

Why Study Cults?

1. Because we are called to make a _____ for our _____.

1 PETER 3:15

But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

We see several things in this passage:

(1) Christian apologetics is first of all a matter of Christian _____. Christ as Lord in our hearts is the basis of all truly effective apologetics. It is not simply an intellectual task.

(2) We are to be prepared to make a defense at all _____.

(3) We are to be prepared to make a defense to all _____.

(4) We must make our defense _____.

(5) This is a _____. If we do not make a defense of our faith, when challenged, we are disobeying God. But if we are not prepared to do this, we probably will not do this, or we will do so poorly. Apologetics is not the domain of philosophers only. It is a task for all believers.

JUDE 3-4

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

And again in this one:

(1) Countercult apologetics requires _____. "Contend earnestly for the faith." To be an effective apologist, you must be passionate about the task. You must study hard and be prepared to work a long time to master this field.

(2) Countercult apologetics requires that you know _____. We are to contend for the faith "once delivered to the saints." This means that we have to know the content of that faith.

(3) Countercult apologetics requires that we guard the faith from attacks by those _____ the church as well as those _____. “For certain persons have crept in unnoticed . . .”

(4) Bad doctrine leads to bad _____. “. . . ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

2. Because cult members need the Lord Jesus Christ as their _____.

EPHESIANS 2:1-7

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

3. Because false _____ are working through cults and leading people away from Jesus and toward eternal _____.

1 TIMOTHY 4:1

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons

1 JOHN 4:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

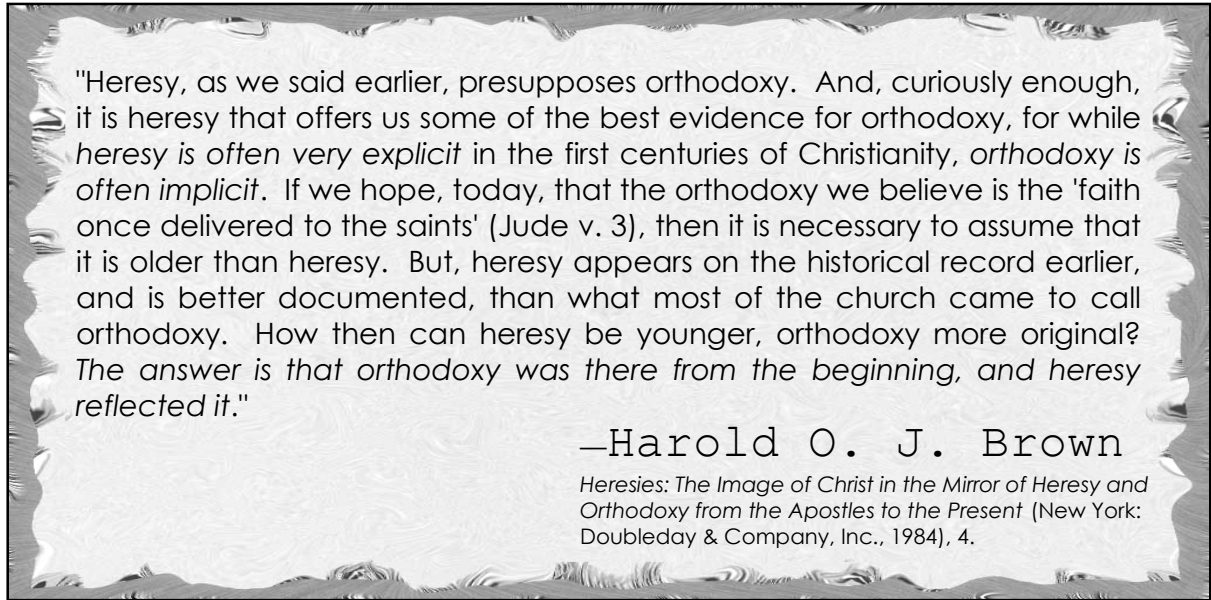
—Something can be real but not true!—

4. Because cults use our _____ but their _____!

When witnessing to cultists, we must *decode* their message and *encode* a Christian message. There are a number of very good evangelistic tools available today—but most of them speak to a cultist in a language that he cannot understand—and will not correctly respond to.

5. Because studying _____ theology makes _____ theology more _____.

Studying the doctrines of cults will enable us to understand and define our own faith better. Cult theology provides a backdrop to orthodoxy, a backdrop against which orthodoxy becomes clear.



6. Because studying these _____ cults will enable one to recognize the _____ cults that will be appearing in the twenty-first century.

—Nobody ever joins a “cult” —

7. Because the goal of all theology is _____.