

Breaking Free from Churches That Abuse

Twisted Scriptures

Mary Alice Chrnalogar

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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Twisted Scriptures

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Chapter I

THE DISCIPLESHIP GAME

CHECKLIST

The Discipleship Game—Chapter 1

Check those that apply to your group:

- Did not get my fully informed consent before I joined.
- Wanted my commitment as soon as possible.
- Consistently makes new demands of me.
- Did not tell me in the beginning of my involvement that anything less than total obedience was unacceptable.
- Seems to create non-Biblical classes of sins (e.g., labeling people as “full of pride” if they don’t agree with the discipler’s decisions or advice).
- Leaders don’t tell me “no,” but instead ask me to “pray about it” and delay my decision.
- See themselves as “more committed” to Jesus than those not in the discipleship.
- Want me to refrain from making decisions without the discipler’s concurrence.
- Disciples are rebuked for actions that aren’t really sinful but which merely differ from the leaders’ opinions.
- My leader/discipler makes no distinction between moral advice and non-moral advice.

NOTE: If you have checked *any* boxes, it may indicate a misuse of Scripture and/or may represent the presence of abuse and excessive control.

Chapter 2

THE DISCIPLESHIP DISASTER

CHECKLIST

The Discipleship Disaster—Chapter 2

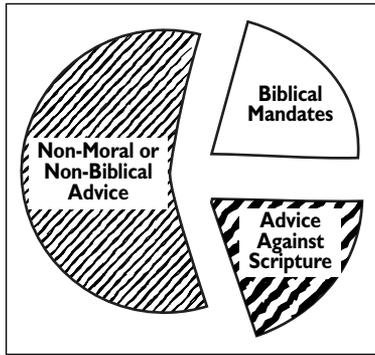
Check any that apply to you and/or your group:

- Withheld certain teachings until I was more trusting.
- I feel somewhat distant from family.
- My spontaneous decisions have diminished because I feel compelled to check with my discipler first.
- I sometimes feel uneasy when talking with my family about my plans.
- I'm not as close to my old friends as I used to be.
- My church has more accountability than most other churches.
- My spiritual growth depends upon following most all of my leader's requests.
- I feel guilty when my desires don't match the will of those in authority.
- I sometimes feel burned out and depressed when I have to suppress my own thoughts and desires to follow what my discipler thinks is better.
- When my thoughts are different from my leaders', I feel as though my heart is going against God's Will for my life.
- My leaders are better able to hear from God than I am.
- I am sometimes labeled as "rebellious" when I am struggling with accepting their advice.

NOTE: If you have checked *any* boxes, it may indicate a misuse of Scripture and/or may represent the presence of abuse and excessive control.

Chapter 3

AUTHORITY UNLIMITED



CHECKLIST

Authority Unlimited—Chapter 3

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- Goes beyond Scripture when it gives authority to leaders.
- Uses verses such as “Touch not my anointed” to imply we can’t criticize leaders without being critical of God.
- Emphasizes trusting leaders, having faith in leaders, imitating leaders, and/or being loyal to them.
- Occasionally assert that refusal to obey leaders’ opinions in personal matters is sin.
- Stresses that leaders are servants; but, in practice, allows leaders to use public or private rebuke for differences of opinion.
- Implies, or even teaches, that we should trust our discipler as the Apostles trusted Jesus.
- Classifies almost all criticism of leaders as slanderous or malicious.
- Selectively focuses on the idea that Jesus endured under abusive authority by being crucified wrongfully, implying that we should obey even questionable advice from leaders to prove our brokenness.
- Ignores Scriptures that describe how Jesus refused to obey certain religious leaders.
- Implies that we need to be accountable to a discipler in every area of our life, even those not in the area of Scripture.
- Teaches that, if advice from leaders doesn’t contradict Scripture, then we need to be flexible and obey.

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Chapter 4

BEYOND ACCOUNTABILITY

CHECKLIST

Beyond Accountability—Chapter 4

Check those that apply to your group:

- Controls negative feedback of leaders.
- Equates doubts and criticism of leadership as sin.
- Teaches people to obey even when it doesn't feel right.
- Emphasizes such ideas as "dying to self" in a non-Scriptural manner.
- Subtly redefines the meanings of words such as "judge."
- Seems to repeat certain Biblical words almost to the exclusion of other Biblical principles.
- Members confess being sorry for not trusting their discipler.
- Teaches "unity" as meaning members' opinions should match those of the group.
- Members must meet in private with leaders when pointing out errors.
- Teaches that certain New Testament church practices are wrong because the churches were young and in transition.

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Chapter 5

THE LANGUAGE OF ENSLAVEMENT

CHECKLIST

The Language of Enslavement—Chapter 5

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- Labels me as “struggling” when I don’t want to follow my discipler’s advice.
- I feel pressure not to reject my discipler’s “advice.”
- Teaches that the Bible says to stay away from those “fallen away.”
- Wants me to confront nearly every sin in others.
- Does not emphasize overlooking weakness in others.
- New people in my discipleship program are viewed as newly committed to Christ regardless of their knowledge or Christian maturity.
- Leaders categorize disciples as having a bad heart when these individuals are only offering healthy criticism of the leaders.
- “Brokenness” means “willingly giving up your desires and following the directions of the leaders.”
- Teaches that all doubt is wrong, especially doubt about the group.
- “Following Christ” means giving up all personal wishes, desires, and goals.
- Total commitment is rarely possible without a discipler.
- I find that many things are now sinful, when I didn’t before.
- I feel an urge to imitate my leader in every way possible.
- Strongly emphasizes obedience to leaders of the group.
- I would be falling away from God or regressing spiritually if I quit the program.

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Chapter 6

WHOSE WILL IS IT?

CHECKLIST

Whose Will Is It?—Chapter 6

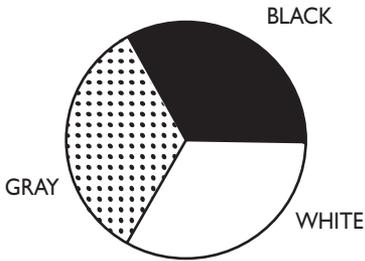
Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- I believe God will give me direct revelations for every detail of my life, if only I am listening.
- I believe human reasoning and personal desires are always contrary to God's Will.
- I am concerned that I am missing God's Will.
- If we ask, God will always reveal why things happen.
- The leaders can hear God and know God's Will better than I can.
- I know I must die completely to my will.
- My mind can be deceived, but my spirit cannot.

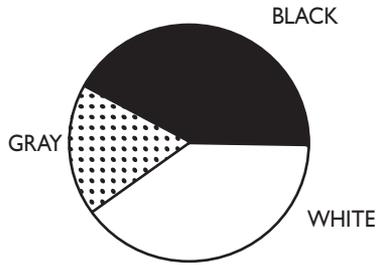
NOTE: If you have checked *any* boxes, it may indicate a misuse of Scripture and/or may represent the presence of abuse and excessive control.

Chapter 7

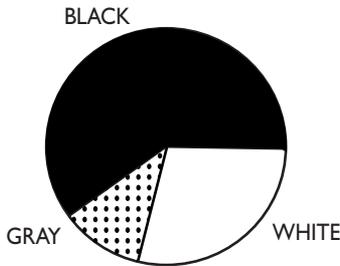
CONTROL IN BLACK AND WHITE



OBJECTIVE MIND
Chart 1



DIMINISHED OBJECTIVITY
Chart 2



PERCEIVES MORE NEGATIVE
Chart 3

CHECKLIST

Control in Black and White—Chapter 7

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- I feel grateful because the gray and open areas of my life have been narrowed; I see absolute right and wrong so clearly now.
- I feel I am free to choose, even though my choices of right and wrong are now narrower than before I joined the group.
- Even though the gray and open areas of my life have been narrowed, I still feel as though I am using all of my critical thinking skills.
- God doesn't give me options if I am truly living each moment in His Perfect Will.
- There is only one way to evangelize.
- Only your group/church has a valid baptism.
- You frequently hear such words as: always, never, must, and only.
- You are taught to believe people are either "all bad" or "all good," totally obedient to God or totally disobedient.
- Prayer must be and only be specific.

NOTE: If you have checked *any* boxes, it may indicate a misuse of Scripture and/or may represent the presence of abuse and excessive control.

Chapter 8

VICIOUS INFORMATION CONTROL

CHECKLIST

Vicious Information Control—Chapter 8

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- You feel that all fear is wrong since it shows a lack of faith.
- “Perfect love casts out fear”—therefore, I should never have fear if I love God.
- I am inclined to see criticism, slander, or ridicule of my group as Biblical persecution.
- “Denying Christ” means not giving up all personal wishes, desires, and goals.
- I find myself suppressing my feelings because they may be sinful or wrong when they are not.
- Random reading of the Bible can answer every question.
- God will lead me directly to a Bible verse each time I have a question for Him.
- My family members feel they can’t say anything against my group.
- I quote Matthew 10:34–36 and Luke 12:51 when I am with my family.
- I become extremely irritated when someone criticizes my group or leaders.
- Those who disagree with, or openly challenge, leaders are divisive.
- If the entire church supports an action or decision of the leaders, I should, too, so I won’t be out of unity.
- I need to know the background of the person before I give much weight to their information or views.

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Chapter 9

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

CHECKLIST

Truth or Consequences—Chapter 9

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- My group equates “fruit” (in the Biblical sense) to large numbers of recruits.
- I often feel guilt or shame when the leaders of my group are speaking.
- I choose not to associate with people who cause me to question my beliefs.
- I believe myself to be “open” but resist discussing the group’s problems or questioning their actions.
- Members willingly stuff their genuine feelings when they don’t match the “correct ones” (i.e., the feelings determined appropriate by the leaders).
- My group shows little compassion for those outside us.
- To a great degree, I am disconnected from Christians outside my group and from those who have left it.
- I now feel that I was never truly close to my family.
- I can quickly tell if someone is Christian or not.
- The group I belong to almost always seems to be in a crisis mode.

NOTE: If you have checked *any* boxes, it may indicate a misuse of Scripture and/or may represent the presence of abuse and excessive control.

Chapter 10

CONFESSION CONFUSION

CHECKLIST

Confession Confusion—Chapter 10

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- I am encouraged to confess (in front of a group) sins or problems that were unrelated to the persons present.
- My group doesn't call it "confessions"—but we are pressured to expose our inner selves and our past.
- I frequently feel I am not being open when I don't confess or share.
- I am told that being secretive is a sin.
- Most human problems or weaknesses are "evil spirits" or "demons" which need to be searched for and cast out.
- Often I feel emotionally drained after sharing.
- I would feel uncomfortable allowing a new person in our small group.
- I would feel uncomfortable if a family member heard our intimate group discussions.
- Leaders can discern my sins better than I can.
- I am constantly looking at my life to see what past or new sins I may have committed.

NOTE: If you have checked *any* boxes, it may indicate a misuse of Scripture and/or may represent the presence of abuse and excessive control.

Chapter 11

WALLING OFF THE WORLD

CHECKLIST

Walling Off the World—Chapter 11

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- Other churches simply “do it wrong.”
- I agree that we should not call anyone on earth our father.
- I am not interested in discussing any critical ideas about my group with my family or friends.
- It’s important to stay in the group where I first found my personal relationship with the Lord.
- It is difficult for those whose spouses leave the group to remain married.
- I do not wish to include unbelievers in my social life.
- I view most Christians not in a discipling relationship as less committed than those in our group.
- Since my involvement with this group, I perceive most Christians outside our group are not really believers.
- I do believe the leaders when they say one of our members has “fallen away.”

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Chapter 12

WHAT GOD AND THE DISCIPLER HAVE JOINED TOGETHER

CHECKLIST

What God and the Discipler Have Joined Together—Chapter 12

Check those that apply to your discipler:

- Exerts control that's as bad or worse than that of a domineering parent.
- Belittles the person I'm dating.
- Delayed my wedding because he or she never "felt peace" about the marriage.
- Helped me—either subtly or overtly—select a certain person as my spouse.
- Talks about being "unequally yoked" when discussing potential mates not in our group.

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Chapter 13

THIS CAN'T BE MIND CONTROL, CAN IT?



Photo taken before involvement
in an abusive group



Photo taken during involvement
with an abusive group

CHECKLIST

This Can't Be Mind Control, Can It?—Chapter 13

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- I avoid reading books that might challenge my beliefs.
- I've been told examples of bad things that happened to people who've left.
- I have heard a leader say: "There's the door; you're free to leave."
- I sense that God and my group are truly one.
- I've been told to "check it out for yourself" but still the group uses isolated Scriptures to reinforce conformity.
- My group does not allow for healthy differences of opinion and does not want me to read material they have not approved.
- I believe my group is not controlling because it is not as intense as other groups I've heard about.
- My group exercises the eight techniques often used in thought reform.

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Chapter 14

COLLISION WITH LEADERSHIP

A SHORT REVIEW

Collision With Leadership—Chapter 14

Comparing Discipleships

Abusive	Non-Abusive
Refuse to pour themselves out to the uncommitted who do not fully accept and follow the leader's orders or advice	Serve others whether they are committed or not
Typically reject dealing with those they judge as "lukewarm"	Offer the lukewarm love and a chance to learn
Distance themselves from any member who leaves their group	Treat kindly those who leave them, as Jesus did Judas
Judge who they should "feed" (counsel) and who they should let go hungry, based on obedience	"Feed" (counsel) anyone in need, regardless of how well they obey
Love, and meet the needs of, only those who are committed	Know that Jesus commands us to love the uncommitted as well as the committed
Judge that those who don't fully obey them or "are not ready" are "wasting their time"	Are willing to invest time and love in working with disobedient or difficult disciples
In practice, change the Biblical: "Whatever you do to the least of these, you do unto me" to "Whatever you do to the least of these (unless you decide that they are wasting your time) you do unto me"	Teach that we are to love the weak and the obstinate by being willing to counsel and disciple them too
Usually refuse to admit any error in their teaching; and try to discredit the critic rather than listen to the complaint	Usually give a careful hearing to complaints about their teaching and presume the critic is sincere

Chapter 15

THE NEW INQUISITION

CHECKLIST

The New Inquisition—Chapter 15

Check those that apply to you and/or your group:

- My leaders believe the Bible calls for men and women to hold each other accountable for almost every imperfection.
- I usually feel guilty when I make my own decisions that go against the approval of my authority (in dealing with non-moral issues).
- My group displays little patience with sinners because imperfection should be confronted.
- Members in my group are free to tell me what my sin is.
- My leaders often accuse me of disloyalty to Christ when I have a criticism of the group.
- My definition of “evil” is much broader than before I joined the group.
- I feel a greater sense of commitment to my group than I do to responsibilities in my family.
- Since my involvement with the group, I feel my family members are uncommitted believers.
- Since my involvement with the group, I have little time for my family and have missed important personal commitments in order to attend group meetings or church activities.
- I am sometimes expected by my group’s leaders to serve well beyond what an average person can do.

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Chapter 16

BOXES WITHIN BOXES

CHECKLIST

Boxes Within Boxes—Chapter 16

Check those that apply to your group's leaders:

- Change the meaning of "organization," "religion," or other words thereby leading their members to feel superior to other churches.
- Apply negative words to other churches.
- Avoid some of my questions and do not allow me to question their authority.
- Encourage certain members to leave.
- Publicly rebuke or discipline members for matters that are not necessary to expose to the whole church.
- Ask members to no longer participate if they miss meetings.
- Ask members to not speak to other members about certain subjects.
- Repeatedly and emphatically request money (and stress that a lack of financial giving is an indication of an unhealthy spiritual life).
- We must personally be asked to attend certain groups or studies before we are allowed to participate.
- Cause me to be psychologically isolated from others who don't know my new definitions of common English words.

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Appendix I

References and Resources

Each Christian group that becomes manipulative is unique. If your group stayed within traditional Christianity teachings but included elements of control, here are helpful books:

The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse, by David Johnson & Jeff Van-Vondersen (Bethany House)

Recovering From Churches That Abuse and *Churches That Abuse*, by Ronald Enroth (Zondervan)

Damaged Disciples, by Ron & Vicki Burks (Zondervan)

When God's People Let You Down, by Robert Devereaux

Walking Wounded, by Robert Devereaux

The Boston Movement, by Carol Giambalvo (423-698-9343 (critical perspectives on the International Churches of Christ))

The Drift Into Deception, by Harold L. Bussell

Unholy Devotion, by Harold L. Bussell (Zondervan)

Scripture Twisting: 20 Ways the Cults Misread the Bible, by James Sire (InterVarsity Press)

FAITH MOVEMENT & PROSPERITY DOCTRINE

If your teachers claim that any of the following are authorities or sources of information, they are probably promoting the “positive faith movement doctrine”: Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth E. Hagin, Oral Roberts, Benny Hinn, John Avanzini, Essek William Kenyon, Frederick K. C. Price, Robert Tilton, Marilyn Hickey, Paul Yonggi Cho (David Cho), Charles Capps, Jerry Savelle, Morris Cerullo, Paul Crouch—unfortunately, there are a host of others too numerous to mention.

If your group admires or promotes in a positive light the teachings of the Faith Movement or any kind of “prosperity doctrine,” you will find the following books helpful:

Christianity in Crisis (for audio book, call 888-700-0274), by Hank Hanegraaff (Harvest House)

Counterfeit Revival, by Hank Hanegraaff (Word Publishing)

A Different Gospel, by D. R. McConnell (Hendrickson)
The Faith Healers, by James Randi, Carl Sagan
The Many Faces of Deception, by Florence Bulle (Bethany)

PSYCHOLOGICAL MANIPULATION

These books listed below will help you understand psychological manipulation:

In Sheep's Clothing: Understanding and Dealing with Manipulative People, by George K. Simon

Emotional Blackmail: When the People in Your Life Use Fear, Obligation and Guilt to Manipulate You, by Susan Forward, Donna Frazier

Under the Influence : The Destructive Effects of Group Dynamics, by John D. Goldhammer

Influence, by Robert B. Cialdini (Quill)

Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Change, by Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman

Captive Hearts Captive Minds (excellent for former New Agers) by Madeleine Landau Tobias, et al.

Cults In Our Midst, by Dr. Margaret Thaler Singer with Janja Lalich (Jossey-Bass)

Combating Cult Mind Control, by Steven Hassan (Park Street Press)

Releasing the Bonds: Empowering People to Think for Themselves, by Steven Hassan

In the Shadow of the Moons, by Nansook Hong

Toxic Faith, by Stephen Arterburn & Jack Felton (Olicer Nelson)

Animal Farm, by George Orwell

MORE RESOURCES

Wellspring Retreat and Resource Center

P.O. Box 67

Albany, Ohio 45710

Tel: 740-698-6277

Fax: 740- 698-2053

Rehabilitation and counseling for persons emerging from undue influence or cult experiences. This is a "live-in" facility specializing in helping former victims, particularly those in Christian groups.

Leo J. Ryan Education Foundation
P.O. Box 700
Bridgeport, CT 06601-0700

Tel: 203-366-5500
Fax: 203-338-9738
www.cultinfo.org

Christian Research Institute
PO Box 7000
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Tel: 949-858-6100
www.equip.org

Spiritual Counterfeits Project
PO Box 4308
Berkley, CA 94704

Tel: 510-540-0300
www.scp-inc.org

The Religious Movement Resouce Center
629 So. Hous
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Tel: 970-490-2032

FACTnet, Inc.
PO Box 3135
Boulder, CO 80307-3135
(specialty-Scientology)

Email: factnet@factnet.org
Web site: www.factnet.org

New England Institute of Religious Research
PO Box 878
Lakeville, MA 02347

Tel: 508-947-9571

Cult Clinic Jewish Board of Family & Children Services
120 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019

Tel: 212-632-4640

True Light Education Ministries
PO Box 310
Shirley, NY 11967

Tel: 516-395-4646

Re-entry Therapy (RETIRN)
9877 Verree Road,
Philadelphia, PA 19115.

Tel: 215-698-8900
Fax: 215-698-7873
www.retirn.com

William Goldberg, M.S.W., A.C.S.W. blgoldberg@aol.com
operates support group for ex-cult members in New Jersey

Free Minds, Inc.
PO Box 3818
Manhattan Beach CA 90266
(helps former Jehovah Witnesses)

www.freeminds.org
www.exjws.net

Comments from the Friends (CFTF)
PO Box 819
Assonet, MA 02702
(specialty–Jehovah Witnesses)

Tel: 508-763-8050
www.CFTF.com

Cult Awareness & Information Center
PO Box 2444
Mansfield Q 4122 (Australia)

Tel: 61-7-3216 8790
www.caic.org.au

ONE-ON-ONE CONTROL

Mary Alice Chrnalogar specializes in working with those in extreme authoritarian churches and New Age groups, and those who are unduly influenced by one person.

Similar personality changes occur in each of these victims. They often lose their humor, interest in family, old friends, and hobbies. Their long-time career goals are often forfeited. Sometimes they are influenced to commit crimes.

Some women are manipulated by their therapist to believe that their father, brother, or relative raped them when it never happened. Before planning a family intervention dealing with false memory victims, contact this organization for information: False Memory Syndrome Foundation, 3401 Market Street, Suite 130, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3315.

GLOBAL CULT INTERVENTIONISTS

Mary Alice Chrnalogar
Freedom From Manipulation
PO Box 8021
Chattanooga, TN 37414-8021

Tel: 423-698-9343
www.cultbuster.com

Rick Ross
PO Box 32906
Phoenix, AZ 85064-2906

Tel: 602-956-0325
www.rickross.com

Be cautious before retaining a professional for cult intervention work. Some demand to be paid for three days preparation time (although it may not be necessary) before they are willing to see a client. Others are not willing to meet the client by a surprise meeting. Do careful research.

ESPECIALLY FOR FORMER CATHOLICS

Folks troubled by and about Regina Laudis with its lay satellites, the Legionaries of Christ with its *Regnum Christi*, TFP (Tradition, Family and Property), certain “covenanted” Catholic charismatic communities, and the Society of Saint Piux X have credited the booklet “Parent’s Guide to Opus Dei” with helping them get a handle on their own experience. An official—Opus Dei, U.S.A—response to this booklet avoids addressing any points in the “Parent’s Guide to Opus Dei.” Father Walter Debold, a cult expert, says this guide is “one of the best books.”

For packets of information about Opus Dei or to purchase the “Parent’s Guide to Opus Dei” (\$7.95), write:

Sicut Dixit Press, Dept. T-S
305 Madison Avenue, Suite 1146
New York, NY 10165

Others knowledgeable about questionable groups within the Catholic Church are:

jones@fidelitypress.com (E. Michael Jones) www.fidelitypress.com
unitypub@earthlink.net (Rick Salbato) www.unitypub.com
ODAN 413-499-7168 www.odan.org
CCIS@mail.flashmail.com (Concerned Catholics)

Many Bible groups degrade other churches, especially the Catholic Church. If this has happened to you, read these:

Theology and Sanity, by Frank Sheed
The Lord, by Romano Guardini
History of Christendom, by Warren Carroll
The Pursuit of the Millenium, by Norman Cohn
Enthusiasm, by Ronald Knox
Catholicism and Fundamentalism, by Karl Keating
Surprised by Truth, Patrick Madrid, editor

These last two books can be ordered from the organizations below. These groups can also answer questions about Catholic doctrine.

Catholic Apologetics Intl.
P.O. Box 2247
Columbia, MD 21045
800-531-6393

Catholic Answers.
P. O. Box 17490
San Diego, CA 92177-9821
619-541-1131

CANADIAN RESOURCES

Info Cult Manitoba Cult Awareness Center
5655 Park Ave., Suite 208 Box 31, Norwood Grove
Montreal, Quebec Winnipeg, Manitoba
H2V 4H2 R2H 3B8
514)-274-2333 204-488-0741

Your comments and suggestions are welcome!

Please write! Tell us how you have used this book, how it affected you as the reader, and what kind of success resulted from sharing *Twisted Scriptures*. We may not be able to repond to all of your letters, but we greatly appreciate your experiences. Address your comments to:

Twisted Scriptures Comments
P.O. Box 8021
Chattanooga, TN 37414-8021

Appendix 2

Shepherding/Discipleship/Accountability Groups: A Brief History

There are differences of opinion regarding the origin of the shepherding/discipleship movement. Tom Yoder gives his firsthand knowledge of the movement.

It seems to have sprung up simultaneously in several groups in the United States and South America during the late 1960s and early 1970s. The best known of the early groups combined beliefs and practices from several sources. One source in the late 1960s was an inner city Episcopalian church in Houston, Texas, that used a form of shepherding in caring for people with special needs who were brought into church members' homes. Later, that shepherding system expanded to include most of the members of the church's charismatic community. During this same time, former leaders of the aberrant 1950s Pentecostal "Latter Rain Movement" taught that the proper church governmental model was the "Five-Fold Ministries." The phrase refers to the presumed hierarchical ordering of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers found in Ephesians 4:11–13. This group taught that the ultimate purpose of these ministries was to unite all believers, and to acquire a divine nature. The Five-Fold Ministries doctrine also held that there are living apostles who are to rule the church and eventually the world.

In 1966, former Communist Douglas Hyde wrote an influential book, Dedication and Leadership: Learning From the Communists, in which he urged Christians to adopt Communist cell group methods to recruit, inspire, and train new members. Some of the shepherding leaders adopted Hyde's book as a guide. Although not a misguided loyalty, it was a misguided methodology. Those adopting communistic methods did not understand their inherent evil.

The most prominent shepherding leaders were Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Don Basham, Charles Simpson, and Ern Baxter who formed the Christian Growth Ministries in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, along with others not mentioned here. Steve Clark and Ralph Martin, leaders of an early charismatic covenant community in Ann Arbor, Michigan, called The Word of God, introduced two of these men to the specific goals and methods of shepherding

around 1972. Together with Kevin Ranaghan and Paul DeCelles (leaders of the covenant community called People of Praise in South Bend, Indiana), and Larry Christenson and Don Pfothenauer, these men formed the somewhat secretive “General Council,” which directed the main elements of the shepherding movement from 1974 through the early 1980s. The Council sponsored the National Men’s Shepherding Conferences in the mid to late 1970s. The men of this General Council controlled the major charismatic media of the day: New Covenant, Pastoral Renewal, New Wine, and Servant Publications. They attempted to influence Cardinal Suenens and other bishops in the Pope’s efforts to bring the Catholic Charismatic Renewal into the heart of the Catholic Church. That is, the Council attempted to keep control of the Charismatic Renewal out of the hands of the Catholic hierarchy. They attempted to form a single network of eighty or more Catholic charismatic covenant communities under their control consisting of those connected to the Word of God, the People of Praise, and the Gulf Coast Fellowship. It should be noted that many Shepherding groups never came under the umbrella of these men.

In 1974, several years after discipleship began, Juan Carlos Ortiz came to the United States from Argentina. With the help of the late Jamie Buckingham, Ortiz wrote Call to Discipleship in 1975. This was one of the first books that widely spread this particular type of discipleship in the charismatic movement.¹

Discipleship programs became popular because the culture had become permissive and Christians wanted to remove themselves from such ungodliness. Many were looking to dedicate their lives to God in a closer way. Discipleship leaders in general promised they had “the way” to total commitment to Jesus. Their answer to helping Christians grow fully was found in their improper concept of being “more accountable.” This was the shepherding error again, with just a few differences.

The result of their corrupted teaching soon showed a dark side. It was not because of imperfect men that this corruption grew, as is generally blamed, but mainly due to the non-Biblical teaching of what “being more accountable” supposedly meant. In practice, this teaching of “more accountability” frequently meant suppression of freedom of expression and action, and pressure to give up one’s own convictions when these differed from those of the leaders. This in

turn created mental anguish and moral dilemmas for many disciples. A Christian magazine reported in 1990 that:

... the movement quickly became elitist, exclusive. Operating on the basis that everyone needs to be accountable to a pastor, "sheep" were assigned to various "shepherds"—many of whom were young, immature, sometimes arrogant and often proud of their new authority. Havoc followed and horror stories abounded. Families were sometimes forced to relocate from one city to another at the whim of a shepherd. Churches split ... Mumford and Simpson in particular took the heat from the critics, who charged they dominated those under them ... Critics cited numerous examples of "shepherds" who required their "sheep" to ask their permission before they dated, changed jobs, or made major decisions.²

The shepherding leaders responded that they were teaching a renewed Biblical understanding of God's government: delegated authority, and covenant loyalty. But soon other national leaders opposed them. During a 700 Club broadcast, Pat Robertson called Mumford, Simpson, and Prince "false teachers," and compared the discipleship movement to the cult led by Jim Jones, saying the only difference was "the shepherds had not yet served Kool-Aid,"³ a reference to the mass suicide of more than 900 members of Jones's group who drank poisoned Kool-Aid on his command. Robertson banned the shepherding leaders from appearing on any of his radio or television outlets.

The conflict over the shepherding movement seemed to reach a turning point in 1990, when a Christian magazine quoted on their cover:

Discipleship was wrong. I repent. I ask forgiveness ... discipleship resulted in unhealthy submission resulting in perverse and un-Biblical obedience to human leaders ... for the injury and shame, I repent with sorrow and ask for your forgiveness.⁴

This admission of unhealthy submission and non-Biblical obedience to human leaders shook the foundation of discipleship in America. Many leaders in this movement followed and repented of the abuses. "All the men except Simpson and Baxter 'released' their disciples to find their own way."⁵ No longer were these disciples to be in complete obedience to men who were in spiritual oversight of

their souls. Since that time, discipleship programs have been dropped by literally hundreds of thousands of people. The movement has continued to shrink as the abuses and the non-Scriptural base of some of the teachings are exposed. But it spawned eggs that even today continue to hatch.

In 1991, *The Word of God Community* in Ann Arbor, Michigan released their people from those in spiritual oversight. The leaders of this community recognized that many members had caused themselves suffering by their submission in this movement. These leaders asked Reverend James LeBar, a specialist on cults, to organize a seminar along with psychologist Margaret Singer and several other experts. The program was a great success in healing this flock.

The problems in the *Word of God* group, according to Tom Yoder, an eight-year former member, were (among other things):

*... militancy, control, elitism, hierarchicalism, black and white interpretations, pressure to perform, loss of identity, loss of freedom-spirit and soul, suppression of the "created" self, dependency, loss of personal initiative, extreme negative world view, extreme sex role differentiation, extreme loyalty.*⁶

The far-reaching nature of the problems identified by Yoder makes it look like this group of Christians were pretty "far out." Yet in actuality, the former members repeated many times how subtle it was. That is one reason they stayed for so long in this discipleship program.

The discipleship movement in the mainline *Church of Christ* caused a church split. An in-depth study of this group was done by Flavil Yeakley, who summarized his findings in the book, *The Discipling Dilemma*.

Yeakley was asked to investigate charges that the discipleship program in this group was causing abnormal personality changes within committed members. Yeakley was at the time director of the *Church Growth Institute at Abilene Christian University*. He used the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), one of the leading tests for ascertaining personality traits. Yeakley measured the distribution of personality types in both new and longer-term members within the discipleship group, and then compared these results to a similar group from the *Church of Christ* mentioned above.

People are born with a specific type of temperament, which includes such factors as whether they are sensing or intuitive,

extroverted or introverted, thinking or feeling, judging or perceiving. Although people grow mentally and mature emotionally, this personality remains the same. Even Christian conversion does not change the personality type.

Jesus' method of discipling did not change the personality of His disciples, either. His Apostles, after they were fully trained by Him and carried on their mission after Him, were indeed like Jesus in many ways. Yet they were clearly different in other ways. There were obvious differences between Peter and John and the other Apostles. Peter was apparently the most extroverted of the Apostles during his time with Jesus, and he continued to be that way afterward. The others were apparently more introverted, and continued to be so. The Apostle Paul was no less outgoing and analytical after he was a Christian; he just used his personality for different ends.

Yeakley therefore expected to find a distribution of personality types in each of the groups that was similar to that found in society in general. He was surprised to find that in the discipleship group, longer-term members showed a high level of personality change with a clear pattern of convergence toward a single type of personality. This pattern was not found among the newer group members or among the members of the mainline church.

Yeakley writes . . .

Results of the psychological type study among members of the Boston Church of Christ clearly indicate that something is causing their members to deny their true type and try to become copies of someone else . . . There is something in the discipling methodology producing this unhealthy pattern. Whatever it is, it should be changed. . . They cannot deny that the psychological type scores are changing and converging in a single type. They cannot deny that the members are being made over after the image of the group norm. They cannot deny that the discipling methodology is producing this effect.⁷

. . . and he concluded . . .

You need to be able to reach and restore the many dropouts who will be harmed psychologically and spiritually by their participation in this movement. The time when these problems are most likely to develop is when the young people in this movement reach mid-life. Falsification of psychological type (trying to change your personality to imitate that of another) produces a serious mid-life

*crisis. There will be major burn-out problems, serious depression, and a variety of other psychological and spiritual problems to resolve.*⁸

Yeakley extensively interviewed members of a group led by Kip McKean (founder of the *International Church of Christ*). This statement proved to be almost prophetic as, in the years that followed, counselors in virtually every city where this radical movement exists saw clients who had been adherents of this movement.

In his own assessment of spiritual leaders, Jesus Christ gave this standard . . .

By their fruits you will know them (Matt. 7:16).

And now, after many years, the fruits of broken hearts, damaged psyches, and disillusioned spirits are becoming more and more evident. Several former leaders echo these same complaints and observations. . .

*Pastors like myself have spent large amounts of time over the last 15 years picking up the pieces of broken lives that resulted from distortion of truth by extreme teachings and destructive applications on discipleship, authority, and shepherding.*⁹

Victims of this movement are usually born-again Christians and are fundamentalist and evangelical in their orientation. The errors are covered in many different terms, such as delegated authority, covering, unquestioned submission, covenant, commitment to a fellowship, etc. . . . Terms change from time to time. Submission may be called "commitment," "covenant relationship," or "divine order" in church government. Often terms aren't used at all, but it is the actions that tell you what is going on.¹⁰

Endnotes for Appendix 2

- [1] Excerpted from an unpublished paper: "The Shepherding-Discipleship Movement" by Tom Yoder (a former member of People of Praise). Used by permission.
- [2] Buckingham, Jamie. "The End of the Discipleship Era." *Ministries Today*, January-February 1990, p. 46.
- [3] Ibid.
- [4] Ibid.
- [5] Ibid.
- [6] Yoder, Tom. "Leaving the Promised Land"—unpublished article by this eight-year former member of the Word of God Community, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
- [7] Yeakley, Falvil R. Jr. *The Discipling Dilemma* (2nd Printing 1988) (Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, TN) p. 45.
- [8] Ibid.
- [9] Buckingham, Jamie. "The End of the Discipleship Era." *Ministries Today*, January-February 1990, p. 48.
- [10] Trusty, Gilbert. *Recovering from Abusive Authority*. (Conference Evangelical Ministries to New Religions in Philadelphia, PA. Sept. 14, 1994).

Appendix 3

A Summary of Abuses

Remembering and recognizing the abuses is extremely important, because there may be days when you think you've made a mistake by leaving your (destructive) group. Sometimes this can cause *floating, spacing out, or dissociation* (describing an altered state of consciousness). This can happen especially when you are depressed or lonely. Bringing yourself out of this lapse and back into objective and critical thinking is partly the goal of this next exercise.

Muriel Mooney, Peter Clark, and Jo Noetzel left an abusive shepherding/discipleship community inside a mainline church. Together, they came up with a list of abuses perpetrated by the group. I've enlarged slightly on their list.¹ For each of these abuses, ask yourself questions such as: Was this applicable for my group? Did I always think or act this way before I became involved with the group? In respect to this point, what did our group teach that other churches don't normally stress?

Start a journal as you study the following list of abuses. Circle the ones that apply to your former group. A few weeks later, go over the list and see how many new examples you have recalled. Use a different color pen so you can take note of how many more abuses you can recall compared to the first time you reflected. Do this several times throughout the year and make additional entries for abuses not listed. Whenever you start to feel confused about having left the controlled environment, pick up your journal and start reading to focus yourself.

In your group, did you see that . . .

- Leadership was excessively esteemed?
- Leaders were not accountable to members?
- You were led to think that good solid teaching outside this group was rare?
- Doctrine often focused solely on behavior to the exclusion of theology?
- The group wanted you to give as much time as you possibly could to their activities?
- Everyone was expected to act together?

- There was a legalistic emphasis on external behaviors which resulted in loss of focus on Jesus?
- There was an excessive emphasis on commitment to the group? "Our commitment is a full commitment, a commitment that involves our whole lives."
- Guilt was an important emotional lever for producing compliance and conformity?
- Appropriate feelings were denigrated at times?
- Members were taught not to feel for themselves or their own needs but to think of the group and not complain?
- Denial and repression of feelings encouraged mood-altering addictive behaviors?
- There was a feeling that there wasn't any security outside the group?
- "Confidentiality" was used to isolate members from each other?
- There was control over channels of communication and information, and that some teachings and/or policies were kept secret?
- Withholding of information sometimes impaired sound judgments?
- Many were led to believe that the church represents all that was good and necessary to meet our needs?
- Your leaders had a corner on wisdom?
- Members needed extensive teaching to be led to Christian maturity?
- Members needed extensive accountability to other men to be led to Christian maturity?
- You were taught to be very concerned about your commitment to each other?
- Members were constantly asked to subordinate their own experiences to the group's teachings, mission, and expectations?
- Former life experiences and lessons were less valuable than what you learned in the group?
- At times, there was enormous pressure to conform in areas of non-moral issues?
- Some members' identities/personalities were reshaped in the process of discipling: dress changed, voice changed, vocabulary changed, appearance changed, and objectivity decreased?

- Women were taught to have a gentle and quiet spirit in order to keep them from asking questions or becoming leaders?
- Criticism, analytical thinking, free exchange of opinion, and an opportunity to verify facts were sometimes denied?
- Some members regressed to child-like dependency?
- Group-will often took precedence over an individual's will for the sake of unity?
- Individuality was perceived to be bad, conformity and uniformity as good?
- Unity depended on submission?
- Leaders were responsible for directing the body, leading it forward in unity; the rest were expected to submit to their direction?
- God's way was very narrow and specific (more so than in the Bible), so that it often seemed that there was only one way to do anything?
- A wrong choice could mean leaving God's protection?
- You were to ignore your inner self and instead trust authority?
- "Gatherings are a matter of commitment; we're not simply free to decide"?
- Attendance at all community gatherings usually took precedence over visiting families or friends?
- Members were expected to renounce good or neutral values simply because they held them prior to becoming group members?
- Your group provided a "new family" which became the focus of relationships previously sustained by your natural family?
- There were weddings in which the group was more involved than the couples' own families?
- Teachings may have encouraged a pessimistic worldview at variance with Christian hope?
- Your own reality testing was diminished by relying largely on your leaders for their opinions?
- A discipler sometimes assumed the power to decide whether a member had a valid reason for not sticking to a commitment?
- Leaders had unilateral power to decide who could be asked to leave?
- Members were led to believe that without intense accountability from another person, they could not grow as fast?
- "Something bad" might happen if you left the group?

- Members who wanted to leave were told: “Each one of you, individually, is leaving the Community that you belong [to] . . . Each one of you, individually, is dropping the . . . relationship you have with the church you belong [to] and with the other brothers and sisters who are in that church . . . you will be leaving a . . . relationship”?
- Jargon or clichés were used to dismiss your legitimate concerns?
- Calling people into “accountability” was often a euphemism for controlling and meddling?
- Words were redefined, amplified, or given new meanings?
- Disciplers were not just persons “coming alongside” for guidance but became instruments for coercing conformity?
- Members were often told they were “working on something” or “struggling” because leaders didn’t think they were measuring up?
- Disciplers often developed pride and arrogance?
- The group believed that the way to live a good Christian life was to get disciplined; almost as if the leaders, teachings, structure, and committed relationships could save us?
- Often carrying out certain agreed-to actions became a sign of one’s commitment?
- The group environment (shaped by legalism) bred a critical, judgmental spirit?
- Members used each other, expecting each other to drop all prior commitments and reschedule to help out a brother or sister in various ways?
- It was sometimes easier to say yes than deal with the guilt if one said no?
- Discipling was elevated to a place of primacy equal to our baptismal or marriage vows?
- There was a belief that one should be in a discipling relationship for his or her whole life?
- There was sometimes concealment of, or coloration of, the truth about why members left or were asked to leave?
- There was a selective recruitment process—leaders wanted only people who were willing to be totally dedicated to the program leaders?
- Leaders overwhelmed newcomers with love, acceptance, and lots of attention at the onset?

- Teachings used *layers of truth*, revealing existing policies a step at a time?
- There was a certain order of learning the group's teachings? (For example, one should experience the care of a discipler before learning about commitment to the discipler.)
- Many members felt pressure to reach unrealistic standards of behavior?
- Your group had odd traditions, such as refraining from giving presents at Christmas?
- There was little respect for diversity?
- Certain kinds of deception were legitimized? (For example, *Word of God* had front groups such as UCO, MCA, Men's Breakfast, Delta Chi Rho; when an event was advertised, they often didn't show *Word of God* as the sponsor.)
- Members were taught that people outside cannot understand what we believe, and it is right not to disclose this information?
- Those who wanted to leave had difficulty in moving out of the group?
- Members' self-worth and hope for salvation were tied to staying in the group?
- There were often subtle messages like: Are you going to leave after all we have done for you?
- *Dying to self* was exaggerated into becoming over-responsible for others and under-responsible for oneself?
- Teachings about selflessness reinforced the idea of an exaggerated call to sacrificial service?
- Your group stressed looking for opportunities to lay down your life?
- Healthy relationships (with friends in the group) were not to be expected to continue once you left?
- Members were encouraged to make smug remarks about those who left?
- Members were taught to interpret the Golden Rule "Love thy neighbor, forget thyself" instead of *loving your neighbor AS yourself*?
- Legitimate goals and dreams of members were often reshaped?
- Assertive women often were turned into doormats?
- The importance of unity was emphasized, instead of discovering the value of one's uniqueness?

- The prevailing attitude was that objections and questions from members stemmed not from reasoned and fairly objective analysis but rather from the person's spiritual or emotional problems?
- There was extreme teaching on subordination, obedience, submission instead of Matt. 20:25–28, Acts 11:1–4, or Gal. 2:14–21?
- The tendency to listen, believe, and obey resulted in an atrophy of critical and analytical thinking skills?
- Leadership fostered a sense of urgency in order to gain cooperation?
- Dissenting was always bad?
- Group policy of extreme submission often produced oppression of women?
- The group's ideal of Christian womanhood promoted dependency?
- An overemphasis on subordination of women in order to produce a quiet, gentle spirit contributed to passivity, confusion, repressed anger, depression, and at times compulsive behavior on the part of female members?
- In your group, women were not seen as men's peers?
- Motherhood and homemaking were so highly praised as to give the impression that (for females) other interests were far inferior?
- Women who expressed or shared difficulties in their marriages were usually advised to submit, love, serve, and respect their husbands more?
- Members were rarely advised to seek professional counsel?
- It was usually decided that the one who needed to change was the woman instead of the man in order to put the marriage back on track?
- Men were encouraged to "have more distance" from their emotions or not to respond to them?
- The value of feelings and emotions was often disdained when these conflicted with the leaders' point of view?
- The underlying concept was that emotions are not a reliable guide to our actions, even when they are valid?
- Making a choice other than the one recommended by leaders was usually thought unwise or rebellious?

- Husbands were given an all-encompassing responsibility for their households—directing wives in all areas at all times—not just when problems arose?
- Sometimes mistrust was fostered in marriages as the husbands became more trusting of the disciplers?
- Some fathers were told to be “uncompromising” with children without regard to sensitivity for the children?
- This uncompromising attitude often led to emotional distance and unavailability of fathers?
- Single men were called on to give many hours of service?
- The group reduced marriage to merely a functional relationship?
- Friendships between men and women were often discouraged?
- Dating and courtship were highly controlled?
- Most members believed they were only to date/marry other members?
- Disciplers demanded so much time that little was left to pursue old friendships outside the group?
- Some members were disillusioned because they expected as a participant in discipleship that life should go better?
- Many experienced disappointment and anger because compliance and faithfulness to the system went unrewarded?
- Many who once defended and promoted controlling leaders now feel that their integrity was compromised?
- There was a general mistrust of others outside the group?
- There was a general loss of personal privacy?

If you don't understand how any one of these is detrimental, be sure to talk with an objective person to gain some perspective, otherwise you may miss some essential points.

Endnote for Appendix 3

- [1] Unpublished paper by Muriel Mooney, Peter Clark, and Jo Noetzel.

Bible Verses

Anointing

John tells us that, in the body of Christ, we each have the anointing of God (1 John 2:20–27)

“You are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it” (1 Cor. 12:12–27)

“Touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm!” (Ps. 105:1)

Authority

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt. 28:18)

Brother

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone” (Matt. 18:15)

“When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, or relatives; if you do you will be repaid” (Luke 14:12)

Behavior

“Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15)

Busybodies

Do not be nosy busybodies (2 Thess. 3:11; 1 Peter 4:15)

“Whatever you do to the least of these ... you do unto me” (Matt. 25:40)

Commands

Care for orphans and widows (James 1:27)

“Remember the poor” (Gal. 2:10)

Feed the poor, visit the sick and those in prison (Matt. 25:35–46)

“Lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody” (1 Thess. 4:11)

"Do not call anyone on earth 'father'" (Matt. 23:9)

"Nor are you to be called 'teacher'" (Matt. 23:10)

"Let the dead bury the dead" (Matt. 8:22; Luke 9:60)

"To be perfect, go sell your possessions and give to the poor" (Matt. 19:21)

"Seek and you will find" (Matt. 7:7)

Counselors

"Seek many counselors" (Prov. 11:14, 15:22; Acts 15)

Disagree

Paul allows the flock to disagree (1 Cor. 14:29)

Disagreement between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36–41)

Challenging leaders (Acts 11; Gal. 2:14)

Paul confronts Peter (Gal. 2:14–21)

Paul and Barnabas agreed to discuss concerns (Acts 15:1–6)

"Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry" (Eph. 4:26–27)

Division

Jesus warned that His mission was to bring divisions and dissension
(Matt. 10:34–36)

"Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's enemies will be those of his household" (Matt. 10:34–36)

"Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth?" (Luke 12:51)

"I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Cor. 1:10)

"Be of one mind" (Rom. 12:16; Phil. 1:27, 2:2, 4:2)

"I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them" (Rom. 16:17–18)

Doubt

"But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea" (James 1:6)

Jesus accepted the doubts of another person (Mark 9:24)

Jesus did not condemn the doubting Thomas (John 20)

Enemies

"Heap burning coals on his head" (Prov. 25:21–22, Rom. 12:20)

Evangelize

Apostles converted 3,000 in one day (Acts 2:41)

“Go and make disciples” (Matt. 28:19)

“If they reject you then they are rejecting me” (Matt. 10:14, 15, 40)

Father

Paul referred to Abraham is the father of us all (Rom. 4:16) *“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good*

works and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16)

Fear, perplexity, or concern

“Perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18)

“Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear” (Matt. 6:25)

Paul was *“perplexed, but not driven to despair”* (2 Cor. 4:8)

Paul was afflicted with external conflicts and internal fears (2 Cor. 7:5)

Jesus’ *“soul is sorrowful unto death”* (Matt. 26:38)

Fellowshipping

“Do not forsake the fellowshipping of the saints” (Heb. 10:25)

“Anyone who . . . does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God. . . . If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him” (2 John 9, 10)

Forgiveness

Seek the forgiveness of those we have injured and do as much as possible to make things right with them (Matt. 5:23, 24)

Overlook the mistakes of others, forgive insults, injuries (Prov. 19:11; Col. 3:12, 14.)

Free will

“Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind” (Rom. 14:5)

Christian liberty is constrained when we refrain from indulging our sinful ways, but it is not necessarily constrained in other areas (Gal. 5:13)

Rich young ruler (Matt. 19)

Philip didn’t try to prevent the eunuch from going back to a non-Christian country (Acts 8:27–39)

Evil can exist in a place where good things happen (Eccl. 3:16)

Fruit

The sign of good fruit (Matt. 7:15–18)

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Gal. 5:22, 23)

Gifts

"He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11)

Hate

"If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar" (1 John 4:20, 21)

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26)

Hearing God

"Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice" (John 18:37) God is able to plant the urge in our hearts concerning which direction we should take (Ps. 20:4)

God used a donkey to speak to Baalam (Num. 22:30)

Joy

"The full measure of my joy within them" (John 17:13)

Judge

Jesus refused to be a judge: *"Who made me a judge over you?" (Luke 12:14)*

"Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon or a Sabbath day" (Col. 2:8–23)

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Matt 7:1)

Judgment on an immoral brother (1 Cor. 5:3)

If we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment (1 Cor. 11:31)

Speck in our brother's eye (Matt. 7:1–5)

Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Tim. 2:17)

Leaders

A good leader should be honored and respected, but we are instructed to prove all things (1 Thess. 5:21)

Leaders must prove themselves trustworthy (1 Cor. 4:1, 2)

Deacons must be tested. (1 Tim 3:10)

Leader's doctrine and behavior are important (1 Tim. 3:1–13; Tit. 1:5–11; 1 Peter 5:2, 3)

Leaders are not to dominate the flock (Ezek. 34:1–4; 1 Pet. 5:1–3)

“Heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders” (Matt. 23:2–4)

Katexousiazō is scarcely found in secular Greek literature. The word was used to mean not the misuse of power (Matt. 20:25; Mk. 10:42)

“Never entertain an accusation against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses to accuse him. Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all” (Tim 5:19)

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1)

“Do not be followers of men” (1 Cor. 1–4)

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1)

Love

“If you love me you will keep my commandments.” (John 14:15)

“Anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward” (Mark 9:38–41)

The activity we are doing is less important than doing it with love (1 Cor. 13:1–3)

“I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me!” (Isa. 65:1,2; quoted by Paul in Rom. 10:20, 21)

Biblical calls for love (Acts 20:31–35; Rom. 15:7; 1 Cor. 4:14; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14; 2 Thess. 3:15)

Mercy

As we show mercy, God will show mercy to us. (Matt. 5:7)

“A good tree cannot bear bad fruit” (Matt. 7:18)

“It is his [man’s] glory to pass over a fault” (Prov. 19:11)

Mother

“Who are my mother and my brothers?” (Mark 3:31–34)

Jesus tells His mother He isn’t ready to begin His ministry (John 2:1–11)

Jesus lovingly fulfilled his mother’s request (John 2:1–11)

Jesus told His mother that He needed to be in His Father’s house (Luke 2:41–51)

Prayer and persistence

The judge gave in to the widow’s request, not because of justice but because of her persistence. (Luke 18:1–8)

“Without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers” (Rom. 1:9, 10)

“When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen” (Matt. 6:7)

Jesus prayed more earnestly because He fell into a great agony (Luke 22:44)

Obey

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority" (Heb. 13:17)

"Pharisees sit in Moses' seat . . . obey them and do everything they tell you."

(Matt. 23:2, 3)

"We must obey [peitharcho] God, not man" (Acts 5:29)

Abraham, Sarah, and Pharaoh (Gen. 12:10–20)

"Rulers hold no terror for those who do right" (Rom. 13:3)

Saul didn't carry out all of God's command (1 Sam. 15)

"Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good" (Titus 3:1–2)

"Everyone must submit . . . to the governing authorities" (Rom. 13:1–3)

Pressure

Herod felt pressure to behead John the Baptist (Mark 6:17–19)

Sacrifice

Denying yourself (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23)

Servants

Whoever wants to be first must be a slave, just as the Son of Man was (Matt. 20:25–28)

"Encourage and rebuke with all authority [epitage]," that is, *"with all impressiveness."* Paul is not giving Titus a position of authority to rule (Titus 2:15)

"Not lording it over those entrusted to you" (1 Peter 5:1–3)

"Cornelius fell at the apostle Peter's feet. Peter said, 'Stand up. I am only a man myself' " (Acts 10:26)

Leaders are to serve, not dominate followers (Luke 22:25–28; 1 Peter 5:3)

The flock is not to be treated as slaves (Luke 11:46; 1 Thess. 2:7–12)

Secret teachings

Jesus did not teach something different to His inner circle from what He taught new members (John 18:20)

"Even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a Gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8)

Shun

"Expel the wicked man from among you" (1 Cor. 5:11, 13)

"Do not give him a greeting" (2 John 10)

"If anyone . . . does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house" (2 John 10)

"If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter . . . do not associate with him" (2 Thess. 3:14–15)

Sinners

Paul addresses the troublesome church of Corinth, which was not following God's commandments, as *"the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia"* (2 Cor. 1:1)

Jesus did not refuse to be intimate with sinners (Mark 2:15–17; Luke 19:1–10)

Jesus hung around sinners and ate with them (Mark 2:16)

Jesus replied He did not come for the righteous (Mark 2:17)

Jesus reached out to tax collectors and sinners (Matt. 9:10–13; Luke 5:29–32)

Sins

"Lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lover of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:2)

"Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed" (Col. 3:5)

"The cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting" (1 John 2:16)

Die to sin (Rom. 6:2–11; 1 Peter 2:24)

"Adultery, murder, stealing, coveting" (Romans 13:9)

"Do not associate with sexually immoral people" (1 Cor. 5:9)

"Knowledge puffs up" (1 Cor. 8:1)

It isn't the things on the outside that make a person dirty (Matt. 15:1–20)

"Do not associate or eat with any [Christian] who is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler" (1 Cor. 5:11, 13)

Slander

"Slander no one" or "speak evil of no one" (Titus 3:2)

You are only obligated to what is Scripturally based (Acts 5:29; Rom. 14)

"Brothers, do not slander one another" (James 4:11)

Standing up to leaders

Jesus healed on the Sabbath, refusing to obey Jewish leaders (Mark 2:27; Luke 13:10–17; John 5)

Jesus refuted the "teachers of the law," defending why His apostles failed to wash their hands before they ate (Matt. 15:1–9)

Jesus called the synagogue rulers hypocritical for putting their own man-made rules before God's commands (Luke 13:15)

Suffering

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"
(2 Cor. 12:9)

All trials should be embraced with patience and acceptance for Christ's sake (Rom. 5:3–5; 2 Cor. 4:16–18; James 1:2–4)

Throughout the Bible misfortune and suffering happen to good people; but, in time, God brings good out of evil (Rom. 8:18–39)

"Weep not for him who is dead, mourn not for him!" (Jer. 22:10)

Taxes

The Pharisees and Herodians asked Jesus about the right to pay taxes to Caesar (Matt. 22:15–22)

"If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?" (Matt. 5:46–47)

Teachers

"Not many of you should presume to be teachers" (James 3:1, 2)

A young Christian layperson should not be granted power to oversee souls (1 Tim. 3:6; James 3:1, 2)

"Must not be a recent convert" (1 Tim. 3:6)

Paul had a reflection three years before he began his mission (Gal. 1:15–24)

Test or be analytical

Discern, examine, test, and prove (1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thess. 5:21)

"Test everything. Hold on to the good" (1 Thess. 5:21; 1 Cor. 14:29)

Trust

"Beware of your friends; do not trust your brothers" (Jer. 9:4)

"Do not trust a neighbor; put no confidence in a friend" (Mic. 7:5)

Unity

"Unity" means "constancy of purpose" (Col. 3:14)

"One hope . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:4–6)

Warning

"For whoever exalts himself will be humbled" (Matt. 23:12)

Yoked

"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14)