

The New Age Movement

1. What is the New Age Movement?

A. - The New Age movement has many sub-divisions, but it is generally a collection of Eastern-influenced metaphysical thought systems, a conglomeration of theologies, hopes, and expectations held together with an eclectic teaching of salvation, of "correct thinking," and "correct knowledge." It is a theology of "feel-goodism," "universal tolerance," and "moral relativism."

1. - In the N.A.M. Man is central. He is viewed as divine, as co-creator, as the hope for future peace and harmony. A representative quote might be: "I am affected only by my thoughts. It needs but this to let salvation come to all the world. For in this single thought is everyone released at last from fear." (A course in Miracles, The Foundation for Inner Peace, Huntington Station, N.Y. Lesson 228, p. 461.)

Unfortunately for the N.A.M. the fear they want to be released from might very well be the fear of damnation, of conviction of sin, and it is even, sometimes, fear of Christianity and Christians. Though the N.A.M. is tolerant of almost any theological position, it is opposed to the "narrow-mindedness" of Christianity that teaches Jesus is the only way and that there are moral absolutes.

B. - The N.A.M. is difficult to define because "there is no hierarchy, dogma, doctrine, collection plate, or membership." It is a collection, an assortment of different theologies with the common threads of toleration and divergence weaving through its tapestry of "universal truth."

C. - The term "New Age" refers to the "Aquarian Age" which, according to New Age followers, is dawning. It is supposed to bring in peace and enlightenment and reunite man with God. Man is presently considered separated from God not because of sin (Isaiah 59:2), but because of lack of understanding and knowledge concerning the true nature of God and reality.

2. The New Age Movement is a religious system with two basic beliefs: Evolutionary Godhood and Global Unity.

A. - What is Evolutionary Godhood?

1. - It is the next step in evolution. It will not be physical, but spiritual:

a. - For the most part, the N.A.M. espouses evolution, both of body and spirit. Man is developing and will soon leap forward into new spiritual horizons. Many New Age practices are designed to push one ahead into that horizon. Some of them are astral projection which is training your soul to leave your body and travel around; contacting spirits so they may speak through you or guide you; using crystals to purify your body's and mind's energy systems; visualization where you use mental imagery to imagine yourself as an animal, in the presence of a divine being, or being healed of sickness, etc.

2. - Evolutionary Godhood also means that mankind will soon see itself as god, as the "Christ principle."

a. - The N.A.M. teaches that Man's basic nature is good and divine. This opposes God's Word which says...

i. - that we are sinners: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12, NIV).

ii. - and that our nature is corrupt: "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath" (Eph. 2:3, NIV).

b. - It teaches that since man is divine by nature, he then has divine qualities.

i. - This is an important part of N.A.M. thinking. Because the average New Ager believes himself to be divine, he can then create his own reality. If, for example, a person believes that reincarnation is true, that's fine because that is his reality. If someone he knows doesn't believe in it, that is alright too because that is someone else's reality. They can each have a reality for themselves that "follows a different path."

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each have a reality for themselves that follows a different path.

c. - In contrast to this, the Bible says that God alone is the creator: "This is what the LORD says -- your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself" (Isa. 44:24, NIV).

d. - The New Ager who believes in his own divinity and ability to create usurps the authority and position of God. He also is still listening to the lie of the devil who spoke to Eve and said she would be like God (Gen. 3:5).

3. - Reincarnation

a. - Though not all New Agers adhere to reincarnation, most believe in some form or another. And, many believe the Bible was changed to remove any verses that might have taught reincarnation. But this accusation only shows the limitation of their knowledge. The Bible never had any references to reincarnation.

b. - Reincarnation opposes the Word of God which says that it is appointed for man to die once, and after this comes judgment (Heb. 9:27).

B. - The second major element of the New Age Movement is Global Unity which consists of three major divisions: Man with Man; Man with Nature; and Man with God.

1. - Man with man.

a. - The N.A.M teaches that we will all learn our proper divine relationship with one another and achieve harmony and mutual love and acceptance through the realization and acceptance of this divine proper knowledge.

i. - Within this hoped harmony is economic unity. The average New Ager is looking for a single world leader who, with New Age principles, will guide the world into a single harmonious economic whole.

ii. - It is also hoped that this leader will unite the world into a spiritual unity; that is, a one world religion.

b. - The New Age hope is reminiscent of the Scriptures that speak of the coming Antichrist:

i. - 2 Thess. 2:3-4, "Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." See also Rev. 13:17,14:9,11; 16:2; 19:20.

2. - Man with nature

a. - Since the N.A.M. says that God is all, and all is God, then nature is also part of God. Man must then get in tune with nature and learn to nurture it and be nurtured by it. In this, all people can unite.

b. - American Indian philosophies are popular among New Agers because they focus on the earth, on nature, and man's relationship to them.

c. - New Age philosophy generally seeks to merge with those philosophies that put man and nature on an equal level. We are no more or less important or different than our cousin the animal, bird, or fish. We must live in harmony with them, understand them, and learn from them, is the general philosophy of the New Age.

i. - This is opposed to the Scriptural teaching of man's superiority over animals (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:19). This does not mean that Man must abuse what he is over, but Man is given the responsibility of caring for and being stewards of God's creation (Gen. 2:15). God will hold Christians responsible for the stewardship that has been entrusted to them.

d. - The New Agers have a name for the earth. It is Gaia. Gaia is to be revered and respected. Some New Agers even worship the earth and nature.

i. - This opposes the Scripture that says we are not to have any other Gods before God (Ex. 20:3).

3. - Man with God

- Since the N.A.M. teaches that man is divine, he must, all people, even those who have never met with the Holy Spirit

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a. - Since the N.A.M. teaches that man is divine by nature, all people, once they see themselves as such, will be helped in their unity of purpose, love, and development. The goal is to fully realize our own goodness. It is obvious that this contradicts Scriptures, c.f., Rom. 3:10-12: "As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.'"

C. - Additional beliefs of the N.A.M. view of God are:

1. - He (it) is impersonal, omnipresent, and benevolent -- therefore he (it) won't condemn anyone.

a. - The New Age god is impersonal. An impersonal God will not reveal himself nor will he have specific requirements as to morality, belief, and behavior. This is why reincarnation appeals so much to them. With it, there is no judgment, there is a second chance, a third chance, and fourth, etc.

b. - It should be noted that because the New Ager seeks to elevate himself to godhood, he must lower the majesty and personhood of the true God. In other words, the universe isn't big enough for one true God, but it is big enough for a bunch of little ones.

2. - There are no moral absolutes in the New Age. Therefore, they claim to have a spiritual tolerance for all "truth systems." They call this "harmonization."

a. - There is an obvious problem here. To say that there are no moral absolutes is an absolute in itself which is self contradictory. Also, if morality is relative, then stealing may be right sometimes, along with lying, adultery, cheating, etc. Living in a world of moral relativism would not bring a promising future.

b. - It would follow that if reality is relative and truth is too, then driving a car would be difficult. After all, if one New Ager thinks the light is red and another thinks its green, when they collide, their different realities will come crashing down on them. That is something most interesting about New Agers, they don't live what they believe. That is because in reality, New Age thinking doesn't work.

c. - The New Age movement does espouse honesty, integrity, love, peace, etc. It just wants to do it without the true God. It wants to do it not on His terms, but on its own.

3. What the New Age Movement does.

A. - It is a sponge that attempts to absorb all religions, cultures, and governments.

B. - It seeks to unify all systems into one spiritual, socio-economic unity.

C. - It uses various means to have mystical experiences with God and/or nature and/or self. Some of the methods were described in Omni Magazine (How to Have a Mystical Experience. Dec. 1988, p. 137-145) as imagining, where you are told to imagine your own reality; transcendence, going beyond the limits of time; sleep deprivation, with the purpose of inducing a mystical experience; focusing, "to experience all of reality as unified and not as a collection of disparate objects"; avoidance, where communication with the outside world is stopped in order to reinterpret the world without its influence on you; identification, "To trade places mentally with a dog or a cat, canary, or animal in the zoo"; reflection, an exercise designed to help you to view the year to come, differently; and star-gazing, "to induce a sense of objectivity about your life and a feeling of connectedness to the rest of cosmos."

4. What the New Age Movement does not do.

A. - It does not teach that man is a sinner - Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:3.

B. - It does not teach that man is dependent upon God for all things - Isaiah 43:7; James 1:17.

C. - It does not teach that punishment is eternal - Rev. 14:11.

D. - It does not teach that the wages of sin is eternal separation from God - Rom. 6:23; Isaiah 59:2.

E. - It does not teach that Jesus is the only way to God - Matt. 11:27; John 14:6.

F. - It does not accept Christianity as the truth - 2 Tim. 3:16.

5. New Age Terminology

A. - According to the Bible, Man is the image-bearing of God (Gen. 1:26) and made in the image of God.

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A. - According to the Bible, man is the image bearer of God (Gen. 1:26), and as such, is a creature of speech.

Remember, God said, "...Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3).

B. - In the New Age, words are very important. In fact, the New Age has some of its own special words. Some of them are: Holistic, holographic, synergistic, unity, oneness, harmony, at-one-ment, transformation, personal growth, human potential, awakening, networking, energy, and consciousness. These words are prevalent in New Age conversations and writings.

C. - In fact, if you were to go to a New Age Bookstore and read the titles or their books, you would see a disproportionate amount of them containing the word "self."

6. The New Age Interpretation of Christianity

A. - God is not a personal heavenly Father but an impersonal force.

B. - God is all and all is God. God is not the "wholly other" creator of all, but part of all that exists.

C. - There is nothing that is not God. (This is pantheism.)

D. - There is no sin, only incorrect understanding of truth. Knowledge is what saves, not Jesus.

E. - Hell is not a place but an experience here on Earth; it is a state of mind.

F. - Jesus was just one of many way showers of divine truth. He exemplified the Christ consciousness probably better than anyone else.

G. - Christ is a consciousness, a form of the higher self. It is possessed by all because everyone is divine. "It is not Christ that can be crucified" (Miracles, Lesson 303, p. 441).

H. - "A miracle is a correction...It merely looks on devastation, and reminds the mind that what it sees is false. It undoes error" (Miracles, p. 164). A miracle to a New Ager is not God's intervention into this world to perform His will but the realization of the true reality that God is all and that you are God.

7. The New Age View of Man

A. - Since all is God, and man is part of all, then man is God. This is pantheism.

1. - This is an eastern mystical belief system that has crept into mainstream America.

2. - God is not part of creation. He is separate from it and made it (Isaiah 44:24).

3. - Man is not God, he is a creation (Gen. 1:26).

B. - Therefore, man is good by nature.

1. - Man is not good by nature (Eph. 2:3).

C. - Man has infinite potential.

1. - This arrogant conclusion based upon false concepts of grandiose self worth, is a deceptive, self-satisfying indulgence into pride. As Satan wanted to be like God (Isaiah 14:12-17) and encouraged Adam and Eve to be like God also (Gen. 3:1-5), the New Ager listens to the echo of that Edenic lie and yields to it willingly.

D. - Man is one with the universe.

1. - Again the difference between man and creation is blurred. Man is made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26). The universe is not. Man is different than creation.

8. The New Age View of Salvation

A. - Salvation in the N.A.M. means to be in tune with the divine consciousness.

1. - In tune means to be in harmony with reality and whatever is perceived to be true.

B. - Since the N.A.M. doesn't acknowledge sin or sinfulness, there is no need for a redeemer like Jesus. Salvation, to them, is simply the realization of our divine nature. "I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.

Salvation of the world depends on me!" (Miracles, Lesson 306, p. 386). Such arrogance is not to be condoned.

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salvation of the world depends on me (miracles, Lesson 206, p. 380). Such arrogance is mind-boggling.

C. - It is a form of knowledge, of achieving correct thought. Therefore we need to be saved from ignorance, not sin.

D. - Salvation, in the New Age sense, is self achieved through understanding your natural godlikeness and goodness, combined with proper knowledge.

As you can see, the New Age Movement is not a biblical teaching by any means. It is a false religious system authored by the evil one. It contradicts Christianity in almost all of its main tenants. It is to be avoided, to be guarded against, and to be destroyed. And so it will on that glorious day when the Lord Jesus returns

A Biblical Responses to the New Age Movement

God is personal. If God were impersonal, then the following qualities could not be His.

God speaks and has a self given name: "I AM" (Exodus 3:14).

God is long suffering, (Psalm 86:15; 2 Peter 3:15).

God is forgiving (Daniel 9:9; Ephesians 1:7; Psalm 86:5).

God hates sin (Psalm 5:5-6; Habakkuk 1:13).

Man is not divine, but a sinner (Romans 3:23).

He is deceitful and desperately sick (Jer. 17:9).

He is full of evil (Mark 7:21-23).

He loves darkness rather than light (John 3:19).

He is unrighteous, does not understand, does not seek for God (Rom. 3:10-12).

He is helpless and ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

He is dead in his trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).

He is by nature a child of wrath (Eph. 2:3).

He cannot understand spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14).

Salvation is not correct thought, but deliverance from the consequence of our sin (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Salvation is God's deliverance from damnation (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 1:18; 2:5; 5:9).

This salvation is found in no one but Jesus alone (Acts 4:12).

Miracles are from God not from the mind of man (Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 17:12-19; John 2:1-11).

Miracles imply an action by someone that is greater than ourselves. If God is impersonal, miracles cannot occur. But they do occur today as well as in Bible times and are not simply proper thoughts or understanding.

Christ means "anointed. Jesus was the Christ, the anointed one." It does not mean a consciousness or quality of people. Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Deliverer from sin.

Jesus is the Christ (Matt. 16:16,20; Luke 9:20).

"Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory" (Luke 24:26).

"Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day" (Luke 24:46).

"...we have found the Messiah (which translated means Christ)" (John 1:41).

"He [Jesus] looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ." (Acts 2:34)

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He [David] looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ... (Acts 2:31).

"...God has made Him both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36).

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6).

"Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

Christ is crucified (1 Cor. 1:23).

You sin against Christ (1 Cor. 8:12).

The blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16).

Only the Bible has the message of Grace. Grace is the unmerited favor of God upon His people. Grace is the undeserved kindness of God. Grace is getting the blessings we do not deserve. At the death of Christ we are blessed; we are given grace; we are given eternal life and forgiveness of sins. Only Christianity has the message of free forgiveness given. Every other religious system on earth has some form of salvation dependent totally or in part on what the adherents do. Not so with Christianity.

Humanity is not unlimited, but just the opposite: it is under bondage (Romans 5:12). Sin is its master and a deadly and deceitful one at that.

True morality is that which is revealed by God in the Bible (Exodus 20). Anything else is only an imitation, a set of ideas laid down by man that originate from the mind of sinful man.

The Bible opposes almost all the tenets of the New Age Movement. As Christians, we should be watchful to recognize what is false and teach what is true. We should be wary because the Edenic lie still rings strong in the hearts of the deceived -- and they want us to believe as they.