

Heaven's Gate

By Bob Waldrep

Founders: Bonnie Lou Nettles and Marshall Herff Applewhite, a.k.a.: The Two Witnesses, Guinea and Pig, Bo and Peep, and Ti and Do.

Founding Date: 1975

Official Publications: This group produced a number of publications, primarily in the form of posters, flyers and statements. These include: "Undercover 'Jesus' Surfaces Before Departure," "95 Statement by an E.T. Presently Incarnate," "Last Chance To Advance Beyond Human" and "The Shedding of Our Human Bodies May Be Required To Take Up New Bodies in then Next World." They also produced a video series entitled: "Beyond Human - The Last Call." Finally, they published an official record of their history and beliefs: *Heaven's Gate (The Door to the Physical Kingdom Level Above Human)*, which was published in book form and posted on their Website.

Unique Terms: Next Level, Evolutionary Physical Level above the Human Level, Older Members, Younger Members.

Other Names: The UFO Cult, The Evolutionary Kingdom Above Human, Next Level, and Heaven's Gate. They also operated under the commercial name, Higher Source.

HISTORY

Reared in Texas, the son of a Presbyterian minister, Applewhite studied briefly for the ministry before shifting to music. In 1964 he relocated to Houston where he was employed by St. Thomas University. In 1970 St. Thomas dismissed him following a scandal involving him and a student.

He began hearing voices and eventually admitted himself to a hospital, seeking to be cured of his homosexual desires. Though previously married and the father of two children, Applewhite had been involved in homosexual affairs and had struggled with his sexual identity. (Eventually this struggle resulted in his having himself castrated; an act he believed would be the ultimate freedom from his sexual guilt).

During this time he met Nettles, a registered nurse who dabbled in astrology. Though reared a Baptist, Nettles was a member of the Theosophical Society and was involved in channeling messages from spirits. She introduced her "spiritual" practices to him and they quickly became inseparable, convinced they had somehow been linked together in previous lives.

Within a year, Nettles left her husband and four children departing with Applewhite, in 1973, to discover their higher purpose. They came to the conclusion they were the two witnesses mentioned in the Book of Revelation, and developed the germ form of their theology that the kingdom of heaven was a physical evolutionary level. During this time, Applewhite served six months in prison for car theft. While incarcerated he wrote their first publication, *Statement I*. Upon his release they rejoined and set out once again.

THE BEST RESOURCE COLLECTION ON CULTS AND RELIGIONS



The *Watchman Fellowship Profile Notebook* provides you with an extensive personal library of information about cults, new and alternative religions, world religions, and religious leaders. You will have at your fingertips over twenty years of research to answer your questions, strengthen your faith, and improve your witness to others.

- Over 100 Profiles
- Over 400 pages of information
- The history and primary teachings of each group
- A Christian response to deepen your faith and enhance your outreach



[CLICK HERE TO ORDER YOUR COPY OF THE WATCHMAN FELLOWSHIP PROFILE NOTEBOOK](#)



Be sure to also order your [free subscription to the Watchman Fellowship Profile](#). Several times each year you will receive a new, four-page Profile that you can add to your Profile Notebook, as well as the latest news from Watchman Fellowship. [Click here to order your free subscription!](#)



In March of 1975, they mailed *Statement I* to “ministers, evangelists, and awareness centers far and wide” (Ibid.). One who received it, Clarence Klug, a New Age teacher, invited them to speak to his class. After the meeting those attending were invited to Gold Beach, Oregon, to hear more. At that meeting Clarence and twenty three others joined “The Two,” who were using the names Guinea and Pig (they believed they were part of an experiment being conducted by the Next Level). Since they now had a “flock,” they took the names Bo and Peep. With this, the “UFO Cult” was born.

In August of 1975 they held a meeting at Canada College, promoting it as a UFO meeting. Though Applewhite stated he did not like to use the term UFO, its use became a major method of generating interest in his meetings. After this they held a meeting at Waldport, Oregon on September 14, 1975. Press coverage of this meeting was not favorable and the group quickly moved on to meetings in Denver, Chicago and Tulsa.

Dividing the followers into groups comprised of two man teams, they sent them out to share the message. Separated from their leaders, followers began to doubt and defections occurred. Nettles and Applewhite had predicted their own death and resurrection, and members were becoming disillusioned because this promised “demonstration” had not occurred. The two resurfaced at a meeting in Manhattan College on April 21, 1976, and announced, “the ‘Harvest’ is closed-there will be no more meetings.”¹

That summer, Bo and Peep took the group to a remote camp in Wyoming, where the forbade sexual activity, drinking of alcoholic beverages, and indulging in drugs. They also eliminated any possibility of independent thinking by doing away with individual revelation; “all information from the next level was channeled through a ‘chain of mind’ linking the next kingdom to individual members through Bo and Peep.”² They explained their failed prophecy of death and resurrection by blaming the members for having become so absorbed with the “demonstration” that they had not spent sufficient time working on their own growth.

With this, a 16 year period of seclusion began. Membership dwindled to about 30-40 people. Those who remained described it as a time of training, and themselves as guinea pigs in the training program. Living in tents, they traveled from place to place, in a communal environment. Their masters constantly experimented on them through diets, work, daily tasks, social patterns, clothing, etc. Supposedly, this was to prepare them for Next Level living. During this period, Applewhite and Nettles took the names “Ti” and “Do” like the musical notes.

Nettles died of liver cancer in 1985, but not before Applewhite came to the conclusion that she was actually his Older Member from the Next Level. In ‘88 *Update* Applewhite describes the period in this way: “What has the class been doing for 12 years?’ You might ask. They have been tuning their minds with their Older Members mind, (Do) who has been tuning his mind with his Older Members mind, (Ti) and so forth up the ladder.”³

In 1991 the group briefly resurfaced when they produced and broadcast over satellite TV a video series entitled, *Beyond Human - The Last Call*. During the previous sixteen years they had not gained any new members. However, mostly as a result of the video series broadcast during an approximate 3½ month period, a few former members did return. On May 27, 1993 they again gained media exposure by purchasing a 1/3 page ad in *USA Today*. The ad, entitled “‘UFO Cult’ Resurfaces with Final Offer,” set forth the basic tenants of Ti’s and Do’s teachings. This was followed by buying ad space in alternative newspapers, weekly newspapers and magazines around the country and overseas where an ad entitled, “Last Chance To Advance Beyond Human” was placed.

In January of 1994 they set out across the country holding public meetings in some 22 states and 63 cities during the course of the year. They described this as, “gathering the remainder of their crew. . .before exiting.”⁴ The last such meeting took place in Boston

on August 19, 1994. Afterwards they went back into seclusion claiming these meetings had nearly doubled the size of their class (membership).⁵ Except for a couple of postings on the World Wide Web and newsgroups on the Internet in September and October of 1995 they had no significant public impact until March, 1997. During March 23-26 thirty nine members of the group (including Applewhite) committed mass suicide, followed in May by another suicide and an attempted suicide. The bizarre and tragic nature of their deaths gave them the public spotlight in a manner and to a degree they had never been able to achieve in life.

DOCTRINE

Trinity: Denies the Trinity, teaching that God is a singular being, “chief of chiefs” among other beings of his creation, who exist in the “Next Level.”

God the Father: An Upper Level Being, and the Older Member to whom Jesus attached himself. Also incarnated in Bonnie Lou Nettles. Speaking of His Older Member, Do wrote, “His relationship to this planet is as Chief Administrator, and is the One referred to as the ‘True God’ in the early stages of this civilization.”⁶

God the Son: Jesus was not God but an Upper Level Being who incarnated on the human level to train others how to attain the next level. He incarnated a second time in the 1970s in the person of Marshall Herff Applewhite.

God the Holy Spirit: Not recognized as a separate being but rather as the evidence of a deposit of an older member being placed in a human level body. For example, the descent of the spirit upon Jesus at His baptism was actually the placement or deposit of an upper level being into the human Jesus.

Man's Destiny: In order to progress to the Next Level one was required to be attached to an older member - a being from the next Level. “If you want or ever expect to go to Heaven - here is your window. That window opportunity requires: 1) an incarnate (as human) Representative of the Kingdom of Heaven; 2) that all who hope to enter Heaven become active students of that Representative while the Representative is present; 3) those who endure the ‘transition classroom’ until it ends (adequately bonding or ‘grafting’ to that Representative) will go with that Representative - literally LEAVE the human kingdom and earth as he is about to do.”⁷ “Only those individuals who had received a ‘deposit’ containing a soul's beginning had the capacity to believe or recognize the Kingdom of Heaven's Representative.”⁸ Followers were taught that during each lifetime they would progress to a certain level and then, possibly, be taken aboard a spaceship where they would await their being implanted into a new physical vehicle on the human level, in order to further progress.

Creation: They taught there was a “Chief of Chiefs” (the Most High God) who created a race of beings who in turn created this human level as a place to conduct experiments. These experiments would be designed to see how those of the human level might best progress to the Next Level. The “class” therefore came to view themselves as guinea pigs in a laboratory experiment.

Luciferians: Those who had received a deposit from the Next Level and fell away - became “. . . part of the opposition to the Next Level.”⁹ Their leader is named Lucifer and approximately one-third of the class fell. “These ‘Luciferians’ (for the most part from the ‘unseen’ world) started all religions and masquerade as ‘gods’ to humans.”¹⁰

Self Denial: Class members forsook all that tied them to the human level: possessions, people (including family), desires, plans, religion, rights, etc. Applewhite wrote, “literally LEAVE the human kingdom and earth” including “family, sensuality, selfish desires, your human mind, and even your human body if required of you.”¹¹

BIBLICAL RESPONSE

1) Though many false gods, there is only one true God, not a race of gods (Malachi 2:10; I Corinthians 8:4-6; Ephesians 4:6; I Timothy 2:5; Isaiah 43:10, 44:6-8).

2) Creation was not designed as a laboratory for "the gods" to experiment on man. Man was the crown of God's creation, created to have dominion over the earth. As man's creator, and being omniscient, God does not need to run experiments to determine how man will respond (Genesis 1-2; Psalm 33:13, 147:4-5; Isaiah 40:28; Job 37:16).

3) The Holy Spirit is not a "deposit" nor the sign of a deposit, but a separate and distinct person of the triune God (John. 16:13-14; Acts 5:3; 13:2).

4) God has revealed Himself, uniquely in the person of the man Jesus Christ. He did this once and for all time in the incarnation (John 1:14; Colossians 1:15-17; Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 8:3; Philippians 2:6-8).

5) Salvation comes not by being "grafted" to an Older Member, but by faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ; not through the efforts of man to conform to "Next Level" living, but by the work of God who came to live among man, as a man, in the person of Jesus (John 14:6; Acts 4:10-12; Romans 3:25-26; 8:3; 1 John 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:8-10; I Timothy 2:5).

6) Man is not in some reincarnative cycle, advancing further with each subsequent life. Instead a man is given one life and with that life will come death, after which is the judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

7) Jesus' return will not be through some obscure reincarnation into a man, such as Marshall Herff Applewhite, but will be as His resurrected self for all to see (Matthew 16:27; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:14-17).

RECOMMENDED READING

UFOs In the New Age, by William Alnor. An excellent 293 page book contains some information on "Ti" and "Do" of Heaven's Gate in addition to research covering scores of additional UFO cults. Alnor, a Philadelphia-based Christian writer and researcher on cults and the paranormal, does an excellent job of tying the UFO cult phenomenon to occultism in general and New Age doctrine specifically. Index, 293 pages.

UFOs: The Hidden Truth. This New Liberty video features actual footage of alleged UFO sightings. Produced from an evangelical Christian perspective, this movie ties some UFO cult literature - especially messages produced psychically or through "channeling" - to the possibility of "nonphysical" (i.e., demonic) entities masquerading as extra terrestrials. 74 minutes.

Notes

¹ '88 Updat.

² James Lewis, ed., *The God's Have Landed*, 154.

³ '88 Update.

⁴ *He's Back, Where Will You Stand*.

⁵ *Overview of Present Mission*.

⁶ *Undercover Jesus*.

⁷ *Do's Intr.*

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ '95 statement by an E.T. Presently Incarnate.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Do's Intro.



Profile is a regular publication of Watchman Fellowship, Inc. Readers are encouraged to begin their own religious research notebooks using these articles. Profiles are published by Watchman Fellowship approximately 6 times per year, covering subjects such as new religious movements, counterfeit Christianity, the occult, New Age Spirituality, and related doctrines and practices. Complete Profile Notebooks containing all Profiles published to date are available. Please contact Watchman Fellowship for current pricing and availability. All rights reserved © 1997.