

## Is Your Church Free from Cultic Tendencies?

### A checklist for Responsible Christians

The following checklist of cultic tendencies by Charles Lesser was published in the October, 1991 *Spiritual Counterfeits Project* newsletter. They are typical of a number of aberrational cultic groups and churches on the scene today.



1. Is your pastor fully accountable to a board of deacons?
2. Is loyalty to Jesus and to one's own calling placed before loyalty to pastor and church?
3. Does your pastor encourage questions and suggestions? Is he approachable?
4. Does your pastor give equal attention to all kinds of people in his congregation?
5. Does your pastor readily admit his errors?
6. Does your pastor avoid boasting or hinting at a "special anointing"?
7. Is your pastor truly humble?
8. Are the sermons based on clear Biblical truths, not on "original revelations" or ax-grinding?
9. Does your church interact with other churches?
10. Does your church staff avoid secrecy?
11. Is power shared in your church (rather than preempted by a hierarchy)?
12. Does your church see itself as just one organ of the Body of Christ, and not the main one?
13. Is your church truly friendly?
14. Does your church emphasize ministry to people rather than church programs?
15. Are especially needy people cared for lovingly in your church?
16. Are church members encouraged and loved even when they leave?
17. Are relationships with former members encouraged or allowed?
18. Do the pastor and congregation avoid attacking and using as object lessons, former members or those who disagree?
19. Are families encouraged to stay together and spend time together?
20. Does your family worship Sunday service include children, at least for part of the service?
21. Are you encouraged in your own calling?
22. Are pleas for money rare and unemotional?
23. Are your children happy to attend church?
24. Are you happy to bring unsaved friends to your church?
25. Is there a diversity of classes, races, dress styles, ages, and occupations in your church?
26. Are people encouraged to hear from God for themselves?
27. Is there a single behavior standard for all people in the church?
28. Are all types of people considered welcome at your church?
29. Is the joy of the Lord present in your church?

30. Are you free from fear in your church?
31. Do you think more about God and Jesus than you do about your pastor and church?
32. Does your pastor include himself in any calls for repentance and forgiveness?
33. Are you clear that the pastors and elders never exaggerate or lie to make themselves look good?
34. Is your group encouraging of each other and free from gossip and rumoring?
35. Is there a humility of doctrine that points to the grace of God and His mercy for sinners?
36. Are you encouraged to serve in ministries or missions outside the local body?
37. Is there ever any pressure put upon members to give or lend money to leaders for their personal or business use (exclusive of church business or projects)?