

SPOTTING SACRED COWS



Sacred Cow:

"... a term used to describe something that is considered to be immune from criticism or questioning."

TOOLS AND RULES:

- **FEED TROUGH:** A box or large jar that contains concepts and beliefs that deserve to be questioned in order to uncover Sacred Cows.
- **PADDLE SIGN:** that displays a large card. On one side is a large question mark, on the other side is an ear.
 - ? = Ask me questions
 - **Ear** = "I'm all ears" give me feedback
- **NOTICING HANDOUT** - always available for people to jot down notes.
- **COMPUTER** – Bring your personal computer to research as needed

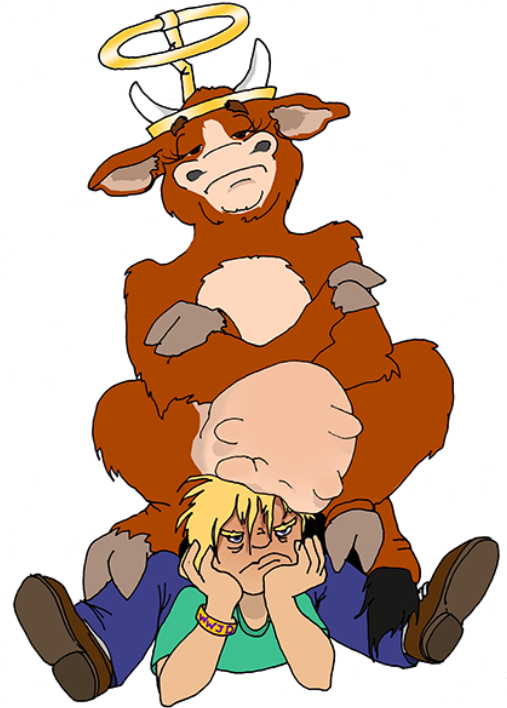
PLAYERS

- **Watchers** learn by watching the interactions
- **Responders** learn by noticing their thoughts and interactions and responding according to how the Seeker is receiving.
- **Seekers** are in charge of their own experience and learn to set boundaries and pace their journey.

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SACRED COWS

- "Their blood is on your hands" (if you don't witness)
- There is no forgiveness if:
 - Suicide
 - Homosexuality
 - Transgender transformation
 - Divorce
 - Not a certain denomination
- You backslide if:
 - You stop going to church
 - Stop reading the Bible
- Love others unconditionally
- Love your enemies means that you do not defend yourself
- Turn the other cheek
- If someone asks for your coat, give them more than what they ask for
- Good works shows the condition of your heart
- If you do not tithe, you are sinning against God
- If you sow into bad soil, you lose the blessing that comes with tithing
- We must suffer
- We are not to be prideful of anything good in us.
- Trials are God testing our faith
- When hard times come, it's a demonic attack
- When blessings come, it's God's endorsement of who I am



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- My faith is weak because:
 - I don't speak in tongues
 - I don't prophesy
 - I don't heal
 - I don't witness
 - I don't tithe
 - I don't like being around people
 - I don't have a title
 - I don't have a ministry
 - I seek medical care
 - I ask for help
- Submission in marriage
- I have a right to call out people by name who are "dangerous" towards leading others astray
- I have to use the right words when praying, such as:
 - according to your riches in glory by Christ Jesus
 - Father God, I pray ...
 - In His name, amen ... (if I don't open and close with these words, then my prayers are not effective)
- I am in rebellion if:
 - I question my leader
 - I don't go to all the church services
 - I don't participate in the current fundraiser
- If I don't want to worship the way others do, then I have a rebellious spirit
- if you don't get Baptised, you aren't fully saved
- If you are Baptised with the words, "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" it isn't real. It has to be in the "Name of Jesus"
- "Don't touch my anointed"



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RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

- **Existence of God** - Debates about whether God exists and the nature of God.
- **Nature of the Afterlife** - Different beliefs about heaven, hell, reincarnation, or nothingness after death.
- **Scriptural Authority** - The validity and interpretation of sacred texts like the Bible, Quran, or Vedas.
- **Role of Jesus Christ** - Discussions about whether Jesus is divine, a prophet, or a historical figure only.
- **Salvation** - Different views on how one attains salvation: faith, works, grace, or a combination.
- **Religious Pluralism** - Whether multiple religions can coexist as valid paths to truth.
- **Miracles** - The belief in miracles and their significance in faith.
- **Role of Women** - Different perspectives on women's roles within religious practices and leadership.
- **Predestination vs. Free Will** - The debate over whether our lives are predetermined or if we have free will.
- **Creation vs. Evolution** - Conflicts between scientific explanations for the origins of life and religious creation stories.
- **Moral Absolutes** - The existence of absolute moral truths versus relative morality.
- **Faith and Reason** - The relationship between faith and scientific reasoning or evidence.
- **End Times Prophecies** - Various interpretations of when and how the world will end.
- **Religious Rituals** - The importance and meaning of rituals in worship.
- **Intercessory Prayer** - The effectiveness and purpose of praying for others.
- **Reincarnation** - Beliefs about rebirth and its implications for morality and life choices.
- **Suffering and Evil** - Theodicy: why suffering exists if a benevolent God does.

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- **Ritual Sacrifice** - The significance and morality of offerings in various faiths.
- **Communion and Eucharist** - Beliefs about the significance of communion in different denominations.
- **Holy War vs. Peaceful Coexistence** - Different views on violence in the name of religion versus peaceful practices.
- **Divine Revelation** - How and if God communicates with humanity today.
- **Secularism** - The role of religion in government and public life versus secular governance.
- **Sin and Forgiveness** - Definitions of sin and the process of seeking forgiveness.
- **Charisma and Prophecy** - The legitimacy of modern-day prophets and charismatic leaders.
- **Faith-Based Activism** - The role of religion in social justice movements and activism.
- **The Infallibility of Sacred Texts** - Belief that religious scriptures are without error.
- **Original Sin** - The idea that humanity is inherently sinful due to the fall of Adam and Eve.
- **Divine Right of Kings** - The belief that monarchs derive their authority from God.
- **Gender Roles** - The notion that men and women have predetermined roles in society and religion.
- **Absolute Morality** - The belief that there are universal moral truths applicable to all people.
- **Exclusivity of Salvation** - The idea that only followers of a particular faith can attain salvation.
- **The Sanctity of Life** - The belief that all human life is sacred and must be protected.
- **Faith Over Reason** - The idea that faith is superior to rational thought and evidence.
- **The Role of Rituals** - The belief that rituals are essential for spiritual growth and connection to the divine.
- **Intercessory Prayer** - The conviction that praying for others can bring about divine intervention.

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- **Suffering as a Test of Faith** - The belief that suffering is a way to strengthen one's faith.
- **The Importance of Tradition** - The idea that long-held traditions should be preserved and followed without question.
- **Heaven and Hell as Literal Places** - The belief in physical locations for eternal reward or punishment.
- **The Power of Blessings** - The conviction that blessings from religious leaders or texts can influence life circumstances.
- **Religious Exclusivism** - The belief that one's own religion is the only true faith.
- **Predestination** - The idea that God has already determined who will be saved or damned.
- **The Immutability of God's Will** - The belief that God's will does not change over time or circumstance.
- **Miracles as Evidence of Faith** - The conviction that miracles occur as proof of divine presence and intervention.
- **The Authority of Clergy** - The belief that religious leaders have a special connection to the divine and should be followed unquestioningly.
- **Moral Superiority of Religious Followers** - The idea that those who adhere to a religion are morally superior to non-believers.
- **Rejection of Science in Favor of Faith** - The belief that scientific explanations contradict faith and should be dismissed.
- **Racial or Ethnic Superiority** - The idea that certain races or ethnicities are favored by the divine.
- **The Necessity of Tithing** - The belief that giving a portion of income to the church is mandatory for spiritual health.
- **Purity Laws and Practices** - The conviction that specific dietary or behavioral laws must be followed for spiritual purity.
- **The Importance of Community Worship** - The belief that gathering for worship is essential for spiritual growth and connection.
- These beliefs are often deeply ingrained in cultural and religious identities, making them sensitive topics for discussion.

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- Charismatic churches have distinctive beliefs that set them apart from other Christian denominations. Here are 25 beliefs often found in charismatic congregations:
- **Baptism in the Holy Spirit:** A separate experience from salvation, marked by receiving spiritual gifts.
- **Spiritual Gifts:** Emphasis on the active presence of spiritual gifts such as prophecy, healing, and speaking in tongues.
- **Speaking in Tongues:** Considered a sign of baptism in the Holy Spirit and a form of personal prayer.
- **Divine Healing:** Strong belief in God's power to heal physical and emotional ailments through prayer and faith.
- **Laying on of Hands:** Practice of laying hands on individuals for healing, blessing, or impartation of spiritual gifts.
- **Prophetic Ministry:** Expectation of modern-day prophets who receive and share messages from God.
- **Worship Style:** Vibrant and expressive worship, often involving music, dancing, and clapping.
- **Personal Relationship with God:** Emphasis on a direct, personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- **Signs and Wonders:** Belief that miraculous signs should accompany the preaching of the gospel.
- **Faith and Prosperity:** Teachings that emphasize faith as a means to achieve success and financial prosperity.
- **Active Spiritual Warfare:** Belief in engaging in spiritual battles against demonic forces.
- **Expectation of God's Presence:** Belief that God's presence can be tangibly felt during services.
- **Community and Fellowship:** Strong focus on building community among believers through small groups and gatherings.
- **Evangelism and Outreach:** Commitment to sharing the gospel actively and engaging in missions.
- **Restoration Theology:** Belief in the restoration of the church to its original power and purpose as seen in the New Testament.

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- **Hope and Joy:** Emphasis on living a life filled with hope and joy, reflecting God's goodness.
- **Holiness and Righteousness:** Call for believers to live a holy life, empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- **Intercessory Prayer:** Focus on the power of prayer for interceding on behalf of others.
- **Diverse Worship Expressions:** Acceptance of various forms of worship, including spontaneous expressions.
- **Dynamic Preaching:** Preference for passionate and engaging preaching styles that encourage participation.
- **End Times Beliefs:** Various interpretations of eschatology that often include an expectation of revival before Christ's return.
- **Inclusivity of Spiritual Practices:** Acceptance of diverse practices such as prophetic arts, dance, and creative expressions in worship.
- **Training for Ministry:** Strong belief in equipping laypeople for ministry and leadership roles within the church.
- **Celebration of Life Events:** Emphasis on celebrating life milestones through church involvement (weddings, dedications).
- **Revelation Knowledge:** Belief that God still reveals knowledge to believers today through dreams, visions, and insights.
- These beliefs contribute to the vibrant culture found within charismatic churches, focusing on the active work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.

SPOTTING SACRED COWS

CHEWING THE CUD:

- How did this particular sacred cow prevent or block the free flow of life?
- How do you know you've found truth?
- What determines what is truth?

MILKING THE COW:

- How has challenging this belief affected you?
- What have you learned from this discussion?
- Have you noticed a change in “energy” regarding this belief?

WHAT'S UNDER THE COW PIE?

- "Don't cast your pearls before swine."