

Another Twisted Faith

Leah Remini investigates The Jehovah's Witnesses

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A+E NETWORKS® presents *Twisted Faith*, its first Primetime programming event across its global flagship channel CRIME+INVESTIGATION (DStv Channel 170) and [streaming live on DStv Now](#).

This first-ever global programming event created for CRIME+INVESTIGATION channels focuses on cults and twisted faith around the world. The event will air in over 100 territories around the world including in the U.S., Canada, the UK, Poland, South Africa, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Southeast Asia.

As part of this 7 day block, and following on the heels of the Emmy Award-winning series, *Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath*, is new special *Leah Remini: The Jehovah's Witnesses*, from Sunday 18 November at 18:20, featuring Leah Remini and Mike Rinder as they shine a light on the Jehovah's Witnesses, giving voice to former members who share their stories of trauma and survival.

We chatted to Leah Remini to get some insight into her work and find out what viewers can expect from the series. Read all about the revealing interview:

Many people have a perception that Jehovah's Witnesses are just inconvenient door-knockers and may be surprised to learn that it is a cult rather than a religion. What is the difference?

Leah Remini said that it's a difficult subject, because they claim to be Christian, but they have a governing body, which consists of men in upstate New York which dictates what Jehovah's Witnesses should and shouldn't do as good Christians. She added that she struggles to understand how people can shun their own children if they don't believe in Jehovah and want to have fun, or fall in love with someone who isn't a Jehovah's Witness. People are shunned for accepting a life-saving blood transfusion for themselves or their children, they don't celebrate holidays, they look down on those reporting a crime which threatens the organization. They discourage people from getting an education, believe that Armageddon is coming and only they will be saved – in that way it's similar to Scientology – these are ways to keep people under control of the governing body. Leah Remini said that she can't subscribe to this pain and the pain that is caused to children being shunned by their own parents.

How do The Jehovah's Witnesses keep people from seeing that it is the same as a cult like Scientology, and how did the show come about?

Leah Remini said that The Jehovah's Witnesses, like Scientology, teaches that going on the internet and reading books that are not the ones they are being told to read are all lies and evil. They are similar in that they dictate what members should and shouldn't be doing. It was ex

Jehovah's Witnesses who approached Leah Remini to do the show. It was not something that she and Mike Rinder thought of doing – they were reached out to by former members and they felt they had a responsibility being asked to tell their story. She added that they only know what they have been told and is not speaking about what she doesn't know but she is allowed to comment on abusive practices that she feels are very damaging.

What keeps on motivating you to do good, despite knowing that you can't possibly reach or save everyone?

Leah Remini said that growing up in Scientology, they are taught and believed that they were saving the world. People who join Scientology and Jehovah's Witnesses are good people who want to do good, but when you are indoctrinated and brainwashed, and don't look outside of what is being told to you, you're living in a bubble. She added that in her heart she wants to help people, and she feels that she is on the right path, moving away from Scientology and extremist thinking and that she's doing her part in making the world a better place.

Is there a message from Leah Remini for viewers in South Africa?

She said that she is hoping for support, and that people will start from Season 1. She also added that she hopes that Scientology doesn't go to other countries trying to recruit people once they feel that the heat is getting too much in the US and they find that they are not getting a lot of members. She encourages people to start watching the series from the beginning, go onto the internet, look at Scientology, do research and read books and don't let your children get involved.

by Alice da Silva

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