

Recent Changes to the ICC

Mar. 15, 2005. Over the past couple of years, the International Church of Christ has experienced major upheavals and changes. After founder Kip McKean - who is responsible for much of the biblically erroneous and abusive nature of the ICOC - stepped down and then returned to 'ministry.' McKean and his wife took over the Portland Church of Christ and soon again attempted to exert authority over the other ICOC churches.

In Feb. 2003, Henry Kriete - a leader in the London Church of Christ - released a paper titled, [Honest to God](#). It was critical of many ICOC practices.

In response, three major factions formed:

1.) There is a reformist group that has taken heed to Henry Kriete and others, who are actively trying to make things better and change.

2) There is a moderate group that, while they recognize that reform is necessary, feel that the current rate of reform is sufficient and believe that the abuses will be taken care of, eventually. They do not feel that they need to go to the perceived 'extreme' measures of the reformist group, to be radical about reform.

3) There is a conservative or traditionalist group, that feel that Kriete's letter and other criticisms (even positive ones) are just being used by the enemies of the ICC in trying to tear it down, and that the ICC has become 'soft' and 'weak'. They want to return to the glory days of old, when things were more black-and-white and definitive (for instance, mandatory disciplers telling people what to do). This group is divided however; some want a return of a high power, Kip, but others do not want Kip to return. Read UpCyberDown and you'll see many of these comments.

Source: [Three Major Factions](#) Chris Lee, at [Reveal.org](#)

It was one of the fastest-growing and most controversial churches in America, banned as a cult from dozens of college campuses while boasting 135,000 members worldwide. Its followers were known for spending their free time recruiting new members and waiting on doorsteps at 4 in the morning, hoping to persuade those who had "fallen away" to come back to the fold. But now the central organization of the International Churches of Christ, a strict religious body founded in Boston, is collapsing.

Thomas "Kip" McKean, its charismatic founder, has stepped down. Its world governing body has dissolved and dozens of local church leaders have resigned or been fired, in part because churches can no longer afford to pay their salaries.

Behind the story of a teetering church empire is the tale of the autocratic visionary who built it and his independent-minded daughter, now a Harvard senior, whose decision to leave the church sparked turmoil in the already troubled group. "It caused her father to have to step aside and it caused the group to reexamine itself," said Michelle Campbell, executive director of REVEAL, a nonprofit organization that provides information and support to former members of the church. "It was sort of inevitable that Kip would fall. The standards he set, no one could meet. Not his children, not even himself. The very thing that he created came back and bit him."


Source: [A Christian community falters](#), "Loss of leader, governing body hurts group formed in Boston," *The Boston Globe*, May 17, 2003.

Though at first glance much of the International Churches of Christ's theology appears to be orthodox, many of its doctrines and practices are, in fact, controversial and cultic. While the ICC proclaims itself to be "God's modern-day movement," Christian apologists and counter-cult experts consider it to be a *cult of Christianity* (theologically). In addition,

the ICC includes many of the sociological characteristics of a cult:

Among other things, this movement

- has a prideful, elitist attitude,
- frequently engages in dishonest recruitment practices,
- has a heavy-handed approach to authority
- employs a controversial discipling system, and
- misrepresents the Bible's teachings regarding grace, baptism, and salvation

Explicitly, it teaches that unless you are part of the ICC, you are not saved. Hear, for example, John Causy: "[Everyone needs to be a member of this church if they're going to go to heaven](#)"  (November 1996 sermon. 290K wave file.)

These and other issues have led theologians, cult experts, as well as secular anticult and Christian counter-cult organizations to warn against involvement in the ICC.

Source: "The ICC." <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/i02.html>

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