

Challenging the Cults

10. Answering the New Age



Tarot Cards, The Ouija Board and Astrology are Old Age Products packaged for a New Age

How should Christians respond to the New Age movement? As the "New Age" becomes more popular, Christians find themselves in a quandary, do they respond or keep quiet. Sorcery, wizardry and channeling are marketed to kids and adults alike. "Harry Potter" exposes children to the "Good" in sorcery and witchcraft. McDonalds kids meals based on a movie about "Haunted Houses". Many, including Christians might dismiss these concerns as being extreme. Television programs such as John Edwards' show "Crossing Over", with Edwards channeling communication between living and dead family makes channeling mainstream. There is even a psychic pets program where a psychic communicates communications between pets and owners on the cable network, Animal Planet.

According to George Barnia, 20% of the population believes in some aspect of the New Age. This will grow as the New Age becomes more acceptable with many searching youths. Most of the people who are in the New Age are from a nominal, liberal Christian or un-churched backgrounds. Unlike other cults such as Islam, Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons the New Age does not have one sole source of doctrine. Nevertheless, is a

collection of similar ideas and thoughts combining Hinduism, Gnostics, and Pagan religious ideas into a collective body, known as the New Age. The way to help New Agers come to a relationship with Christ varies from other cults.

Strategy to reach the New Age

To reach those involved in the New Age, we need to recognize at what level we are operating. The books of Ephesians and Corinthians spread light on the situation.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.
Ephesians 6:12

20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.

21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons¹; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.

I Corinthians 10:20-21

Several points come to light in these scriptures in dealing with the New Age.

From Ephesians we learn:

- The battle is spiritual not physical
- The spiritual realm is organized opposition
- The spiritual realm has specific demonic forces leading the war.

From I Corinthians we learn:

¹ Demons: δαιμόνιον *Daimonion* (dahee-mon'-ee-on); Word Origin: Greek, Noun Neuter, Strong #: 1140. Demons are fallen angels who fell with Satan, when he rejected God's authority. According to Revelation 12 1/3 of the Angels rebelled with Satan against God. Demons refers to these fallen angels.

- Participants in pagan systems, might feel they are serving God, but are serving demons.
- Those who participate in pagan (New Age) religious systems are having fellowship with demons
- Fellowship with demons breaks our fellowship with the Lord

With these scriptures in mind, we need to recognize the appeal to the New Age is not simple innocence, but supplication and communication with demonic forces. These forces operate in the spiritual realms, they work for the destruction of souls. These demonic forces are fallen angels who rebelled with Satan, against God's authority, they are organized in battle against the saints, and God's work. Therefore, the believer must first seek the Lord, when confronting those who are involved in New Age matters, through prayer.

Steps to reach the lost in the New Age

- Prayer
- Help the New Ager understand the Biblical Position.
- Challenge the source of New Age authority through compassion and logic.
- Share with New Age follower why the Bible is true based on Biblical Evidence
- Share the need

Christian Dialogue with a New Ager

John Christian meets David Newager at a graduation party for a mutual friend, Sam Seeker.

DN: Hi my name is Dave I am a friend of Sam's

JC: Hi Dave, my name is John, Sam and I go to the same Church.

DN: I didn't know Dave was going to church, what kind of church do you go too?

JC: The church is called Bible Fellowship, it's a Bible Believing Church.

DN: You mean one of those "Born Again" Churches...I see ...that why Sam hasn't been able to Make it to Starbucks for the last three months on SundayI am going to have Talk to my buddy Sam.

JC: Dave, Do you go to church?

DN: John...I was raised Catholic and I went to Catholic School, But I haven't been there in quite, But I am Spiritual....What I have learned is you don't need to Go to Church or even read the Bible...to have a deep relationship with God.

JC: Dave what is your source for "Truth"? if its not the Bible?

DN: I Believe all religions are all part of the same package, like petals on a flower, Don't get me wrong, I think its great you go to church and Sam goes there too...for this stage in your spiritual walk...I am very happy for you.

JC: Dave, But how do you know what you believe is true?

DN: John, I have had actually communicated with a spiritual force unlike anything, anybody at any church could imagine. I started doing research and discovered I could access the power of the Divine from within, So after praying to my Divinity....I experienced something beyond any church. John, I know you might think I am nuts, but I don't expect church people to understand this. I have my own guiding spirit that has directed my life for the last 3 years.

JC: Actually Dave, I do understand what you are saying. I also believe we live in a spiritual world.

Thats what the Bible tells us, spiritual forces exist and are involved in the realm of mankind. The question you need to ask yourself is who did you meet?

DN: I know who I met was part of me ...my Divine essence, because my guide affirmed that I am God,that we are all God, and all paths lead toward God.

JC: Dave, I would really question if all religions are talking about the same thing. For example, there are religions that practiced Human sacrifice such as the Aztecs of Mexico, sacrificing hundreds of thousands of people, including children. Part of the Aztec religion was the ritual

cannibalism of its enemies. Is that also part of God? In addition, what about contradictions in Islam and Christianity? Christians believe Jesus died on the cross and Muslims believe Jesus did not die on the cross, they can't both be right? Dave I would really question who it is that spoke to you?

DN: John what are you trying to say? Who do you think spoke to me?

JC: Well Dave, the Bible tells us that your spiritual experience is not unique, that we live in a spiritual world. In this world there are fallen angels, who along with Satan rebelled against God. This resulted in their fall, Satan then tempted Adam and Eve, when they fell Satan and his fallen angels received dominion over this earth. The bible in fact calls Satan the god of this age, that's god with a little g. (2 Corinthians 4:4). And Satan's fallen angels are his representatives who seek to deceive those living on the earth.

In the Old Testament and the New Testament the concept of channeling or talking to spirit guides is not new...one bit. This is an old practice called "Familiar Spirits" or Necromancy. The Bible warns against the practice, not because God doesn't want us to have spiritual knowledge but because, we are not really talking to who we think we are talking. We are really talking fallen angels, who masquerade as someone "Familiar". This is how Satan, deceives people.

DN: John, let me get this right are you saying that my spirit guide is a fallen angel and not from God? That's hard for me to believe, because this being is beautiful and full of peace.

JC: Dave, it all goes back to What is the truth? And who is it that you spoke to you? Because the being was beautiful and peaceful does not mean it is not unique. The Bible tells us that Satan himself masquerades as an "Angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). So it's not hard to imagine that his fallen angels would come in the same manner. Dave, the Bible is very clear on the identity of God, we can't all be God. There is only One God, what the angel affirmed to you contradicts the Bible. Therefore I would question, who you are talking too?

DN: Well how do you know if the Bible is true?

JC: The Bible has all the proof anybody could want to prove that it is God's Word. Most people have never examined the evidence. There are several proofs the Bible is God's Word. The Bible is proven true, based on History, Archeology and Bible Prophecy.

DN: John, over the years the Bible has changed, it's not the same as when it was first written down.

JC: Well Dave, the Dead Sea Scrolls would disagree with you, Portions of every book of the Bible have been found there except the book of Esther. These manuscripts were 1100 years older than earlier manuscripts used in the translation of the Bible, and they proved the Bible was unchanged from source documents.

DN: What proof do you have the Bible is true?

JC: Unlike any other book, the Bible tells us details about the future written thousands of years before the events. The nation of Israel in existence today was written about 2500 years ago in the book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 36 and 37) and 3400 years ago in the book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 28:64, 30:3). Hundreds of specific prophecies about Jesus were written hundreds of years before his birth, describing what would happen to him (Isaiah 52:13 to Isaiah 53:12). Even the exact month and year of Jesus' death was foretold over 500 years before his birth (Daniel 9:24-27), and today's conflicts in the Middle East between Israel and the rest of the world are also foretold.

The Bible says there is only one way to Heaven, and that is through Jesus. That's why it's important too to find the source of your guide.

DN: So how do you believe you get to Heaven?

JC: Dave, by receiving God's gift of salvation, by believing Jesus is the Son of God who died on the cross for our sins.

God

The New Age God is an impersonal force pervading all creation; this is known as *Monism* meaning "One-ism". They believe all that exists is derived from a single force of divine energy. This concept was popularized in the movie "Star Wars", where the Force, was present in the Universe.

This view of god harmonizes with the Hindu view of *Pantheism*. Pantheism believes all that exists is God; God is all that exists. This leads naturally to the concept of the divinity of the individual, that we are all Gods, Gods within the self and throughout the entire universe. The Hindu Vedas read:

This whole world is Brahma. Tranquil, let one worship. It as that from which he came forth, as that into which he will be dissolved, as that in which he breathes.²

Christian Response

God is distinct from his creation. He is the source of all that exists but his identity is distinct and eternal from what He created.

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: "I am the Lord, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself;
Isaiah 44:24

Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it:
Isaiah 42:5

24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

25 "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. Acts 17:24-25

God is also a personal God knowing his creation and having a relationship with them being pleased and displeased.

7 Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. Genesis 12:7

11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.
Exodus 33:11

Man

Man is ultimately God, this follows from the *Monist* and *Pantheistic* view of God.

This is the being/embodiment relationship, as exemplified primarily in the Eastern religions and philosophies....this relationship simply affirms that all life is one, that I am one with God and can embody Divinity...God and I do not just communicate; we commune and are one. There is no separation except failure to recognize that there is no separation.³

Shirley MacLaine, a Hollywood voice for the New Age wrote in here book, *Out on a Limb*,

I know that I exist, therefore I AM, I know that the God-source exists. Therefore IT IS. Since I am part of that force, then I AM that I AM.⁴

² Benjamin Crème, *The reappearance of the Christ and the Masers of Wisdom* (London:Tara Press, 1980)
209

Christian Response

The Bible clearly distinguishes God from Man who was created by God for God's Glory.

7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."
Isaiah 43:7

5 'I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me.
Jeremiah 27:5

Salvation

Since mankind is not a fallen creature, no salvation is necessary. We only need to rescue from ignorance of our godhood. Once we enter "god-realization", "enlightenment", "attunement" or "at-one-ment (With God)", we are personally transformed.

We already know everything. The knowingness of our divinity is the highest intelligence. And to be what we already know is the free will. Free will is simply the enactment of the realization that you are God, a realization that you are divine.⁵

The aim of a Course in Miracles is to lead us from duality to oneness—to the realization of our At-one-ment with God, our Self, and all people---our brothers. In this healing, is our Salvation—we are saved from our misperceptions of ourselves as separated individuals. When our perception is corrected we remember our true or higher Self...Salvation is really enlightenment.⁶

Christian Response

The Bible clearly teaches that some will be saved and others will not be saved. Salvation is not universal. Individuals live one life and must give an account for that one life.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?"

"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"

Matthew 7:21-23

27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
Hebrews 9:27

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ The Jesus of the New Age is differs from the Biblical Jesus. The New Age separates Jesus from Christ. Jesus was one of many Christs or teachers, who came to show the way. Christ is seen as office being held by an avatar or teacher.

Jesus differed but little from other children, only that in past lives he had overcome carnal propensities...Jesus was a remarkable child, for by ages of strenuous preparation he was qualified to be an avatar, a savior of the world.⁷

In every age Teachers have come forth from this spiritual centre to enable mankind to take its next evolutionary step; we know them, among others, as Hercules, Hermes, Rama, Mithra, Vyasa, Sanskaracharya, Krishna, Buddha, and the Christ. All perfect men in their time, all sons of men who became Sons of God, for having revealed their innate Divinity.⁸

Christian Response

³ J.D. Salinger, Nine Stories, 288

⁴ Shirley MacLaine, Dancing in the Light (New York : Bantam Books, 1985) 420

⁵ William Goldstein, "Life on the Astral Plane," Publishers Weekly (March 18, 1983): 46 (Quoting Shirley MacLaine)

⁶ Julius J. Finegold and William M. Thetford, Choose Once Again: Selection from a Course in Miracles, 2-3

Jesus is God incarnate, God the Son born of a virgin, who came into the world and died on a cross.
Jesus is the only means of salvation.

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.
Matthew 24:4-5

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this
John 11:25-26

Astrology

Christian Response

Astrology and Horoscopes are not new but repackaged paganism condemned in the Bible. The stars of the Universe were created for light on the earth. They are not to be worshipped or used for

12 "Stand now with your enchantments And the multitude of your sorceries, In which you have labored from your youth-
Perhaps you will be able to profit, Perhaps you will prevail.

13 You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, And the monthly prognosticators
Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you.
Isaiah 47:12-15

2 Thus says the Lord: "Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, For the Gentiles are
dismayed at them.
Jeremiah 10:2

19 "And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of
heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the
whole heaven as a heritage.
Deuteronomy 4:19

Spirit Guides, Mediums, Channeling

31 'Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.
Leviticus 19:31

6 'And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against
that person and cut him off from his people.

'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone
them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them.' "

Leviticus 20:6,27

19 And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a
people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?
Isaiah 8:19

16 Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who
brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who

⁷ Levi Downing, The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ (Marina del Rey, Calif; De Vorss and Company, 1981), 12

⁸ Crème, Reappearance, 28

proclaim to us the way of salvation."

- 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.
- 19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities.
- Acts 16:16-19

Crystals

Christian Response

Crystals are a form of idoltry, the belief is that Crystals contain inert mystical power in conjunction with its color.

- 32 "What you have in your mind shall never be, when you say, 'We will be like the Gentiles, like the families in other countries, serving wood and stone.'
- Ezekiel 20:32

- 28 "And there you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell.
- Deuteronomy 4:28

Reincarnation

Christian Response

Reincarnation is a Hinduism and Buddhist belief introduced via the New-Age movement. Scripture clearly teaches that we have one life, after this life we must give an account. For this reason, Christ died on the cross, to pay for our sins. Reincarnation is salvation through works, as the soul has a 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc..turns at redemption. This deceives people into thinking they will have another opportunity at salvation if they don't make it in this life.

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

Hebrews 9:27

Lazarus and the rich man

- 19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.
- 20 "But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,
- 21 "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.
- 22 "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.
- 23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
- 24 "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'
- 25 "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.
- 26 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'
- 27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house,
- 28 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'
- 29 "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'
- 30 "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'
- 31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'
- Luke 16:19-31