

# **When Religion Becomes Evil**

## **Session 2: Blind Obedience**

### **1. Key Idea**

- “Authentic religion engages the intellect as people wrestle with the mystery of existence and the challenges of living in an imperfect world. Conversely, blind obedience is a sure sign of corrupt religion.” (p.72)

### **2. Religious Sects and Cults**

- a. Definition of Sects & Cults
  - i. Negative Connotation
- b. Religious Beginnings
  - i. Reformation of already established traditions
  - ii. Healthy religions continue to branch new sects
- c. Warning signs when sects become unhealthy
- d. Case Study:
  - i. James Jones and the Peoples Temple

### **3. Indicators of Blind Obedience**

- a. Enslavement of Doctrine
  - i. Obsession with End Times / Apocalyptic Literature
  - ii. Limiting Practice of Questioning and Challenging Concepts
  - iii. Authority Limited to a Few or One Individual(s)
- b. Withdrawing from Larger Society
  - i. Pattern leading to Corruption
  - ii. Balance between Sacred & Secular
  - iii. Case Study: Branch Davidian

### **4. Our Responsibility**

- a. Learning to Think / Value of Reasoning and Intellect
- b. Encouraging Dialogue and Questions