

**WHAT IS A CULT?**

# WHAT IS A CULT?

- A system of religious veneration and devotion directed toward a particular figure or object.
- A relatively small group of people having religious beliefs or practices regarded by others as strange or sinister.
- The word cult in current popular usage usually refers to a group whose beliefs or practices are considered abnormal or bizarre.

**CULT**

# WHAT IS A CULT?

The word originally denoted a system of ritual practices.

The word was first used in the early 17th century denoting *homage paid to a divinity* and derived from the French *culte* or Latin *cultus*, 'worship', from *cult-*, 'inhabited, cultivated, worshipped,' from the verb *colere*, 'care, cultivation'.

CULT

# WHAT IS A CULT?

**MEANINGS VARY BECAUSE IT IS AMBIGUOUS** - infused with a variety of meanings depending on who uses it and for which purpose it is used.

## **THEOLOGICAL vs. SOCIOLOGICAL**

*Mormon Church / Unification Church*

*Scientology / Heavens Gate / Branch Davidians*

*Manson Family / Jim Jones*

**CULT**

# Is The Church of Christ a Cult?

## NEGATIVE DEFINITION OF CULT SUGGESTS

1. Extra Biblical Revelation
2. Presumptuous Messianic Leadership
3. Slavery of the mind
4. Denial of privacy
5. Deception, coercion, human doctrine, isolation, mental suppression, uncertain hope



# Is The Church of Christ a Cult?

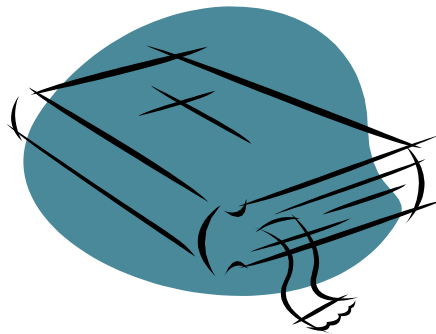
## PUREST FORM OF DEFINITION

- A system of religious veneration and devotion directed toward a particular figure or object.

- Acts 4:1-3, 12-13

- Acts 5:28-33

- Acts 7



Been with Jesus ...

In this name ...

Stoned Steven ...

# Is The Church of Christ a Cult?

## PUREST FORM OF DEFINITION

- A relatively small group of people having religious beliefs or practices regarded by others as strange or sinister
  - Saul's attacked **THE WAY** **Acts 9:2**
  - Paul in Ephesus **Acts 19:9-10**
  - Riot in Ephesus **Acts 19:23**



# Is The Church of Christ a Cult?

But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. **(Acts 24:14)**

“that after the way which they call heresy” (KJV)

See also **Acts 24:5**



# CHARACTER OF NT CHURCH

- **ONE way**      **John 14:6**
- **ONE name**      **Acts 4:12**
- **ONE faith**      **Ephesians 4:4-6**
- **ONE word**      **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
- **ONE life**      **2 Corinthians 6:14-18**
- **ONE hope**      **Revelation 1:8**
- **ONE GOD**      **John 3:16**





This is how God showed his love among us:

He sent his  
one and only Son  
into the world  
that we might  
live through him.  
1 John 4:9