

The Occult "Family Tree":  
 The Major Categories of the Occult  
 with the Group(s) or Type(s) of Person(s) in Each Category  
 Professor Craig S. Hawkins  
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1. general occultism:  
 mediums, palmistry, psychics, spiritism, spiritualists
2. esoteric groups:  
 rosicrucianism
3. ritual/ceremonial magic:  
 o.t.o., golden dawn, individuals
4. New Age:
 

human potential	groups	wholistic health movement
life spring	theosophy	applied kinesiology
forum (est)	i am	iridology
kroning	unity	crystal healing
		reflexology
5. neopaganism:
 

druids	others	witchcraft (wicca)
reformed	new reformed	alexandrian, algard
north	order of the	gardnerian, seax-wicca,
american	golden dawn	etc.
druids		
6. satanism:  
 public and private, group and individual  
 church of satan, temple of set, etc.
7. regional forms of occultism:  
 E.g, african, south america, mexican, etc.  
 bruja, candombe, hoodoo, macumba, santeria, voodoo, yoruba, etc.
8. eastern occultism (e.g., world religions):  
 hinduism (e.g., yoga), tibetan buddhism, etc.

Eight Primary Perspectives or Theories  
of how--According to Occultists--the Occult Works or Operates  
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1. latent psychic power(s):
2. forces, powers, laws, ...:
3. monistic power or force ...
4. idealism:
5. hierarchy of entities:
6. combination thereof:
7. materialist/naturalistic
8. agnostic/atheistic

### **The Biblical View of the Occult**

It is expressly forbidden and condemned!

It's source is the devil and the demonic:

Lev. 20:6; Deut. 32:17; Psalms 106:34-43; 1 Cor. 10:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Rev. 9:20-21.

God' view on the occult:

Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:6; Deut. 18:9-12; 2 Kings 21:6; 2 Chr. 33:6; Isa. 8:19-22; 47:9-15; Jer 27:9; Gal. 5:20; Rev. 9:20-21; 19:20; 21:8; 22:15.

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## **APOLOGETICS INFORMATION MINISTRY (AIM)**

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### **CHRISTIANITY AND THE GOSPEL VERSUS THE CULTS AND THE OCCULT**

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- I. The overall approach is to emphasize the Gospel, what it is and is not!
  - A. We want to concentrate on the Gospel, and then on the cults and the occult—in light of the Gospel.
  - B. The counterfeit bill example: experts on "the real thing"  
The essentials: what are the essential teachings of Christianity? What are the beliefs that are unique to it and in turn separate it from all other belief systems, such as other world religions, the cults, and the occult? What *must* a person believe in order to be a Christian in the first place and *why* must these beliefs be held?
  
- II. Definitions:  
Christian denomination(s), aberrant groups, non-Christian religions, cult, the occult
  - A. Christianity: orthodox vs. heterodox
  - B. Denomination(s): differ on Cardinals, Tertiaries, and Peripherals: communion, baptism, church government  
For example: Lutheran, Presbyterian, Reformed, Baptist, Methodist, Anglican, Assemblies of God, etc.  
  
But they all agree on the Essentials!  
  
Augustine's maximum: "in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity."  
  
Vernon Grounds: "The history of Christianity is a dismal record of sincere dogmatists quarreling among themselves over whose theological pronouncements could rightly claim to state God's infallible word infallibly" (Moody Monthly, July/August, 1985, 99).  
  
"Controversy for the sake of controversy is sin, controversy for the sake of truth (CHRIST) is a divine command!  
Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 11:19; Jude 3; Revelation 2:2-3
  - C. Aberrant Christian Groups: 3 Types
    1. Sociological:  
Shepherding, Fund raising, discipline (stand in a corner)
    2. Theological:

P.C./born again Jesus bit, baptism in the name of "Jesus only" or only by group x.

Confused on Essentials, Cardinals, Tertiaries, or Peripherals, but do not explicitly deny any essential doctrines

For example: Some in the International Church of Christ, some within Seventh day Adventism, some within Roman Catholicism, the Local Church, PC'ers, etc.

3. Sociological/Theological:

Confused on orthopraxy (right practice) and orthodoxy (right/correct doctrine).

Almost always found together, Maybe always

For example: Shepherding/P.C.ers

D. Non-Christian (World) Religions:

They may or may not claim to be compatible with Christianity. Generally they do not claim to be compatible with Christianity.

For example: Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, etc.

E. Cult (Seven Definitions):

1. Classical: *Cultus*

2. Anthropological:

3. Sociological (Cultural/Societal):

Cultural: deviate from the norm of society, whatever that is or may be.

Simply put, nonconformity!

Societal:

For example: isolate members from their families, take all or most of their money, center on or around a given person's teachings, or the only place to get truth today.

4. Pejorative:

insult, "Your mother... and you belong to a cult!"

"Jim Jones type"

5. Esoteric:

For example: the mystery religions of Greece, Rome, etc. They are only for or known by the initiates of their group.

6. Pop:

7. Theological:

2-3(?) and deny one (1) or more of the five Essentials, claim to be compatible with Christianity (based on the Bible as "they understand it"), and (generally) claim that they are the only true church!

Examples: Mormonism, J. W'S, Christian Science, UPC, etc.

Notice: not disagreement on Cardinals, Tertiaries, or Peripherals, but on the Essentials!

This is how we are using, and will use the term "cult."

F. The Occult:

1. Latin: *occultus*: esoteric, hidden, occluded, secret
  2. Knowledge and practices:
- 

3. Biblical view (definition)--forbidden: interaction and trafficking with the demonic.
4. The occult is composed of three types of basic activities: divination, magic(k)/sorcery, and spiritism:

A. Divination:

Knowledge about the past, present, or future obtained (according to God's word) via the demonic. For example, "Uncle Harry" appears at your bedside and gives you some info.

Examples: astrology, horoscopes, crystal balls, palmistry, psychics, mediums (euphemistically known today as channelers), seances, ouija boards, *I Ching*, and so forth

B. Magic(k)/Sorcery: Two Categories:

1. Magic:

*Not* here referring to sleight-of-hand or prestidigitation--which is merely an illusion performed by various methods in which the audience is fooled into thinking that a "magician" is able to do certain "supernatural" feats, such as levitating

2. Magick/Sorcery:

To bend, twist, manipulate reality in order to obtain what one desires. According to the Bible, whether the occultist(s) knows or acknowledges this or not, it is accomplished via the intervention of demonic spirits. Hence it is expressly condemned!

a. Two Alleged Types:

1. White:
2. Black:

b. Multiple View:

C. Spiritism:

4. Biblical View

1. Unequivocal Condemnation:

Lev. 19:26, 31; Deut. 18:9-12 (covers the waterfront); 2 Kings 21:6; 2 Chr. 33:6; Jer. 27:9; Gal. 5:20; Rev. 21:8, etc.

2. Why so harsh?

a. Lev. 17:17; Lev. 20:6; Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:36-37; 1 Cor. 10:20; Rev. 9:20!

Interaction and trafficking with the demonic, which is in rebellion and war with God

3. Results:  
Acts 13:6-10--List.  
Those in the occult even more so: Rom. 3:9-12; 5; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph 2:1-5; 4:17-18.

### III. Spiritual Warfare

- A. Protect yourself, your family, and reach people for Christ!  
2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 1:21-23; 2:6; 6:10-18; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:7; 1 John 3:8; 4:4

### IV. The Necessity of the Word of God and Prayer

- A. Deut. 8:3; Isa. 55:11; Matt. and Luke 4; Heb. 4:12; 1 John 2:13-14.
- B. John 1:13; 6:44, 65; 15:4-8\*; 16:8-10; 1 Thess. 5:17; Eph. 6:18!

### V. Witnessing Tips

**Only the Holy Spirit can enable a person to believe in or trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior!**

The Situation in Our Society

Hopefully Helpful Hints

- A. Know the Bible--The Word of GOD--and the Gospel well!
  1. See Psalm 126:5-6; Isaiah 55:10-11; Hebrews 4:12; and 1 Peter 1:23-25 (cf. Isa. 40:6-8).
  2. You do not have to be an expert on cults, the occult, world religions, philosophy, or otherwise. But, you are called to be an "expert" on the Bible and the Gospel (1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Peter 1:5-8; 3:18).
- B. Pray
  1. Prayer should be a priority--when witnessing and otherwise!
    - a. Prayer should not be an after-thought or seen as a last resort: "Oh well, there is nothing else that I can do, I guess I could pray."
    - b. Bathe your witnessing in prayer!
  2. See **Luke 18:1-2**; John 14:13-14; 15:7-8; 16:23-24; Ephesians 6:18; **Philippians 4:6-7**; **Colossians 4:2-4**; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; and 1 John 5:14-15.
  3. We also should pray for a heart for those who do not know Christ, a genuine love for the lost.
- C. Spiritual Warfare
  1. Always remember that you are involved in spiritual warfare!
  2. See Acts 26:17-18; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 6:10-18; Colossians 1:13

- and 1 Thessalonians 2:18.
3. Non-Christians are spiritually dead.
  4. See 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; and Ephesians 2:1-2, 4-10.
  5. Thus, it is not *just* an issue of reading the Bible and being logical—of simple persuasion.
  6. Giving a minimal amount of information, evidence, and reason are necessary but not sufficient conditions for salvation.
  7. Never, never, never forget this!
- D. Do *not* present or deal with difficulties or objections to Christianity that a person has not mentioned.
- E. Do answer to the best of your ability questions *they* do have.
- F. The Apologetic "Sliding Scale"
1. Start where the person is in their thinking about Christianity and proceed from that point. (Note: start from where *they* are, not where you are!)
    - a. For example, find out if they are they an atheist, agnostic, pantheist, theist...
    - b. Whatever the case, begin with appropriate scriptural references and argumentation.
    - c. For instance, if they already believe in the existence of God, Jesus Christ as an historical person, and/or that the Bible is God's revelation to us, do *not* try to "prove" these to them, since obviously, they already believe such.
  2. The goal is to locate where an individual is along the spectrum or "scale" of unbelief or objections to Christianity, whether holding to the most extreme or "milder" objections, and move them, by the grace and working of God, towards and ultimately to belief in Christ as Lord and Savior.
- G. Ask God Questions:
- Ask God** (first and foremost)—James 1:5
1. "What should I say to or share with them?"
  2. "What shouldn't I say to them?"
  3. "Relative to the Law/Gospel continuum, God where are they; what do they need to hear?"
  4. "What passages or scriptural truths will have the most impact on them?"
    - a. For example, Mormonism helped them out financially....
      - (1) They should trust in God vs. rely on Mormonism for the family finances.
      - (2) See Matthew 6:25-34 and Luke 12:22-34.
    - b. They are afraid what there family or others will think. See Matthew 10:24-40; Luke 12:4-10; and 14:25-26.
  5. Also ask God, for example:  
 "Where are they coming from?" "What are their issues that I need to address the most." "How do you want me to interact with this person?"  
 Others...
- H. Ask Them:
- Like a good medical doctor you should ask questions. In this case we are getting a profile of the person's spiritual history and health.
- A good doctor does not just start treating a patient—proscribing medication or**

**"cutting." They ask questions first (such as...). They obtain the necessary information—the patient's medical history first.**

1. "Why do you believe (or not believe) this?"
  2. "How long have you believed (or not) this?"
  3. "When did you change your mind on this?"
  4. "What do you like about it?"
  5. "Why are (or how did) you involved in \_\_\_\_?" (e.g. Mormonism financially taking care of their family: counter Matt. 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-34—truth; or family, Matt. 10:32-40; Luke 14:25-27).
  6. "What do you derive from it, or what need(s) do you believe that it fulfills for you?"
  7. Ask them to please define their words or ideas, that is, what they do and do not mean by certain words or ideas. For example:
    - a. "Who is Jesus Christ? Who or what do you mean by the name 'Jesus'?"
    - b. "What is your understanding of salvation?" (if they believe in any type of salvation at all).
    - c. What do you mean by \_\_\_\_? **Definition**
    - d. "What do you or your group mean by that term (x)?"
    - e. **"Would you please explain if for me?"**
  8. Also Ask Them:
    - a. "Are you stating a mere opinion or preference, or are you making some kind of (objective) truth claim?"
    - b. "How do you know that \_\_\_\_ is right or true?"
    - c. "What, if anything, would it take to show or prove (or disprove) \_\_\_\_ to you?"
    - d. "What, if anything, would constitute evidence for you that \_\_\_\_ was true?" (or false, as the case may be).
    - e. "What would or should you accept as evidence?"
    - f. "Would anything convince you, or is your mind already made-up?"
    - g. "Why do you \_\_\_\_?"
    - h. "Why should I (we) believe \_\_\_\_?"
- I. Define your terms.
1. We as well need to always define our terms or ideas and do not assume that those to whom we are speaking (1) understand the word or concept, (2) or are using it in the same way.
  2. **We need to carefully define our terms!**
- J. There is no "sure-fire" combination of Scriptures.  
That is, there is no "sure-fire" way that is guaranteed to produce converts every time one witnesses. There is no "just-right" combination of, or usage of, passages and/or arguments that works every time for everybody—with guaranteed instant conversions.
1. Trust God. He is working, whether you *feel* like He is or not, or see any "visible" signs that He is (Isa. 55:11; John 16:8-11).
  2. Thus, be patient and do not despair (2 Pet. 3:9).
- K. Do not speak Christianese to non-Christians!  
Like any good missionary (1) learn what is important to the person or people you are



trying to reach, and (2) how to best communicate what you want to convey to them by learning their language.

1. Washed in the Blood...
2. In the Flesh...
3. Die to Self...
4. Walking in the Spirit...
5. These are great Christian truths but will not be understood by non-Christians. Thus, watch your language when speaking to non-Christians.

L. It's not up to you.

1. God draws people to Himself (see John 1:13; 6:44, 65; Rom. 9:16; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:8-10).
2. Trust God. Relax. The work or "burden" is not yours or on you. You cannot save anyone. You're not a salesperson closing a sale or deal, or having to meet your "soul quota" or else (or God will be upset with you if you don't "produce").
3. Again, relax and enjoy as you watch God at work.
  - a. Start with and share what you do know about the gospel.
  - b. It's fun sensing and seeing God working through us.
  - c. God is pleased with you that you are sharing the gospel.

M. Do not take it so personal.

1. If a person "rejects" you (unless you're really obnoxious or offensive) it is because they are rejecting the One you represent (see Matt. 10:24-40; John 15:18-25; 17:14-15; 1 John 4:5-6).
2. If they reject Jesus it is not per se a personal referendum on you or your personhood.
3. See if for what it really is--the ultimate spiritual contest (Mat. 13:1-23) and do not retaliate or strike back in anger because you are offended or hurt (remember Matt. 10:24-25).

N. The resurrection of Christ and His atoning work for us is the touchstone of apologetics.

1. In the above process we must never lose sight of the goal--belief in Christ.
2. Do not get involved with superfluous apologetic issues (side or rabbit trails) which detract or simply lose sight of the real issue, that is, why the individual person does not believe in the veracity of Christianity--in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.
3. Where possible begin with Christ's resurrection from the dead and atonement for us (dispense with your other arguments), since in order to preach the Gospel you must finally arrive at presenting and explaining this to them, that is, Christ's atoning work for them.

O. Go for it!

See Ephesians 6:10-18

Philippians 4:13

Hebrews 13:20-21

Philemon 1:6.

**Matthew 9:35-38**  
**28:18-20!**