

**SESSION OBJECTIVE: HEAVEN'S GATE**

To learn more about the history and practices of Heaven's Gate.

"Hale-Bopp brings closure to Heaven's Gate ... Our 22 years of classroom here on planet Earth is finally coming to conclusion— 'graduation' from the Human Evolutionary Level. We are happily prepared to leave 'this world' and go with Ti's crew." (Heaven's Gate website, prior to the mass suicide)

History

Heaven's Gate was a pseudo-Christian cult that began in 1974 and ended in 1997. The group was founded by Bonnie Lou Nettles (often referred to as, *Ti* or *Peep*) and Marshall Applewhite (often referred to as, *Do* or *Bo*), who met when Applewhite was hospitalized in a place that Nettles was a nurse. They were "spiritual soul mates" and co-equals in their developing group.

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

In 1973, Ti and Do traveled across the country, participating in various religious activities. It was while they were on the west coast that they became convinced that they were the two witness of Revelation 11. This is where they came up with their surname, "the Two."

THE WALDPART MEETING

The first, real big meeting to bring growth to the group was known as the Waldport Meeting, in Waldport, Oregon. Around 20 people decided to join what was being referred to as, "the UFO group," and were not seen

any longer. Investigations were done, but there was no evidence to lead them anywhere. After the Waldport meeting, several other meetings took place that lured folks in with mysterious flyers. Their numbers grew the most during this timeframe. They were nomadic in nature, usually camping, and consumed by the stars. Their structure was very unique, in that there was little to no manipulation, coercion, or brainwashing happening. It was a very free-spirited group.

THE MEDIA STRIKES

Two the members, Robert Balch and David Taylor, were actually secretly sociologists who had joined the group to determine what was happening inside. Their entrance was shrouded with secrecy, but once in, they determined that the group really wasn't demanding like normal cults. During their time, they took a lot of notes and ended up publishing with Psychology Today in 1975 as a cover piece. It drew a ton of media attention, and from that point, the scrutiny led to a massive downsizing of the group.

HUMAN INDIVIDUAL METAMORPHOSIS

The original goal of this group was known as HIM, or Human Individual Metamorphosis. Applewhite said, "The kingdom of heaven cannot be entered as long as I still have attachments and addictions to the human kingdom, whether it be people, things, careers..." The process was not very clear. There was no manual. There was no real instruction. People were meant to lose the things that they held onto that made them more human.

SEXUAL SUPPRESSION

One of the more difficult aspects of this group was their suppression of sexual desire.