



By

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Satanism is growing in popularity. Does that surprise you?

I interviewed the founder of the Church of Satan almost 55 years ago. Anton LaVey also wrote The Satanic Bible. When I talked with LaVey, he told me that the number of people attending the “church” in San Francisco numbered a few hundred people. LaVey said that there were thousands of Satanists around the world.

That was in the late 1960s. How about now? The U.S. Government recognizes “The Satanic Temple” as a religion. Followers of Satan gather in America, Europe, and Australia, and number in the thousands. Almost a thousand of them gathered for “SatanCon” in Boston in May of this year.

What's SatanCon?

I think the name “SatanCon” is appropriate for what the devil’s follower are doing. I’ll explain why I say that in a few minutes.

Is this annual event something that should concern Christians? Certainly. Anything that is anti-Christ should concern Christians. However, should an event like “SatanCon” in Boston surprise Christians?

I was an atheist when I interviewed Anton LaVey in the late 1960s. I didn’t believe in Satan because I didn’t believe in God. LaVey called himself the “high priest” of Satanism. I viewed him as someone who wanted to gain fame and fortune, so I didn’t take him or his “satanism” seriously. I thought of him as more of a *showman* than someone who really believed he was worshipping a supernatural being.

However, I did agree with some of the things that LaVey told me led him to “worship” Satan: the hypocrisy of church leaders. He said he saw a lot of that when he was growing up. So did I. Hypocritical church leaders eventually led me toward atheism as a teenager. LaVey and I may have landed in different places, but the motivation was basically the same.

LaVey died in 1997, but the idea of “Satan” worship didn’t die with him. How could it? Whether people called the beliefs and behaviors of people “Satanism” or “paganism” or some other name, the outcome was basically the same. Now that I am a Christian and believe in God and the devil, I understand what’s happening in the spiritual realm. There is a war going on and humans are in the middle.

What Do Satanists Believe?

The way old-style journalists learned things was by asking questions, then publishing the answers without personal opinion. So, I'll do that here. First, what Satanists say they believe. Then, what Jesus and His apostles said about Satanists. Fair enough?

Open to church members only, the convention's agenda is geared toward the interests and beliefs of the non-theistic Satanists the congregation serves, according to Dex Desjardins, a spokesman for The Satanic Temple.

This year marks the second annual event, following the inaugural SatanCon held in Scottsdale, Arizona, last year.

In an email, Desjardins said the convention carries a special significance this year, as the church is celebrating its 10-year anniversary since its founding.

“Members in attendance will be able to spend time together, in many cases seeing close friends of many years for the first time in person, or reconnecting after long absences,” Desjardins wrote. “It is one of the strongest community-building activities The Satanic Temple holds.”

There are often two misunderstandings about the church, according to Desjardins, including the notion that the congregation is an activist organization with a name intended to simply troll Christians.

“That is not who we are ... Satanism is its own unique religious tradition with its own positive ethics,” Desjardins wrote. “It is not a reaction to or a subset of other religions.”

The other misconception is that the church worships a literal Satan, or the Devil — “a belief that comes along with all of the predictable, Hollywood stereotypes and Satanic Panic hysteria,” he wrote.

“We do not believe in or worship a literal Satan. We do not believe in or worship symbolic ‘evil,’” Desjardins wrote. “We believe that unnecessary suffering is bad, and that things which reduce unnecessary suffering are good.”

For members, Satan is “a central metaphor representing the pursuit of knowledge, personal liberation, and rebellion against arbitrary authority,” Desjardins wrote.

“Our Satan represents a Promethean hero as depicted in the works of writers such as Anatole France and John Milton, bringing the light of knowledge to humanity in defiance of the ultimate tyrant,” he wrote. “Satan is the symbol around which our ethos is built.”

Satanists in the church live in accordance with “Seven Tenets,” according to Desjardins. [Boston.com](#)

BOSTON — About 800 people, including many who donned sinister-themed outfits, gathered in Boston last weekend for the second annual SatanCon – an “impious” gathering of supporters of The Satanic Temple, the subject of the critically-acclaimed documentary, “Hail Satan?” Attendance more than doubled compared to last year, which had around 300 attendees, according to organizers.

Group members say that critics often and incorrectly assume the organization is made up of evil “trolls” whose goal is to worship the devil with blood sacrifices. They say their Satanism is more about free-thinking and being a champion of independence and personal expression.

Headquartered in Salem, Massachusetts, with congregations worldwide, The Satanic Temple follows “Seven Fundamental Tenets” to inform their beliefs:



1. “One should strive to act with compassion and empathy toward all creatures in accordance with reason.”
2. “The struggle for justice is an ongoing and necessary pursuit that should prevail over laws and institutions.”
3. “One’s body is inviolable, subject to one’s own will alone.”
4. “The freedoms of others should be respected, including the freedom to offend. To willfully and

unjustly encroach upon the freedoms of another is to forgo one's own."

5. "Beliefs should conform to one's best scientific understanding of the world. One should take care never to distort scientific facts to fit one's beliefs."
6. "People are fallible. If one makes a mistake, one should do one's best to rectify it and resolve any harm that might have been caused."
7. "Every tenet is a guiding principle designed to inspire nobility in action and thought. The spirit of compassion, wisdom, and justice should always prevail over the written or spoken word."

Unlike the Church of Satan, founded by Anton Szandor LaVey in the 1960s, the Satanic Temple does not claim to be politically neutral, and its congregants regularly meet to engage with political and public affairs that "advance secularism and individual liberty." USA Today

What Do Christians Believe?

The best place to learn about what Christians should believe about Satan is the Bible. It is, after all, God's Word.

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that

they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. Genesis 3:1-7

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "*Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not ^[a]tempt the Lord your God.' " Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship

me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears God’s words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.” John 8:42-47

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 1 Peter 5:8-9

He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Ephesians 6:10-13

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Revelation 12:7-9

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Revelation 20:7-10

The “Con” Game

I mentioned at the beginning of this study that the name “Satan Con” is appropriate for what the devil’s follower are doing. Why? Because it’s a “con game.” It’s what Satan does. The Bible warns us about the “wiles” of the devil. The word means “tricks, schemes.” Satan Con is one of Satan’s cons. The young people who get involved are being conned. However, it’s just one of thousands of cons the devil is playing across the world. We read about his first “con” in Genesis 3. He conned Eve into believing she could be like God. He deceived Eve and Adam followed right along with the con. It’s being going that way ever since.

Don’t fall for Satan’s cons. It won’t take people anywhere but where Satan is going – into the lake of fire.

Believe Jesus Christ, God's unique and only eternal Son. Trust Him for salvation from Satan's cons. Satan introduced "sin" into the world. Don't fall for it. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He did that by dying on the Cross as a payment for our sins. You can be free of Satan's con and receive the gift of eternal life from Christ.

Your choice: Satan's con or Jesus Christ – The Way, The Truth, and the Life.

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