

Are We a Cult?

Many have condemned me, and those who are in agreement with me in doctrine and practice, as a cult. Some have even called for blood. Many professing believers who think to have the Christ Spirit look at us with disdain, whispering and speaking all kinds of evil against us. They treat us as though we were earth's (and Heaven's) worst nightmare.

The saints are called to be a light and salt, not to persecute those who do evil.

Just what *is* a cult? Does anyone know? Experts of Catholic persuasion, or should I say birth and/or indoctrination, deem many prominent denominations to be cults. The truth be known, if they had the power they had before the reformation, everybody but Catholics would be burned at the stake, or hung, or drowned in mock water immersion (baptism). Many Catholics themselves perished in the Inquisition, so ruthless it was under "Saint" Ignatius Loyola and other tyrannical "spiritual" leaders.

But their version of history is quite different from that of Protestants and vice versa, so many Catholics who read this will be offended because they have not been taught anything but their own version in their schools and seminaries. Some who are prepared to acknowledge the past horrific acts of the Catholic Church say, "That was then, but no more." I say that the root has never changed, the trunk has not changed, branches grow from the trunk and from those branches come the stems, leaves and fruit. **How can the fruit be different with the same source?**

Protestants as a whole have not been guiltless either. Luther and Calvin, for examples, have their infamous records to bear as well, and so do many others. To them, the Catholic Church was not only a cult but also the occult. And when you consider several aspects of the Catholic Church's teachings and practices, like storing some dead man's blood in a vial over centuries and watching to see if it will change on some "holy" days, like worshiping a woman more than God, like digging up a corpse to see if it is preserved after a long while to determine whether they should declare that person a saint, like dressing in all sorts of religious clothing, like chanting in Latin, like celebrating Halloween, you would have to agree.

That does not, however, justify persecution. The saints/children/people of *true* faith in God are called to be a light, and salt, and are called to reprove the works of darkness; they are not called to torture, punish, or persecute to the death those who do evil in the Name of God.

Most Catholics and “Protestants” would consider the Mormons, the Seventh Day Adventists, and the Jehovah’s Witnesses to be cults, along with the Moonies and several other groups today.

So, What Is a Cult?

Some say it is a “baby denomination” or an infant religion. With such a definition, every denomination would of necessity have once been a cult. Jesus and His followers were known and condemned as a cult.

You can decide for yourselves whether or not we are a "cult."

Some say it is a religious movement that focuses on a charismatic leader. (I wonder how the Catholic Church gets around that one with a leader they call “The Most Holy Father,” no less. They even speak proudly, unapologetically about how charismatic he is.)

Some say that a cult is people who live in communities, sharing everything. There go the Hutterites and so many other groups. And what is wrong with community or communal living? Did they not have all things common as recorded in the Book of Acts? Perhaps they did not live communally... it does not say... but is living in community so wrong? Says who? Those who don’t live communally? Those who are too selfish to share all that they have? Are they to be the judges? Are Catholic experts to be the judges of all others? Says who? The Catholics? Are Baptists to define or identify cults? Says who? Baptists? Evangelicals?

From what I see, cults are defined and identified according to one’s own religious indoctrination and belief. Therefore, I propose that rather than trying to define a cult, I will simply lay out to all, that which we believe and practise. You can decide for yourselves, in whatever way you like, whether or not we are a “cult.”

Why Are We Condemned as a Cult?

Could it be because we believe in the reconciliation of all things as surely testified of in Scripture, a wonderful hope and promise for all? This doctrine is certainly contrary to the diabolical doctrine of eternal torment for the majority of mankind, as taught by mainstream nominal Christendom. It also, in one fell swoop, condemns any and all forms of self-righteousness. It is a hard thing for one to truly believe that he is no more righteous than any other. So when we declare so, we are “a cult.”

Could it be because we keep the Biblical Sabbath? Seventh Day Adventists do so; the Worldwide Church of God does so; Jews do so, and so do many others. Are they branded as cults? By some, for this very reason, yes.

Could it be because we do not celebrate Christmas, Easter, Halloween, birthdays, and such, all of which are, as a matter of record, of pagan origin? Undoubtedly. Many nominal Christians can't understand why we "don't celebrate Jesus' birthday!" The fact is, nowhere in the Bible is there celebration of His birthday, or that of any of the people of faith. We do, however, have a Biblical record of the celebration of birthdays by unbelievers, such as Herod, on which occasion, John, our beloved brother, lost his head. These pagan celebrations have been so inculcated in "Christian" religion that to repent of them is heresy and partaking of them is godliness. In repenting, we are "a cult."

Could it be because we have had some community living and commitment? This aspect seems to scare many people away. Is it wrong to live in community?

Could it be because we speak of God without "going to church" or belonging to an accepted and recognized religious organization? There are some who don't think we have the right to speak of God independently of some official hierarchy.

Could it be that I have spoken, saying that all formal religious "Christian" organizations are false, that they are social organizations, designed to benefit in the flesh and in the world, that they are the "high places" referred to in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, that they are the very "gates of Hades" to which Jesus referred (Matthew 16:18), and that all those who are His must come out? Undoubtedly.

Could it be that I have claimed to hear from God on many and diverse issues, condemning so much of what is believed and practised by nominal Christians? Obviously.

Could it be that we endeavor to obey God regardless of what the world thinks?

Could it be because I lead and others follow? Is that a crime? We are accused of "controlling." Apparently, some people do not like being told what to do. They prefer their pride and independence intact. That is the nature of lawless, unregenerate man. Did not Jesus lead and others follow? Did not John the Baptist, and Paul and many others lead while still others followed? So what is the crime? Can anyone declare, by Scripture, what is wrong here?

The fact is that I lead, and not as a hireling. I am sent by God, not man, and those who are His will heed. The shepherds of church systems must be careful, lest they lose their congregants, their status and their livelihood. So how can they then lead, when led themselves, not by God, but by their own sheep? One cannot be led by both. And the congregants love to have this power. They are not interested in worshiping God. They want to be entertained and coddled; they want their ears tickled. They prefer their sins, and a false sense of security and identity with God. They have their reward, and pay dearly, not knowing it. **The comfortable pew is much more appealing than the fatal cross, without which no man shall see God.**

Could it be because we claim to hear the Voice of God, Who said, “My sheep hear (not read) My Voice” (John 10:27)? Could it be that God is real to us, unlike with our accusers, that we are dead serious about Him, thus being “a savor of death unto death” to many, and that we endeavor to obey Him regardless of what the world may think?

Could it be because those things we hear and speak from God are foreign to the worshipers of false gods, particularly those who worship other gods in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Unlike others, our doctrine does not make us, but our doctrine grows out of our relationship with God. Others seek a relationship with God by doctrine, as did the Pharisees, for example, and as do almost all, if not all denominations today.

Jesus Christ, **the** Son of God, and Creator God Himself, is indeed Lord of all, not only theoretically, or theologically, but in all reality, here, now.

There is but One God, not three, and Jesus Christ is He. “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is **One Lord**” (Deut. 6:4), and “**One Lord**, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4:5).

Both Old and New Testaments are God’s testimony of Himself, His will and record of His dealings with mankind. The Bible as we know it is the one and only truly Holy Scripture given to mankind. The focus is the Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

God calls on all men to repent, to turn from their self-serving and wicked ways.

God manifest Himself in the weakness and limitation of flesh to His creation, in the Person of Jesus Christ, to redeem all of mankind from self, from sin, from darkness, from the world under the power of the Serpent.

The Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has been perfectly successful, the fruits to be manifest in the fullness of time. All men will be delivered from their sin, redeemed to confess Him as Lord on reverent and thankful, not grudging and fearful, bended knee.

Jesus Christ died for the sins of all men, was buried, and after three days, raised from the dead, in victory over evil principalities and powers, and death itself. Our one and only hope is through faith in Jesus Christ's salvation through His sacrifice, His shed blood, His death and resurrection.

He calls on all men to repent, to turn from their self-serving, harmful, and wicked ways, to Him, to save them from their destructives.

His righteousness alone is worthy; any and all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, utterly unworthy.

But He calls us to holiness and obedience, therefore righteous fruits of faith will come as a result of genuine faith.

His Law is not done away; those who are His establish the law as outlined in the Ten Commandments (Romans 3:31).

The fruits of genuine faith can only be determined by the spiritual man, by spiritual discernment and revelation granted by God, certainly not by the carnal man, not by intellectual or sensual judgment.

More specifically, as pertaining to us, we believe:

In the keeping of the true Sabbath of God (the seventh day which He sanctified), according to the Scriptures, and not the substituted one (the first day which He did not) according to man's idolatries and carnal reasonings.

As mentioned, we believe in One God, not three, according to the Scriptures as quoted. While He can and has manifest Himself as Son and Father, yet He is One and not two or three. Is it any stranger to believe that He can manifest Himself at once in two or more persons than to believe that there are three Gods all at once?

We believe that the so-called holy days or "holidays" of Christmas and Easter have nothing to do with Christ, nor God, nor the Scriptures, nor the will of God for us. They are, as a matter of record, of pagan origin, and as such, we do not participate in them because He has commanded us to not do so (Jeremiah 10).

We hear the Voice of God, and when we do, we are to obey when commanded.

We believe in farming and eating organically, that is, without harm by use of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, harmful artificial fertilizers and such. We believe in proper treatment of the entire environment, wherever possible, including air, water, soil, microorganisms, insects, plants, animals as well as people.

In dress, we do not believe in religious or uniform clothing as do cults, by definition of some, but we do believe that people should dress discreetly, with respect for all, that women should look like women and men like men, identified with reasonable ease.

We believe that formal religious organizations are out of the will of God, and as such, we need to be separate from them, not by our own power, but by the grace of God. We perceive great suffering and sorrow as a consequence of partaking of the harlot church.

Oh, how unaware of the consequences are those who worship “within the gates,” “inside the city,” not knowing the will, nor believing the commands and promises of God! A promise God made to the Israelites, that pertains to us every bit as much, is that “none of these diseases will He lay on us that He has laid on the Egyptians, if we will obey His commandments.” One of His commands to us has been, “Come out from among them and be separate.”

We believe that we are to do unto others as we would have others do unto us, that we are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. This is not a matter of works but of pure grace.

We believe in hearing the Voice of God, for which alone we are branded as a cult by those who do not believe God speaks to people personally today. We do hear the Voice of God, and recognize that when we do, we are to obey when commanded.

Above all other reasons, I believe we are branded as a cult because we preach the cross of Christ. The cross is a hideous, odious thing to the flesh. When God speaks, and gives a command, the cross is often there. When we have heard His Voice, there has often been a serious price to pay. Those not interested in dying to self deny that God would require “such terrible things” of people. Jesus did plainly say, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross.” That means not only repentance from sin, but death to all that is near and dear. This we believe and preach, and can do no other.

IF FOR THESE THINGS WE ARE DEFINED OR IDENTIFIED AS A CULT, SO BE IT, WE *ARE* A CULT, AND I MAKE NO APOLOGIES.

I say this to all: As costly as it has been for us, the reward is infinitely greater. I am very thankful to be free of the fear of man, having the fear of God, granted to prefer His praise to that of men.

Victor Hafichuk