

# **A BIBLICAL LOOK AT THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT**

## ***BACKGROUND INFO***

**Q: What is the New Age movement? Who are some of the leaders & what are some of the related groups?**

**A:** Here is a modified definition of the New Age Movement from Walter Martin's book "The New Age Cult":

*A loose organization of people, who believe the world has entered (or will soon enter) the Aquarian Age when peace on earth and one-world government will rule. They see themselves as advanced in consciousness, rejecting Judeo-Christian values and the Bible in favor of Eastern philosophies and religion. Among them may be found environmentalists, nuclear freeze proponents, Marxist-socialist utopians, mind control advocates, ESP cultists, spirits, witchcraft practitioners, and others using magical rites.*

Some related groups include Hare Krishna, Scientology, EST, Lifespring, Eckaner, Self-Realization Fellowship, New Thought, Christian Science, Unity School of Christianity, Rosicrucianism, Science of Mind, Religious Science, Theosophical Society (occult group founded by Madame Helena Blavatsky in late 1800s), Green parties, Greenpeace, Planetary Citizens, Unity-in-Diversity Council, Windstar Foundation, Tara Center, Human Potential movement.

Other people involved in some way with the New Age movement:

- ◆ Marilyn Ferguson (wrote "The Aquarian Conspiracy" in 1980, the unofficial bible of the New Age movement)
- ◆ Napoleon Hill (wrote "Think and Grow Rich"); Carl Sagan
- ◆ Gurus such as Alice Bailey, Benjamin Creme, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Elizabeth Clare Prophet (Church Universal & Triumphant)
- ◆ Lou Tice; Matthew Fox
- ◆ Shirley MacLaine, Merv Griffin, Linda Evans, John Denver, Phalicia Rashad, Sharon Giles, Joyce DeWitt, Marsha Mason, Helen Reddy, Tina Turner, Lisa Bonet, Ted Turner, Burt Reynolds, Richard Chamberlain, Shelley Fabares, Mike Farrell

Movies & TV shows with new age present in some form:

- ◆ The Omen, ALF, ET, Saturday am cartoons, Star Wars, Rosemary's Baby, Exorcist, 2001, Cocoon, Angel Heart, Last Temptation of Christ, Indiana Jones & the Temple of Doom, Dark Crystal

Courses/seminars include: "A Course in Miracles"

**Q: Is the New Age "new"?**

**A:** No. It's roots go back to the ancient religion of Hinduism; other influences include Buddhism, Occultism & Paganism.

**Q: What are some basic teachings of the New Age movement?**

**A:** ◆ Pantheism (creation is God) vs Monotheism (God is distinct from creation)

◆ Monistic pantheism (all is one, all is god)

◆ We are "gods"

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION (cont.)**

◆ Re: God & Religion; 4 premises -

1) All is one

2) We are all one

3) All is god

4) We are god

◆ Gnosis (secret knowledge) - our "higher self" can be learned via meditation, yoga, chanting, mind expanding drugs, etc.

◆ Glorification of man; man not sinful or evil

◆ Naturalism ("gods" work within universal laws) vs Supernaturalism (God overrides/outside natural laws)

◆ Monistic God (both good & evil)

◆ Jesus is only one of many enlightened masters (we may share the "christ consciousness" or "cosmic christ spirit")

- ◆ All religions are essentially one (all lead to cosmic unity; syncretism)
- ◆ Moral relativism (there are NO moral absolutes)
- ◆ Jesus's sacrifice on cross meaningless
- ◆ Satan is "God of Light", "God of Good"
- ◆ Universal mind; harmonic convergence
- ◆ Nirvana (great world soul)
- ◆ Evolution
- ◆ Whatever the human mind can believe, it can achieve
- ◆ Collective unconscious
- ◆ Eastern meditation; mantras (hindu principle of linking the human mind with the Universal mind)
- ◆ Altered states of consciousness
- ◆ Create reality with our minds; universal mind over matter (eg SRI, Parapsychology, Teilhard)
- ◆ Silva method: whatever we can visualize in the mind, can be brought into existence in the physical world by our mental power (visualization)
- ◆ Karma (whatever good or bad a person does will return to him in exact proportion in another existence)
- ◆ Reincarnation (note: final goal is to merge with the cosmos or "god" and end the repeated birth-death-rebirth process)
- ◆ Age of Aquarius (a glorious upcoming age where Lord Maitreya -- an incarnation of Buddha will further enlighten the world)
- ◆ "Avatars" - revealers of truth (e.g., Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Zoroaster, Moses, Krishna)
- ◆ spirit guides/entities (aka light bearers, spirits of light, inner guides, psychic guides, spirit counselors, psychic advisors, inner teachers, wise ones)
- ◆ masters; ancient masters; disembodied spirits (e.g., Seth, Ramatha)
  - Basic messages of these channeled entities:
    - Death is unreal
    - All is One in the synergy of death
    - We are divine beings, but have chosen to live as physical humans
    - In this life there are no victims, only opportunities
    - We can control reality through the powers of the Universal Mind
- ◆ Channeling; automatic writing; dictated poetry, art, writing; physical channeling (table tipping, levitation, materialization, movement of objects)

- ◆ "Paradigm Shift"

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION (cont.)**

- ◆ Extreme environmentalism (eg "Deep Ecology" -- I am the earth, all life has equal value, humans have no superior rights over any other life); Mother Earth god (Gaia; also called Diana and other names) (earth is a conscious living entity with a mind than in turn participates in some universal/cosmic mind)
- ◆ Witchcraft (Wicca)
- ◆ Shamans (aka witch doctors, medicine man, sorcerers, wizards) "circle of life"
- ◆ Native American wisdom
- ◆ Astrology; horoscopes
- ◆ Holistic health & healing (eg, spiritual energy -- life force -- flows from universe into living beings, includes "Chi", "Ki", "ying & Yang"; reflexology, iridology, reading auras, aroma therapy, color therapy, yoga, rolfing, etc.)
- ◆ pro- secular humanism

**Q: What are some common New Age techniques, products & gadgets?**

- A:**
- ◆ Meditation, self-hypnosis, focusing, centering, guided imagery, visualization, TM, yoga, bio-feedback, dianetics, ouija boards
  - ◆ herbal medicine, holistic health
  - ◆ crystals, pyramid power, color therapy, singing tibetan bowls, statues, incense, tarot cards, charms, pendants, greeting cards, talismans, fortune telling devices, astrology charts, software, rebirthing tanks, colonic cleaners, rebirthing tanks, deep massage
  - ◆ music, books, magazines
  - ◆ psychics

**Q: What are the some of the Goals & Strategies of the New Age movement?**

- A:** Politics: planetary transformation, characterized by mass enlightenment and social evolution; central global power (i.e., one world government); extreme environmentalism; ZPG; sexual freedom; abortion;

"deep ecology"; world peace; nuclear disarmament; anti-capitalism; androgyny (no male vs female distinctions); feminism.

Education: use textbooks, programs, etc. to promote New Age teachings & techniques such as guided imagery, values clarification, globalism, environmentalism, eastern meditation, yoga, etc. Use management training programs, creative imagination workshops, super learning programs, etc.

Social: penetrate groups such as Sierra Club, Amnesty International, ZPG, churches, etc.; build networks via bookstores, groups, etc.

Psychology: Jung's "collective unconscious" theory

**Q: Is there a country where New Age thinking has been very dominant?**

**A:** Yes, new age and related hindu thinking has dominated the country of India for mann years. A look at the country will demonstrate the fate of any country that allows new age/hindu thinking to become dominant.

### **ISSUE: MAN IS GOD**

Is the teaching that man is a god (or can become a god) biblical? **NO!**

Biblical teachings:

- 1) Lie of Satan that we can be a god (Gen 3:4; Mt 4:10; Duet 6:13)
- 2) Men's wisdom is foolishness (I Cor 3:18-21)
- 3) Our hearts are wicked; out of the heart comes much evil; we have an evil, sinful nature; and ALL of us have sinned (Jer 17:9; Mt 15:19; Rm 7:19, 21-24; Rm 3:23)
- 4) If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves (I Jn 1:8,10)
- 5) We should worship the Creator, not the creation (Rm 1:25)

## **ISSUE: JESUS MERELY ONE "WAY" AMONG MANY**

Is Jesus merely one way among many? **NO!**

Biblical teachings:

- 1) Jesus is the **ONLY** way of salvation (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12)
- 2) There is one God and one mediator between man and God (I Tim 2:5,6)
- 3) Every knee will someday bow before Jesus (Phil 2:5-11)
- 4) There is **ONE** God, **ONE** Lord, Jesus Christ (I Cor 8:6)
- 5) Jesus is God (Jn 1:1-18; 10:30; other scriptures)
- 6) Jesus died on the cross as an atonement for our sins (Jn 3:16; Mt 1:18-25, 20:28; Gal 4:4-5; Phil 2:5-11; I Cor 15:2-8; II Cor 5:21; Heb 4:14-16; I Jn 2:1-2; Rm 4:25, 5:18-19; Isaiah 53: 5,6,10).

## **ISSUE: REINCARNATION**

Is reincarnation biblical? **NO!**

Biblical teachings:

- 1) (Heb 9:27) we die once, then comes judgement
- 2) (II Cor 5:8) absent from the body, present with the Lord
- 3) (Lk 23:43) today you will be with me in paradise

The bible teaches **RESURRECTION**, not **REINCARNATION**

## **ISSUE: KARMA**

Is the teaching of Karma biblical? **NO!**

The bible does teach you "reap what you sow", but not in perfect proportion, AND with exceptions (born-again Christians will NOT pay the penalty for our own sins!).

### **ISSUE: MORAL RELATIVISM VS MORAL ABSOLUTES**

is everything relative (i.e, grey area; dependent on circumstances) or are these absolutes?? The Bible teaches that there are absolutes. Here are some Biblical principles:

- 1) God's Word abides *forever* (I Pet 1:23-25)
- 2) God's Word is eternal and is settled forever in heaven (Ps 119:89)
- 3) God's Word was established to last forever (Ps 119:152)
- 4) Word of God stands forever (Is 40:8)
- 5) God's Word is TRUTH (Jn 17:17)
- 6) The Bible is the inspired Word of God (II Pet 1:20-21; I Cor 2:13; II Tim 3:16), and has great value to us as we learn and apply it (Heb 4:12; II Tim 3:16-17; Josh 1:7-8; Jm 1:22-25; Lk 6:46-49, 8:19-21, 11:28).
- 7) Jesus's teaching is the source of TRUTH (Jn 8:31-32)
- 8) Jesus said that He was the way, the TRUTH, the life (Jn 14:6)
- 9) Truth came through Jesus (Jn 1:17); Jesus came full of truth (Jn 1:14); Truth is in Jesus (Eph 4:21)
- 10) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8)



## **ISSUE: ENVIRONMENTALISM**

Here are some Biblical principles:

- 1) God has authority over the world, and the earth is His (Gen 1:1; Ps 24:1-2, 50:10-11, 89:11; Mk 4:37-41).
- 2) God has given to man delegated authority over the earth (Gen 1:28, 9:1-3).
- 3) Man is more important than animals/nature (Mt 6:26, 12:9-14; Lk 12:24); man is created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-7).
- 4) We should worship the Creator, not the creation (Romans 1).
- 5) Man should respect and be good stewards of God's creation:
  - ◆ God's creation is good (Gen 1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31)
  - ◆ We should be kind to animals, such as giving them rest (Ex 20:8-11, 23:10-12; Lv 25:5-7); not killing unnecessarily (Lv 22:28; Ex 34:26; Dt 22:6-7); and returning strays to their owners (Ex 23:4-5; Dt 22:1-4).

## **ISSUE: WITCHCRAFT/SORCERY/MEDIUMS/OCCULT**

Some related biblical teachings:

- 1) The Bible repeatedly condemns all of these and related practices (Ex 22:18; Lev 19:26,31, 20:6, 27; Deut 13:1-5, 18:9-14; I Sam 28:7-20; 2 Kings 17:17, 21:6, 23:24; I Chron 10:13; Is 8:19-20; Gal 5:20)

2) False christs, prophets and teachers are predicted and warned against; Satan himself is a great deceiver (Mt 24:24; Lk 21:8; 2 Cor 11:4, 13-14; I Tim 4:1; 2 Pet 2:1-3)

### **ISSUE: SECULAR HUMANISM**

Secular humanism has invaded the public school system and other spheres of our culture. Secular humanism is an ideology which puts man at the center of the universe. Man's wisdom and man's works are the standard by which everything is judged. Secular humanism does not recognize the authority of God, nor does it respect the truth of God's Word.

Some related biblical teachings:

- 1) God is everlasting; Creator; has understanding beyond our reasoning (Is 40:28).
- 2) God's ways and thoughts are far superior to man's (Is 55:8-9).
- 3) God is source of wisdom and knowledge (Dan 2:20-21).
- 4) People are destroyed from lack of knowledge of God (Hosea 4:6).
- 5) Wisdom of the world is foolishness in God's sight (I Cor 3:19).
- 6) Man's heart is deceitful (Jer 17:9).
- 7) We should not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rm 12:2).
- 8) Man should be humble, not proud (Phil 2:5-7; Jm 4:6).

### **PARTIAL LIST OF RESOURCES CONSULTED**

Chandler, Russell. Understanding the New Age, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993.

Martin, Walter. The New Age Cult, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 1989.

Hunt, Dave & McMahon, T.A. The New Spirituality, Eugene, Or: Harvest House Publishers, 1988.

Marrs, Texe. Dark Secrets of the New Age, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1987.