Smith was arrested for destroying the *Nauvoo Expositor*, which exposed his polygamous affairs in explicit detail. During Smith's wait for trial in a Carthage, Illinois jail, an angry mob stormed the facility on June 27, 1844, and amid an exchange of gunfire between Joseph Smith and the mob, Smith and his brother Hyrum were killed. Today, Mormons see Smith as a martyr, but it is difficult to reconcile the idea of martyrdom with trying to kill others in an attempt to preserve one's life, nevertheless, that is what Smith did at Carthage.

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# Jehovah's Witnesses

The Watchtower Bible Tract Society

Jehovah's Witness  
Articles



## Jehovah's Witnesses

Paul Derengowski, ThM

### Introduction

The Jehovah's Witnesses originally started under the leadership of one Charles Taze Russell in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1870. Dissatisfied with his Congregationalist upbringing, particularly over the doctrine of eternal torment, Russell started his own Bible study group, *The Dawn Bible Students*, which he would later incorporate into *Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society* in 1884. Russell was a prolific writer and used the written page to propagate his new religion, which not only was a composite of old Arianism, but the failed prophecies of William Miller and Seventh Day Adventism. Perhaps the most influential of his teachings involved the prediction of Armageddon and the end of the current world order in the year 1914.

The man who gave the current organization its current title, the *Watchtower Bible & Tract Society*, and its followers their name, *Jehovah's Witnesses*, was Joseph F. Rutherford, the second leader. In fact, because of his remaining insistence, and shift from the biblical study that Russell stressed to a more missionary outreach, Zion's Watchtower ended up splitting between The Dawn Bible Students and Jehovah's Witnesses. Rutherford was equally a prolific writer, as well as false prophet. His command to build both Beth Sarim and Beth Shan in San Diego to house the ancient patriarchs of the Old Testament, as indicative of closeness of the end times, is perhaps his most noteworthy blunder. The Watchtower Society has since sold both properties, leaving very few Jehovah's Witnesses with any knowledge of this history and cover-up.

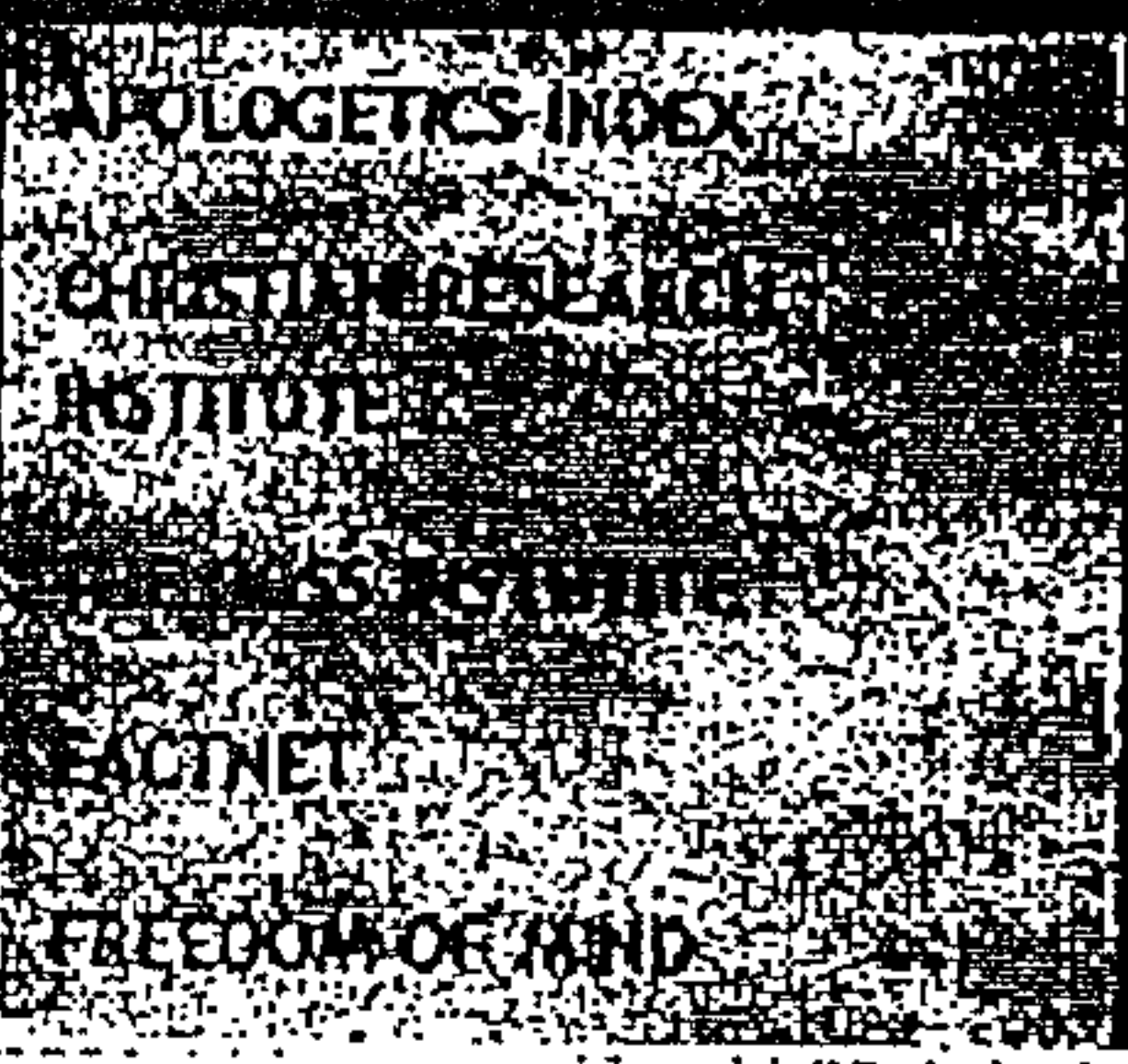
Other Watchtower leaders who were instrumental in implementing various facets of



### Cultism Articles



### Cultism Help



## What is a Cult?

Paul Derengowski, ThM.

Of course, depending on who is asked what a cult is will also depend on the type of response that is received. For many different persons in many different fields of study define what a cult is according to their particular discipline. A standard definition that many typically refer to is Webster's dictionary, which defines a cult in the following manner:

- 1a) a system of religious worship or ritual b) a quasi-religious group, often living in a colony, with a charismatic leader who indoctrinates members with unorthodox or extremist views, practices, or beliefs
- 2a) devoted attachment to, or extravagant admiration for, a person, principle, or lifestyle, esp. when regarded as a fad [the cult of nudism] b) the object of such attachment
- 3 a group of followers; sect. 1

Although such a definition serves to broadly and generally inform an inquirer as to what a cult is, it does not do justice to how the word is used in the various fields of study which deal with cultism more directly. For example, in the world of social psychology a cult may be defined as:

...a group of people who organize around a strong authority figure. Cults, like many other groups, attempt to expand their influence for the purposes of power or money. However, to achieve these ends, destructive cults employ a potent mixture of influence techniques and deception to attain psychological control over members and new recruits. This fundamental level of control is known alternatively as 'brainwashing,' 'thought reform,' or 'mind control.' A successful induction by a destructive cult displaces a person's former identity and replaces it with a new

# Cultism

Paul Derengowski, ThM

Cults and Cultism have been a part of the human fabric since almost its inception. More recently, however, the idea of belonging to a cult has taken on a more sinister meaning. Starting with the writing of the *Kingdom of the Cults* by Walter Martin in 1965, to belong to a cult was to belong to an aberration of the Christian faith. From that particular perspective other less theological approaches to cult observation began to arise, whether they were sociological or psychological.

Typically when addressing the idea of aberrant doctrines it is meant that the cult or cultist either denies, distorts, or demeans the fundamental aspects which constitute traditional, biblical, historic Christianity. In other words, it is not uncommon for a cult to deny the reality of the Trinity or the deity of Jesus Christ (Jehovah's Witnesses), or even that Christ came in the flesh at all (Gnosticism). Or a cult may simply distort a fundamental tenet of Christianity, such as is the case when Oneness Pentecostals distort the Trinity by asserting that God simply changes modes to represent the Father, Son, and Spirit, when he needs to, but is not actually three different persons in the one godhead. And when denial and distortion do not fit the description of cult operation, the cult simply demeans a given doctrine, such as when the cult claims to uphold the Bible as authoritative, only to turn around assert its fallacious nature, and the necessity of incorporating extra-biblical revelation to clear up any errors or fallacies. Mormonism, with its *Book of Mormon*, is a classic example of a cult that demeans the Bible through its doubletalk outlook toward the Bible.

Aside from aberrant doctrines contrary to biblical, historic Christianity, cults often exhibit other characteristics which set them apart from the mainstream of both religious and secular life. Often a cult manifests a dynamic, charismatic leader who rules with domineering authority over his followers. Frequently the leader is involved in, or has been involved in, some kind of immoral activity, typically as it relates to sexual intercourse. Joseph Smith (Mormonism), Jim Jones (Peoples Temple), Charles Manson (the Family), Moses David (Children of God), David Koresh (Branch Davidians), and Claude Vorhilon (Raelianism) are all classic examples of cult leaders with propensities to seduce their female followers because of the strong personal influence they hold over them.

Greed, or a lust for money, is another regular trait found among the cults. Some twist biblical precedence to swindle money out of their followers, while others simply pressure their flocks into buying services and "technologies" which promise great rewards for their sacrifices. It is not uncommon for those involved in Scientology to pay thousands of dollars for auditing sessions which the "church" convinces its adherents will help them traverse to the next "Operating Thetan" level. Similar tactics are employed by many Word-Faith preachers such as Benny Hinn, Ken and Gloria Copeland, and Bob Larson, to name just a few, as they advertise the need to buy "anointed" prayer clothes, books, self-help recordings, etc., all promising special blessings from God, while the former fly around in their private jets.

The number of cults cannot be assessed with absolute precision. While there are several fairly large cults that are noticeable, and will most likely be around for some time, others are relatively obscure and small. Some have estimated that anywhere between two and three thousands cults are in existence at any given time, but that number likely wavers with each passing day, as one cult arises and another one folds. The keys to remember is that they do exist, there are many of them, and anyone at any given time is susceptible to being drawn into a cult, if one is not careful.

It is the expressed desire of CAPRO to aid in preparing the reader to be wary of cult recruitment and indoctrination. For once a person has been hooked into joining a cult, it is almost impossible to retrieve that friend, family member, or co-worker from the cult. Therefore it is with God's blessing that you review the information placed here, for preventative intervention is going to be the best remedy to avoid becoming the victim of the cult.