

THE SERVANT

A Christian Awareness Fellowship Publication

SUMMER

1990

MORMON CHURCH CHANGES TEMPLE RITUALS

THE ENDOWMENT CEREMONY, initiating Mormons into their temples, underwent major changes in April. According to *Time* (May 14, 1990 p. 67) these changes include: letting women swear obedience to the Mormon god (instead of their husbands), dropping the "blood-curdling secrecy vows," and discontinuing the portrayal of Protestant ministers as being paid by Satan to lure Mormons from their faith.

Mormon temples are off limits to non-Mormons and also to about 90% of L.D.S. members (local "wards" are used for Sunday services). Mormons who keep certain rules (such as abstaining from coffee and alcohol and paying a full tithe to the church) and have their bishop's approval may receive a "temple recommend". The temple recommend allows Mormons entrance into the secret temples. According to the L.D.S. religion, going through the temple is a necessary step to "exaltation" or becoming a god (see Isaiah 43:10). Temples are used for proxy baptisms of the dead, eternal marriages, and the endowment. There are only fourty-three L.D.S. temples worldwide for their 7.3 million members.

The Bible teaches that the temple of the old covenant was not secret and was used for sacrifices. Jesus Christ came to offer himself as a sacrifice for our sins (Heb. 10:12), so there is now no need for temples. God does not dwell in temples made by human hands (Acts 17:24) but in the temples of our bodies (1Cor 3:16).

The changes in the endowment has erased a few of the many connections it had with

Freemasonry. Also known as the Masonic Lodge, Freemasonry is an occultic fraternity with a secret initiation ritual very similar to the L.D.S. temple endowment. Freemasonry, as an organization, is 100 years older than the Mormon church. Founding L.D.S. prophet Joseph Smith claimed to receive temple ritual instructions from God. He introduced the practices into the L.D.S. church only one month after he joined the Masonic Lodge (*Is There No Help For The Widow's Son?*, Durham, Reed C., Martin Publishing, Nauvoo, Ill., 1980, p. 17.).

What *Time* calls, "blood-curdling secrecy vows ("We agree that our throats be cut from ear to ear")" are actually penalty signs the Mormon church borrowed from Freemasonry. These hand signals (slitting the throat, abdomen, etc.) are a warning not to discuss the secrets of the organization. Although the L.D.S church recently dropped the penalty signs, the blood oaths are still repeated by Mormons going through the temple.

Another Masonic practice dropped is the five points of fellowship. The five points of fellowship is an embrace given to other Lodge members. In Mormonism, a man representing the L.D.S. god stood behind a veil and gave the embrace to others entering one area of the temple.

Some of the Masonic influences still retained in Mormonism are the square and compass symbols found on L.D.S. garments, aprons worn in the temple, the secret handshakes or grips, passwords and code names, and the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods.

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FALSE RELIGIONS

THE BOSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST

A couple of weeks ago, while strolling across a mall in Tucson, my wife and I were approached by a pleasant lady who we thought was conducting a mall survey. She asked us if we would like to go to a nice church. She was intent on our attending a service of her church without any question of our beliefs. The church, called the **Tucson Church of Christ** was about six months old and her husband was the minister. We had just been approached by one of the multiplying ministries of the Boston Church of Christ.

Although the Boston Church of Christ had its origins within the traditional Church of Christ (C.O.C.), its extremely successful methods of evangelism (which were originally given the go-ahead by the C.O.C) began to be seen for what they were-- mind control techniques. While the movement gained momentum it began to make subtle breaks in doctrine regarding discipling, baptism, church autonomy and assumed a more independent nature towards itself.

The Boston Church of Christ considers the traditional C.O.C., as well as all other Christian churches to be apostate. The Tucson C.O.C. is under the guide of the San Diego C.O.C. which itself is under the leadership of the Boston Church. In 1982 the Cult Awareness Network (CAN), identified the Discipling Movement of the Boston C.O.C. as a destructive cult. According to CAN, there are 3000 cultic groups in the United States utilizing mind control with memberships ranging from a few people to several thousand. What the Discipling movement of the Boston C.O.C. has in common with other cults is their deceptive techniques used during the recruitment, programming and retention phases. This contributes to an individual's dependency on the group as well as total individual compliance through mind control. Another alarming fact is that many cults change or use front names due to bad publicity. The Moonies alone have two hundred plus front names (such as CAUSA and the American Freedom Coalition). Such is the case with the Boston C.O.C. in Tucson. The Boston movement is often confused with the traditional C.O.C. Outsiders to the Tucson group may be informed of its connection to the San Diego C.O.C. but not to the Boston church.

Although cults differ in beliefs, they share several common effects on their members. The effects include members being financially exploited, psychologically manipulated, and their time monopolized. These costs are felt directly by families and friends of the members while enslaving the member's mind and actions to a group that has little (or no) regard for the autonomy or welfare of the individual. People who become deeply involved in the Boston C.O.C. movement eventually relinquish control over their lives and allow the church to dictate to them where to live, whom to date and marry, and how much time they should spend with their families and friends.

There is a heavy push for fund raising for foreign missions and church plantings. Members who have left the group (It has a 32.5% attrition rate) have commented on the heavy intimidation presented by leaders to give money. One former member reported giving half her paycheck each week. The group holds garage and yard sales regularly where ultimately the assets of members are liquidated in order to make or beat contribution quotas. Also unlike the traditional C.O.C. which is not hierarchical (there are no pastors, bishops, or denomination presidents), the Boston C.O.C. has many leaders. Members are not only responsible to God but their discipling partners, Bible Talk leader, House Church elders, and finally the man on the top, Kip McKean. Time cards are to be filled out by members weekly to submit to the Bible study leader. It lists how much time is spent daily with people not in the church, praying, reading the Bible, sleeping and preaching to strangers. Buddy Martin has been following the group for ten years and exit-counsels members from the group. He comments, "I have spoken with individuals in the health care profession, counsellors, psychologists, and psychiatrists and they all label Boston Church of Christ as a destructive cult." One counselor in the city of Boston said, "The Boston Church of Christ is a cult, they have all the characteristics and more. They are one of the most pernicious groups in the area."

The Tucson Church of Christ has a greater than 90% membership of college age. This age category tends to be idealistic, impressionable and willing to work hard for a cause they think is right. The group has been kicked-off several university campuses already (Northeastern, Marquette and Boston Universities) because of harassment and intimidation. At Harvard, students in freshmen orientation are warned about the group's deceptive tactics during recruitment.

(See **Boston Movement** p.4)

BOSTON MOVEMENT (cont. from p. 3)

College newspapers warn students about the Boston movement. One front page article was entitled "Former Members Accuse Church Of Mind Control, Manipulation" and was in the college paper supplement *U. The National College Newspaper*. It informed its 1.4 million readers of the dangers of the group. According to exit counselor Buddy Martin, "The church is growing fast, especially in college age areas, but in areas where there is a consistent public awareness their growth is stayed."

Editor's Note:

Both the traditional Church of Christ and the cultic Boston movement differ with the evangelical churches in that they teach salvation is obtained by faith in Christ AND by immersion baptism. In the Boston movement (and in some traditional Churches of Christ) the baptism must be performed by their church to be valid. Prospective members that were baptized by other churches are taught they must be re-baptized in order to be saved. The evangelical churches' position is that the Bible teaches salvation comes by grace alone, not by works (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7). Works include baptism, church membership, tithing, proselytizing, etc. The traditional C.O.C. and Boston movement also differs from other churches in that musical instruments are not allowed in services (see Psalm 150 & Rev. 14:2). There are about 100 Boston churches in 35 different countries all under the leadership of Kip McKean in Boston. These churches take the name of the city they are located in. A few of the cities these churches have been established in are: Albuquerque, Detroit, Louisville, Phoenix, Seattle and Tucson.

Upcoming C.A.F. Events

Oct. 7, 14, 21 & 28 7:00pm

(Call for presentation topics)
First Southern Baptist Church
445 E. Speedway, Tucson

Oct. 20 8:00am

The Selling of the New Age
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church
8650 N. Shannon, Tucson

Nov. 11-17
KFLT Family Life Radio 830 AM
Prayer Spotlight for Christian Awareness Fellowship

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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

WARNING: May be hazardous to your health.

The Church of Christ Scientist has again made national headlines. This time with the trial of the tragic death of two year old Robyn Twitchell. Parents Ginger and David Twitchell were found guilty of manslaughter for the death of their son in 1988. They refused to bring the child to a doctor because of Christian Science beliefs. A simple operation for an obstructed bowel could have saved the boy's life.

Muppet inventor Jim Henson also recently died. According to his wife Jane (*People* June 18, 1990 p. 88f), Henson put off going to a hospital because of his Christian Science upbringing. Jane Henson told *People* he didn't practice his faith, but "it affects his general thinking." Jim Henson died of complications due to a strept. induced pneumonia. These kinds of strept. infections are easily treated with penicillin-- if caught in time. He was six to eight hours too late to be helped.

Walter Martin once commented that Christian Science isn't Christian and it isn't scientific either! But this cult is still flourishing as is its progeny the Unity School of Christianity. The C.A.F. is offering two tracts on Christian Science: *A Cult For The Cultured* and also *New Beginnings*. These were written by the Christian Way; Former Christian Scientists for Truth Through Jesus Christ.

The WATCHTOWER annual district conven-

tion met in Tucson again this year during June and July. Aproximately 40,000 Jehovah's Witnesses from the Southwestern U.S. were present (attendance is expected). The theme was "The Pure Language," meaning the Watchtower's interpretation of God's Word. Their own version of the Bible, called *The New World Translation*, changes many verses to fit their interpretations. The Watchtower denies the Christian view that the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ are God. Therefore they preach "another" Jesus and a "different" spirit (2 Cor. 11).

The Christian Awareness Fellowship

We are a nonprofit, volunteer, inter-denominational, ministry supported by your prayers and tax deductible gifts. Your comments and questions are welcomed. Our goal is to educate the Church about false religions and the lost about Jesus Christ. We are available for speaking engagements and movie presentations for your church or organization.