

The Do's and Don'ts of Witnessing to Cults

by Walter Martin

Effective communication with cultists requires recognizing the need for identity, identifying with the cultists, and convincing them of the gospel through clear and defined vocabulary and terminology.

Duration: 57:03

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 16:31, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Ephesians 6:10-11, Colossians 4:6, 2 Timothy 2:15, 1 Peter 3:15

Topics: "Cults"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having Christ enthroned in our hearts and lives before defending the Christian Gospel. He shares a personal story of a young boy who was transformed by Christ and became a witness for Him. The speaker also highlights the need to prioritize winning souls over winning arguments, showing love and compassion to others. He advises against trying to impress people with biblical knowledge and instead encourages understanding their mindset in order to effectively communicate.

Transcript

The verse which best describes what this course will be, from a biblical perspective, is 1 Peter 3, verse 15. Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give to everyone that asks of you an answer, a reason for the hope that lies within you with humility and with reverence. What we are being told by Peter is that before you can effectively defend the Christian gospel against its enemies, Christ must be enthroned in the heart and in the life.

Once he is set apart as sovereign, then it is possible to be prepared to give to everyone that asks of you an answer. And that is what the science of apologetics is all about. It is to every man an answer, a reason for the hope that lies within you.

We are involved in this series of meetings, in this course, on the subject of cult apologetics. We call it a cult clinic or a cult seminar, but we're really involved in cult apologetics and evangelism. Giving reasons for faith and then evangelizing people.

Because after we communicate the gospel of Christ to someone, it's important for us to be prepared to give them reasons why we believe in it. When you're talking to a Jehovah's Witness or a Mormon or a Christian scientist or a Unitarian or someone in the kingdom of the cult, and you give that person your witness in Christ, the person is going to respond and give you their thoughts. Now when that happens, you

cannot retort with John 3.16. You cannot come back with Acts 16.31. You have got to be able to answer the question addressed to you in the context of that question.

Not just give more evangelism, because you will lose the respect of the person unless they see that you are concerned with their questions. That they have genuine concerns and are looking for answers. That's why there has to be giving reasons or answers for our faith.

That's why the Greek word found about eight times approximately in the New Testament, apologia, put up a strong defense. A strong spiritual fight for your faith is included in New Testament theology. The Lord Jesus, the apostles, the disciples of our Lord, all of them were apologists as well as evangelists.

They not only proclaimed Jesus Christ, but when they were questioned, they had good solid reasons for their faith. That's why Peter says, always ready to every man an answer. Reason for the hope that lies within us.

That is primary to our understanding of this field. Secondly, we have to understand something else about the world of the cult. We are dealing with approximately 24 million people in the kingdom of the cult.

And according to Time Magazine, approximately 60 odd million involved in our culture practice. Put them together and you have a good round number of 84 million who are desperately in need of a communication of the Christian gospel. That's the object of evangelism and of apologetics.

Give them the message and be prepared to give some answers. Now there are many things that have to be learned. And in the time that we have together, I don't think we're going to cover everything that we ought to cover or would want to cover.

But I want to assign reading for you in the text because this will give you some background and cover some material on your own time that will be supplementary to what we cover in our class lectures. I would like you to read between now and our next meeting together, the first two chapters of the kingdom of the cult, with particular emphasis upon the chapters scaling the language barrier. And the chapter entitled, Jesus of the Cult.

The Jesus of the Cult. Those are orientation chapters. Chapters which will give you a perspective on the world of the cult.

We define a cult, incidentally, as a group of people polarized about the interpretations or the teachings of a specific individual or organization. It always claims to be in harmony with Christianity. But it always ends up denying that Jesus Christ is the Lord God himself in human flesh.

For the purposes of our study, that is what a cult is. Simple meaning of the word in Latin, cultus, means a group. But as we look around us and see Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Christian Science, Unitarianism, Spiritism, the Unity School of Christianity, Herbert W. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God, and go on naming all of the various cults that surround us, you will notice that each one has its own guru, if you will.

Its own interpreter. The one who makes plain to them what God has said. They're always trying, almost tumbling over each other sometimes, to say, we're in agreement with the basic Christian message.

But when you start penetrating deeper into the system, you find out that there is an essential denial of the person of Jesus Christ. Let me illustrate what I mean by this. When you are talking to a Jehovah's Witness and you say, Jesus, that means to the Christian, God the Son, Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

That means to the Jehovah's Witness, Michael the Archangel, the first and greatest creation of Jehovah God. When you say, Jesus, to a Mormon, that means to you, God the Son, Second Person of the Trinity. It doesn't change.

To the Mormon, it means a polygamous offspring of another god and the Virgin Mary, who is one god in a pantheon of gods. And every Mormon member of the priesthood, male member, is attempting to attain godhood so they can be like Jesus. When you say, Jesus, to a Christian scientist, to you, God the Son, Second Person of the Trinity.

To the Christian scientist, the divine idea of God is the divine idea of a true man? Of course not. Because there is no such thing as true manhood because the physical world doesn't exist. Christian science says, and I quote Mrs. Eddy, founder and discoverer, allegedly, there is no life, truth, intelligence or substance in matter but all is infinite mind and its infinite manifestation.

God is all and in all. Translated, there is no reality to the world of matter. This is known in philosophy as absolute idealism.

The only thing that exists is the ideal, the idea itself. It has, however, a basic flaw. That basic flaw is people persist in getting sick and dying.

And this does create somewhat of a contradiction in Christian science reasoning process. Death rate is still one per person. And the Christian scientists keep on making it like everybody else.

Therefore, idealism does have its problems. For if God is all and all is good, where did you ever get the idea that there was evil? And when you have to account for the existence of the idea, you are involved in logical contradictions. That, of course, we'll get to when we start studying the mind sciences and how you talk to people who think their bodies aren't really there.

I went to school with a Christian scientist for a number of years and he used to teach me Christian science theology before I was a Christian. And I had terrible hay fever. And when the ragweed was in bloom, so was my nose.

And I used to sneeze interminably. And he would always tell me that if I could learn to demonstrate over error that my nose wouldn't run, my eyes wouldn't run and it would disappear. And I said, how do I demonstrate over error? He said, well, you only really think that you're sneezing.

You only really think that you have a physical body to be irritated by ragweed. Now, if you can realize that the real you is in the image of God and what you are seeing here is an illusion, you can get rid of your hay fever. And I said, fantastic! That's great! I mean, that sounds wonderful.

I said, how come you haven't gotten rid of your broken nose? He said, what broken nose? And he had a nose that was stuck over at an angle like this. And he was looking right down it over there, talking to me and telling me he did not have a broken nose. Anybody that can look at you with a broken nose and tell you they don't have a broken nose can certainly tell you you don't have hay fever.

These are really philosophical problems you run into in dealing with the world of the cult. They're there and they're going to have to be faced. But our primary concern, and I say this very seriously, our primary concern is not to show the cultist that we're smarter than he is.

Not to dazzle him with our biblical footwork or with our apologetics. Our task is to communicate Jesus Christ, the real Jesus, the real spirit, and the real gospel to the cult. And to show them how terribly deceived they have become through the forces of darkness which dominate the world in which we live.

It is also imperative, finally, in dealing with the world of the cult, that you recognize the origin. There are many contributing factors, many explanations which can be given. But the scriptures give one absolute explanation for the world in which we live, the kingdom of the cult.

2 Corinthians 4, verse 4. If our gospel is hid, it is hid to them who are lost, in whom the God of this age has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine to them. You are dealing fundamentally with people who are in darkness spiritually. We are not better than they are.

We are sinners saved by grace. And God has made us righteous in Christ. If they ever get the idea that a Christian thinks that he or she is better than they are, a Christian will never communicate the gospel for that person.

And all too often, in attempting to reach cultists, our approach is, I'm saved and you're lost. Now, theologically, that's true. But emotionally and psychologically, that will turn them off about as fast as anything you could possibly imagine.

Try and find some synonyms for what have become biblical clichés. Try and find some words for saved and lost. Try and find some words to describe the great theological doctrines that are meaningful to the people while at the same time not turning them off to the truth of those teachings.

Illustration. Don't ever say to cultists, you've got to be saved to get under the blood of Jesus. Because the average cultist doesn't even know what you're talking about when you use that kind of vocabulary, that in-house vocabulary.

That is not vocabulary the cultists understand. What you can say to a cultist is, I can remember when the Lord redeemed me from my sins. I didn't deserve it, but Christ delivered me.

And he did it on the basis of the cross of Calvary, where God paid the penalty for human sin. Now given the entire gospel, only you've used the synonym structure. The cultists get the message that you have not climbed up into a pulpit and are engaged in a preaching mission to him.

You are talking with him, using just as forceful language but not with the theological definitions that so often evangelical Christianity is not only familiar with, but guilty of using to excess. I wrote a chapter entitled Scaling the Language Barrier. Why? Because the world of the cult has a completely different language than yours and mine as Christians.

I pointed out to you before the difference in the word Jesus. Well that goes all down the line. For instance, if I were to say to a Christian scientist, the atonement of Christ, a Christian scientist would have a redefinition lightning fast in his or her mind.

And it would mean, I am at onement with God. They hyphenate the word atonement until it becomes at-one-ment with God. But atonement in Christian theology means the covering of our sins the payment for our sins by the substitution of Jesus Christ's life on the cross.

Not so in Christian science. When you start talking to a Mormon about atonement, the Mormon will say oh yes, I believe Jesus died for my sins. I believe his blood was shed for me.

I'm trusting in it. Christian gets a little nonplussed at that point. What's going on in the vocabulary structure? It sounds the same.

How many of you read George Orwell, 1984? You remember doublethink? You just met it again. That's doublethink. Same words, completely different thoughts.

Who is Jesus Christ? God himself in human flesh who died on the cross for our sins. Who is the Jesus of the Mormons? The spirit brother of the devil. The offspring of sexual relations between Adam God and the Virgin Mary.

A polygamist who produced children before he died and was married to at least three women according to Mormon theology. Does his blood cleanse from all sins? No. According to Mormon prophets Brigham Young exactly.

There are some sins the blood of Jesus cannot atone for. Your own blood has to pay for it. How did they arrange that? By executing you for your sins.

Better known in history as the doctrine of blood atonement. So here you have someone saying, I believe in the blood of Jesus and trust it. And you've got another Jesus an incomplete atonement and one that cannot meet the sins of the whole world.

You can follow it through step by step. Have you tried this kind of reasoning in the world of medicine? You never get away with it. Can you imagine going into a doctor and having him look in your throat and poke and push, examine you and then tell you that you had to be in the hospital the next day because he intended to operate, you had appendicitis and you were very upset of course and you went in and the doctor operated.

And you woke up and you still had the pain in your side and you had a sore throat to boot. You suddenly realized that you couldn't talk and when you looked down your throat with a mirror you found out you didn't have any tonsils. And when the doctor came in you said to him I thought I was having my appendix out.

That's down here. My tonsils are out. They're up here.

I'm not a doctor but that much I know. What's going on? The doctor said to you with a smile. No, no.

Let's not be narrow and bigoted. Be broad minded. Tonsils to you, appendix to me.

Now the absurdity of the thought grabbed you immediately. You know a doctor wouldn't last more than one operation with that kind of reasoning. You'd never know what he was going to take out.

If you went into a courtroom and stood before a judge and he didn't know the difference between a misdemeanor and a felony you could go up for murder on a parking ticket. You've got to know that terms in context refer to a specific thing and can be defined as such or we have lost the capacity to

communicate. Now Watergate should have taught us at least one thing.

Words are definitely in need of definition in the American culture. When people can stand up before Congress under oath and with a straight face swear that they never took a dishonest dollar and then under pressure from an attorney they're asked the question, did you take \$20,000 to Mexico, deposit it in the Mexican bank and bring it back again? Yes. Was that \$20,000 an illegal contribution? Yes.

Did you give that \$20,000 to somebody in order to get that person to do what you wanted them to do in this election campaign? Yes. Then you actually bribed that person. No sir, I did not bribe that person.

Well what did you do? I simply utilized funds that were available to extrajudicially find the solution to a difficult problem. Now you know and I know that I did not invent that. We lived through that.

Parades of people going back and forth, lie like troopers. One lie, the other swear to it. And then everybody say, who me? No, never.

Now, not to belabor the point. If terms do not mean in context what they are by definition, we're dead. Politically, medically, legally.

May I extend it? Theologically. And if you think you can talk to the people in the kingdom of the cult and tell them about Jesus and how he loved them and died for their sins and rose from the dead, and you think you're communicating with those people, you're sick. Because as fast as you are giving them that vocabulary, they are going through double think.

And it's coming right out the other end of the computer in their own frame of reference, and it doesn't mean anything at all to the Christian message. Now what do you do in order to short-circuit it? Very carefully define your terms. Define your terms.

Define your terms. When you're talking to somebody and you want to communicate Christ to them, when you use the name of the Lord Jesus, and the person says, I believe in Jesus, then you ought to say, but which one? And that takes people up. What do you mean which one? There's only one? Oh no, didn't you know? There's lots of them.

I only know about one. Ah, but have you got the right one? That's a good conversation starter right there. They're not ready for this.

You'll see this when you read the chapter of Jesus and the cult. 2 Corinthians chapter 11, there's another Jesus, another spirit, another gospel. And it's possible for you to be using all the terminology of Christianity and be going down the primrose path to semantic destruction without even knowing what's going on.

So terminology, vocabulary, is enormously important. Scaling the language barrier by the definition of terms, by taking nothing for granted, and by testing all things. 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, test all things, put everything to the test.

Cling tenaciously to what is good. We know what is good in the context of the person of our Lord, teachings of the New Testament, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. What I'd like to do is to give you some of the do's and don'ts of witnessing to cultists.

Because that's really what we're dealing with, isn't it? How to witness to cultists. So let me give you some of the things I've learned after 24 years of dealing with virtually every variety known, and a few that haven't yet been classified. Hopefully that in sharing this, you will be able to utilize the information and communicate with people also.

Marshall McLuhan has given to the world priceless gifts. It is the gift of emphasis upon the meaning of communication. Namely, if you cannot say it so that people can comprehend it, you have not said it at all.

Donald Barnhouse, who was my teacher, said get the hay down out of the loft onto the barn floor where the cows can get at it. Jesus did not say feed my giraffes. He said feed my sheep.

So don't try and impress people with your newfound biblical knowledge. Don't try and whip off the text the four spiritual laws, the navigators, and whatever else you may have gotten your hands on as the pièce de résistance to the cultists. Because you'll find out, not only don't they know what you're talking about, but believe me, they couldn't care less.

They have their own system of thought. You've got to get inside that mind and inside that system of thought in order to communicate. The first do is do recognize the need for identity.

You have to identify with the cultists. You've got to convince them. And you really must do it because you believe it.

Not because it's a message, but because you believe it. You've got to convince them that you consider them to be a person in their own right, worthwhile, basically honest, and not trying to put something over on you. You've got to identify with the fact that they're people before they're cultists.

They have families. They have children. They have needs.

They have frustrations and fears. They are flesh and blood and they are our brothers and sisters in Adam, not in Christ. In Acts chapter 17 we are told, all men are God's offspring.

The word is child. What does it mean? It means that in Adam all of us share a common heritage. We are all homo sapien, for better or for worse.

And I can call a man brother in the Adamic sense. And it's valid because we are children of Adam. It sometimes disturbs Jehovah's Witnesses when you put your arm around them or the Mormons and say, now brother.

And they say, what do you mean brother? Jehovah's Witness when I was witnessing to him one time said, I'm not your brother. I said, well that depends on what level we're talking on. What do you mean by that? I said, well, didn't you have the same father that I did? What do you mean? I said, don't you believe Adam is the father of the human race? He said, yeah.

I said, all right, brother. Let's talk a little bit. Let's shake them up.

Because they have never thought of the family of Adam to which we all belong. Let's talk from the family of Adam perspective, prayerfully hoping to bring them to the family of God perspective. We are all God's children by creation in Adam.

But we are God's sons and daughters in the new creation by adoption through faith in Christ Jesus. That's biblical theology. With them as people.

And feel for them as people. Remember what you were like before you found him. If you want a good description of yourself and myself, 1 Corinthians chapter 1 will tell you near the end of the chapter what an awful mess we were.

And how Jesus Christ put our Humpty Dumpty back together again. That's what we want him to do for them. Do identify with the cultists as a person and accept their basic integrity.

Secondly, do labor patiently and exhaustively and prayerfully with the cultists. Never give up unless the cultist openly and decisively refuses further contact. Plant the seed.

Nobody ever won a race who stopped running halfway through or six feet from the finish line. You and I are in a race. We're in there to give our best and we want those people to come to Christ.

Until they pull the plug out, we hang in there. Remembering that the Lord blesses his word. Scripture says, My word will never return to me empty, but it will accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it and prosper in what I have ordained.

Do we believe that as Christians? Then if we do, we ought to redouble our efforts to plant the seed of the word of God and to water it. Identifying with the people and laboring patiently with them, never giving up unless they are willing to break off and turn away. Christ taught there is a point when you do not cast the pearls of the gospel before the swine of unbelief.

But until that point is reached, Christian labors to bring the person to the Savior. Another important do is exhaust every effort to answer the questions of cultists. There are people who are so busy listening to themselves witness that they never hear anything that the other person is saying.

Nothing turns somebody off so quickly as when they're trying to communicate with you and you have turned off the channel. I find when I deal with a Jehovah's Witness, a Mormon, or a cultist of any variety, if you are willing to listen, disagree lovingly but listen, the person is responsive. If you just simply say, yeah, okay, okay, okay, and then go on.

The person quickly gets the message you don't care. Result? Termination of contact. They're not going to buy it.

There's another important do that you may misinterpret, but I'll say it anyhow. Do let cultists save face. Do let cultists save face.

You know what I mean by that? I mean that when you're witnessing to people, and that time will come, when you have made a convincing presentation of Christ, answered their questions, and they're pretty shaky, they're on rocky ground, you have an opportunity to present the gospel to them in a very loving manner. Or you have the opportunity to come on so strong that the person will end up fighting you even though they know in their soul they're wrong. And I've seen that happen sometimes to the point of disgust.

Where a group of Christians and people who don't agree in the cults will be having a lengthy discussion. And one or two of the cultists will just run out of gas. Some of the Christians will descend upon that person.

You see? You were wrong on this point, and this is why. Boom, boom, boom, it starts. And the person gradually becomes quiet, and then hostile.

Because you know when you back somebody into a corner, what happens? Even if they're wrong, they're going to do what? Fight! Human nature. Corrupt human nature. But it's there.

You know it's there. I know it's there. We don't like to have that happen to us.

All right. What do you do? When you sense that the person has really had it and there's no place to go, that's the time to be, as Winston Churchill said, in victory magnanimous. In defeat defiant, but in victory magnanimous.

And say to the person, lovingly, I realize that we can get awful uptight in these areas if we let ourselves. Let's just forget that you're a Jehovah's Witness and I'm a Baptist or whatever you might be. And let's just think of ourselves as two people who want more than anything else to know the whole truth and the whole counsel of God.

Right? I've never met a cultist yet that wouldn't say, right. Well, you're halfway home. You've avoided that catastrophe.

And then you can say, you know, it isn't your fault that always is a good way to begin. Because the real fault lies with the organization which has deceived the person, not with the person who is deceived. They've bought the deception.

The Watchtower deceived them. The Mormon Church deceived them. The Christian Science Church deceived them.

Maharishi Mahesh Yoga deceived them. Guru Maharishi deceived them. But fix it upon the leader of the organization or the organization itself, preferably.

And say, you know, you don't have to stay in that. You don't have to be pushed. What you can do is find the wonderful liberty of the sons of God.

You know, that's what the Lord did for me. I was pushed around an awful lot by whatever it may have been in your life. But then I found out Christ doesn't want to push us anyplace or pull us.

He just wants to make us truly free. And that's what I want for you. I want you to know I love you.

I care. And I want you to know that I'm not hostile or angry. In fact, let's have a word of prayer together.

I have seen some pretty hardcore cultists shake apart at that point. Because they expected and were told Christian love didn't exist. And that if they ever got backed into a corner, they were going to get clobbered.

And instead they were loved. I was at Calvary Chapel, Chuck Smith's beautiful tent before the now even more beautiful building, and had a series of marvelous meetings. In one of those meetings, a Mormon boy, a missionary, stood up.

I think they still have the tape, but I hope they have it. And really asked me some questions from his heart. You could tell from the way he was asking the questions he was hurting.

Joseph and Brigham and their theology had been pretty badly bruised that night. And Mormonism as such wasn't in too good a shape in his eyes. And now he stood up to face the antagonist.

That was me. I had not attacked Mormons. I had criticized Mormon theology for what it was doing to the Mormons.

And his voice was trembling. And he asked me a question. I answered it.

And somebody thought that what I said was funny. You know, sometimes you say something unintentionally that is funny. And it just came out that way.

It wasn't planned. And 3,500 or 800 people all laughed at once. That was quite a loud noise.

And you could just see that fellow standing there in that middle aisle. And he just wilted right where he stood. He just fell apart.

Here he was trying to talk, and he felt he was being laughed at, looking for an answer. The Spirit of the Lord touched me that night. I saw his face.

I saw how he was standing and his voice. And I said, just a minute to the audience. Nobody here means to laugh at you.

And I'm sure none of us meant that. Everybody said, Amen. I said, sometimes you say something and it's interpreted the wrong way.

I'm sorry this was. We love you. Be glad to answer this question and any other question you've got.

I apologize to you if your feelings were hurt. We are interested in talking. Stay afterwards, and we'll have a chat.

Well, you know, he stayed. And a couple hundred of our dear Jesus people stayed, too. And they all came down front.

I was so proud of them. Nobody leaped forward. Nobody started poking a finger in the chest.

Nobody started hurling Scripture verses. Everybody just gathered around and sort of softly spoke to him and asked him questions. It was a beautiful time.

I finally got down there to him after some of the mob had cleared away, and came up to him and I said, What's the problem? He said, Well, you said the Book of Mormon was wrong. I said, It is. He said, No, it can't be.

And his voice began to shake. I said, Look, if the Bible is the oldest revelation and the Book of Mormon and the Bible don't agree, which one are you going to believe? He said, The Bible. I said, All right, let's look.

So we looked for 20 minutes together, page by page. And at the end of that 20 minutes, there was no place to hide, no place to run, no place to go. Everything was gone.

And he was in the middle of what appeared to be an enormously hostile environment. At that moment, after years of having done it the wrong way, I did it the right way. I put my arm around him and loved him

for Christ's sake.

And let him off the hook and say faith. And I said, You can't help this. They taught you this, but it's not the truth.

Jesus is the truth, the real Jesus. And we love you. And those kids all gathered around him, and they hugged him.

And he didn't know what to do in the face of all this love. It was just too much. And I said, Let's pray together.

He said, Okay. I put my arm around him, and he put his arm around me. Let me tell you, for a Mormon to put his arm around me, that's victory.

And I prayed for him that the Lord would open his eyes and his ears and his soul and his understanding and redeem him. And two nights later, Christ saved him. At Calvary Chapel, down front, twenty or thirty of the kids kneeling with him in prayer.

And that boy went out to be a witness for Christ. For years, I made the mistake of thinking when you win the argument, you've won the soul. That's utter nonsense.

You can win the argument hands down and lose the soul. Like that. If you win the argument, be willing to back off in the name of love and compassion and concern, and let that person save face.

Don't humiliate them. And go for the soul. Do do that.

And the Lord will add blessing on top of the effort. Now there's some don'ts that I would urge you to list. By no means is this list exhaustive.

Don't approach a cultist with a spiritual chip on your shoulder. Some people say, what do you mean by that? A spiritual chip is communication of a feeling to the cultist. You are looking down on them because you have something they don't have.

It took me a long time to learn about this one, but I learned it. Christians have a tendency because they have been redeemed, I know it, to be so secure in the liberty wherein Christ has made us free that we automatically make other people insecure. And there's nothing worse than insecurity if the person buys that you are on some kind of a superior or superiority trip.

The spiritual chip on the shoulder is if they get the idea you've got it, they haven't. My aren't you lucky in how poorly off they really are. Condescension syndrome is lethal at this point.

And I don't know how many cultists have said to me who have come to Christ, so often Christians spoke to me and I got the impression they were looking down at me instead of reaching out for me. That's a terrible feeling for people to have. I'm not saying that Christians are that way, and I'm not saying that Christians try to be that way.

I'm saying if the cultist ever gets to think that way, that's the end of the communication. They become antagonistic. So don't go with the spiritual chip.

If you ever got it, get rid of it. I'm saved, they're lost. I'm going to get that across to them.

You may get it across to them, but what will come across is a condescension on your part and an absence of love. And that ought not to be. Secondly, don't attack directly the founder of any particular cult.

Don't! When I lecture on Mormonism, I do not attack Joseph Smith and Brigham Young as people. I criticize the theology they taught. Because if you deal in personalities, people become instantaneously defensive.

Someone wrote us a letter at the Christian Research Institute a few years ago, and they said, I have heard that Mary Baker Eddy had five husbands. I hope this is true. Please let me know.

Now it was obvious from the letter. The person was doing what? Looking for a juicy piece of scandal to go back and beat that nice little white-haired lady in the Christian science reading room to death with. And I mean, this was totally contrary to what the Holy Spirit would have you and I do as witnesses for Christ.

I wrote the person back and ruined their whole day, I'm sure. I said, Mrs. Eddy always enjoyed a reputation of puritanical morality. She was married three times.

Her first husband died. Her second husband ran off with another woman, and she quite properly divorced him. And her third husband died of a coronary, and she never remarried.

How one can deduce from this the immorality of Mrs. Eddy, I do not know. So stop trying. They not only didn't return our contribution envelope, they didn't even write me back a nasty letter.

So I assume that they were in a very bad frame of mind. That is not the approach. If you are going to ever bring up anything about a person who founded a cult or was in it, there's only one way to do it.

From the perspective of history. Whenever I get into a problem with the Jehovah's Witnesses and how the Watchtower has taken advantage of them, I always say, well, you know, Judge Rutherford was a very gifted man, but an awful lot of Jehovah's Witnesses, historically, had to pay for Judge Rutherford's brilliance and luxuries. The average Jehovah's Witness would say, what do you mean by that? Don't you know about Beth Sarim? What's Beth Sarim? Well, right down here in San Diego, you can go down and see it.

Beth Sarim is the house of princes. You never saw the house of princes? No. What's the house of princes? Well, back in 1925, Judge Rutherford was teaching all you Jehovah's Witnesses that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and all the patriarchs were coming back to Earth, and they were going to live here in happiness during the Millennial Kingdom after Armageddon.

He did. Yes. And he bought a home down in San Diego, which you people paid for.

And he refurbished it for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and all the patriarchs. And then he moved in. And he stayed there waiting for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and the patriarchs to come back to Earth.

And they never came. And he never moved out. He stayed as the gardener until he died in 1942, and then the Watts powers sold Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's house so that if they do get back, there's going to be a very grave housing shortage in San Diego for the patriarchs.

Now, you don't have to say much more than that. The average Jehovah's Witness peddles an awful lot of papers to make a buck. The thought that the president of the Watts Tower Society was living in a quarter

of a million dollar mansion in San Diego generates considerable interest in Beth Sarim.

And immediately they go home and write the Watts Tower headquarters in Brooklyn. What about Beth Sarim? And, of course, the Watts Tower comes back and says, well, now this is what happened. And then they come and tell you, and then you have the pleasure of showing them a photostat of the deed.

And the whole story all written out, and you've got one good Jehovah's Witness and his or her family listening intently on a historical note, not a theological note. And from that, into the theology of the Watts Tower. How much can you trust somebody who made out this well on the Jehovah's Witness? This is the only way that it can effectively be done.

You come right out and say, Judge Rutherford ripped you off for 250 Gs. Forget it! That is the end of the communication. You're not getting anywhere.

But time it again, the Jehovah's Witness will come back and say, I don't like that Beth Sarim business. It's thinking. It's kicking away.

It's a little historical time bomb that's going to bear fruit sometime. This is the only way it can be done. Then, let me add another don't.

Don't lose your patience, regardless of how dense cultists may be. I know some people that say, how can they be so thick? Answer, you and I were pretty thick too, until the Lord managed to break through. There is no describing the thickness and the darkness of sin.

When one is bound in the chains of slavery to sin, things just aren't coming through. You've got to be patient, because the Scripture says the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace. What is longsuffering? Patience! Oh, along with the gifts of the Spirit, God has mentioned the necessity of the fruits of the Spirit.

One is a bestowal, the other is a natural outgrowth. The life of the Christian is supposed to be showing love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, temperance, faith. Patience.

That means being willing to go over something ten times, if necessary, believing that the Lord will give the increase. Finally, on the don't side, don't dodge questions that a cultist asks you, and don't expect that all cultists can be appealed to on the same basis. You can't.

Never dodge questions. If you don't know the answer, just forthrightly say, you know, I never thought of that before. That's a good one.

I'm going to write that down. Please give me your name and address, and I'm going to get back to you so we can find the answer to this, because I'm sure there is one. And you will earn the respect of that person.

But if you bypass it and say, well, this isn't important, that's the end of your capacity to get to that person. They just write you off as another religionist or another person involved in religion who just doesn't care. But if you make it a point to follow it up, they respect you, even though they disagree with you.

They respect you. And there is no guarantee that all cultists will respond the same way to biblical verses or methods of evangelism. You will hear tapes by people giving you surefire ways to communicate with Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, and everybody else.

Permit me to make the observation in a loving manner. There are no surefire ways. There is no series of propositions that are absolutely irresistible.

There is no forensic logic that will crush all opposition of the cults. There's no panacea, no magic wand, and no push-button panel with a computer that's going to kick out your answers. Neither will the Holy Spirit give them to you by the process of osmosis.

You will get the answers by studying and showing yourself approved by God, a workman who doesn't blush with embarrassment, rightly interpreting the word of truth. If you're going to get to these people it's going to take sweat. It's going to take prayer.

It's going to take identification and compassion. It's going to take wisdom and knowledge from the Spirit. And most of all, a mastery of the word of God.

It's going to be a hard thing to learn that oversimplification is lethal. It is. And that what you have been taught many times about how to get to these people just isn't true.

After all is said and done, the way we most effectively communicate with the people in the cults is through the agency of the Holy Spirit, taking the word of God and the knowledge which we have absorbed, and the experience which we have had, and applying this to the situations in which we find ourselves so that it is he who touches their souls. It is he who convinces them of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. And we become in his hands the vessels which by grace have become fit for the Master's use.

With this approach it is possible not only to penetrate the kingdom of the cults, but to launch a full-scale invasion and to bring people out of that darkness into God's marvelous life. I've seen that happen. I've seen Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons and Christian scientists and Unitarians and witches and warlocks, male witches, and wizards, high priests of Satan.

I've seen people from every strata of the cult and the occult touched and changed by Jesus of Nazareth. And I want to tell you, he's doing it today right here in California, and you and I have the opportunity to participate in it. CRI Box 500 San Juan Capitano, California 92693.

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