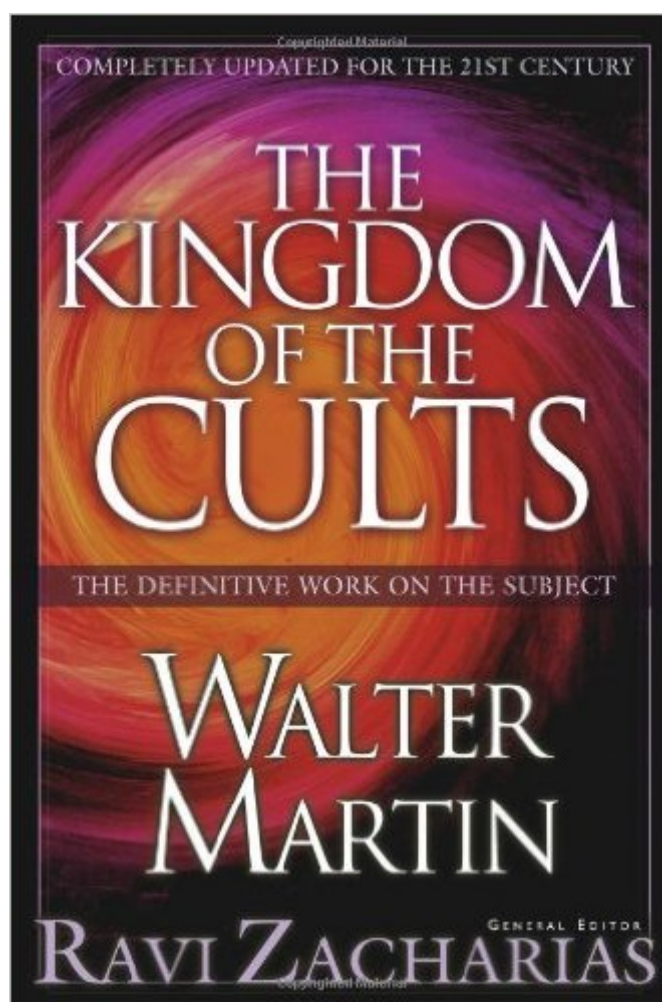


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# The Kingdom Of The Cults



## Synopsis

The authoritative reference work on major cult systems for nearly forty years. Working closely together, Ravi Zacharias and Managing Editors Jill and Kevin Rische (daughter of Dr. Martin) have updated and augmented the work with new material. This book will continue as a crucial tool in countercult ministry and in evangelism for years to come. Among cults and religions included are: Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, New Age Cults, the Unification Church, Baha'i Faith, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and more.

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## Customer Reviews

Anyone engaged in something more than a casual interest in apologetics will discover an incredible value in Walter Martin's classic "The Kingdom of the Cults." This updated edition is similar in structure as earlier editions, but fairly acknowledges major changes in theology and activity in various religious groups. Intended for the thinking Christian and the open-minded nonChristian, Martin's book has continually challenged people to rely on Scripture for their theology. This is an unusual book in that it is neither an evangelical or fundamentalism critique of those who disagree, but a deeper look at the histories, documents, arguments at groups in opposition to orthodoxy. I first read this skeptically, but was impressed by the immense research by Martin and his team of editors. There is a dual functionality to "The Kingdom of the Cults." Not only does it explain the distinctives of groups such as the Jehovah Witnesses and the Church of the Latter Day Saints, but in doing so, it teaches Scriptural fundamentals of the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and provides

direction for testing our own faith with the Bible. Martin's exposure of what the groups themselves are claiming will disturb many within the group as they discover the truth. He is quick to grant the strengths of a group, but points them to Scripture to make their own comparisons (as opposed to relying on Martin's views). He prefers the reader to think for himself, not content to depend on his book, or any other book but the Bible. This balance is rare in Christian literature, and a value in reading "The Kingdom of the Cults." Martin provides a meaty analysis of all the major groups, as well as primary lines of thought within Protestant perspectives, and Roman Catholicism.

As one reviewer already mentioned, those who argue that Dr. Martin had anything derogatory in mind when he called his book Kingdom of the Cults, in reference to his study of various religions, have either purposely disregarded Dr. Martin's own direct statements in the book, or simply didn't read the book carefully. Despite false allegations about Dr. Martin's doctorate ("degree mill") education and other unsubstantiated assertions about people "lambasting" him for "inaccuracies," the Kingdom of the Cults remains a perennial classic in its field. What Dr. Martin attempted to do, as he clearly stated, was to evaluate various belief systems as they compared with the doctrines of the historic Christian faith. All the cults, and many major religions like Islam, deny certain historic Christian doctrines: The trinity, the deity of Christ, etc. With scholarly information and exhaustive documentation using mainly primary source material, Dr. Martin evaluates, in about 20 chapters, religious traditions from The Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, Mormonism, and Spiritism, to Islam, Seventh-day Adventism, and Unitarianism, to name a few. It should be noted that although Dr. Martin includes the Adventists in his book, he clearly says that he does not consider them to be a cult religious system outside of orthodoxy, but a Christian sect with some heterodox beliefs, such as soul sleep and soul annihilation. Since the exhaustive nature of this book and limited review space does not permit a review that does justice to Dr. Martin's work, I will only give a few examples of how he evaluated some religious teachings in comparison to historic, orthodox doctrine, focusing on how Dr. Martin contrasted the Jesus of orthodoxy with the "Jesus" of the cults.

Let's keep one thing straight: 'Kingdom of the Cults' was written by a biblical scholar, from the point of view of a fundamentalist Christian. If you don't care for a world view centered on the core beliefs of Christianity, you will abhor (and probably refuse even to read) this book. If, however, you are a Christian thoroughly versed in scripture, or especially a Christian only beginning to be familiar with the Bible (and wanting to clearly understand the differences between Christianity and the other major world religions and quasi-'Christian' sects), or simply curious about Christianity (without an

axe to grind), you will find this book totally engrossing. The book is organized on a chapter by chapter basis, with each chapter centered on a particular world religion or cult. Thus, the reader can choose a particular religion or cult (such as Hinduism or Christian Science, among many others), and delve immediately into this author's insights on the underlying doctrines of each. Somewhat surprisingly (because it is so "Non-PC"), the author considers the three other major world religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam) to be "cults." Even more surprisingly, the author patiently and thoroughly explores the doctrines undergirding these other epistemologies and compares them with Christian doctrine in a measured, methodical, and non-hysterical manner. The author thoroughly explains why these doctrines have failed in the past - and are currently failing - both in theory and practice. There is no "moral relativism" or "tolerance" in this approach. From the perspective of Christian theology, the author illustrates why those who are earnest members of any one of the Kingdom of the Cults face certain eternal damnation.

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