THE NEW AGE AND HINDU-BASED CULTS

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 New Age and Hindu-based groups if combined would constitute to be the **third largest** denomination in America. Present membership is unknown. However, Americans who participate and are influenced by New Age teachings run into the tens of millions.

 According to the influential New Age occultist Barbara Marx Hubbard stated:

“New Thought is now or will become in the next 30 to 50 years the most important single movement on earth.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

 New Agers consider themselves to be “fully Christian” and believe they have discovered “True Christianity.” Their influence goes well beyond their official membership, affecting even evangelical thinking: Word-Faith teachings—Name It, Claim It; and charismatic teachers Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland. Many believe new age beliefs have arisen as a reaction to Rationalism and the Secularism of Modern Western Culture, which has stripped the world of meaning.

 The New Age is the result of, “our spiritual evolution: a gradual awakening to the realization that the Spirit is center… It is in everything around everything and through everything and it is everything.”[[2]](#footnote-2) Unless men and women come to the realization of our Oneness with God they will remain in spiritual darkness.

PURPOSE: “is the evolution, through self-effort, that man’s limited, mortal consciousness into God Consciousness” (SRF).[[3]](#footnote-3) “Taking charge of your life by creating your own destiny”;[[4]](#footnote-4) People taking control of their own destiny by consciousness alone” (RS);To help one to get in touch with the “higher self” -- to enable people to live successfully and peacefully (NT).

NEW AGE GROUPS

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE – Founded by Mary Baker Eddy who plagiarized portions of P.P. Quimby’s book “Science of Man” Originate in Boston, Mass. in 1879. CS has suffered great depletion in membership since the 1950’s. Worldwide the membership is estimated at 180,000 to 250,000.

RELIGIOUS SCIENCE – Founded by Ernest Holmes who incorporated his own philosophy from concepts of M.B. Eddy, Filmore, and Quimby. Ralph Waldo Emerson, a Unitarian preacher (famous for his writings on transcendentalism), and Swedenborgians had an impact on Holmes’ teachings. He even plagiarized some of their material. His teachings can be found in Della Reese’s, “Touched by an Angel,” Norman Vincent Peale, Robert Schuller and Alcoholics Anonymous. RS began in 1917 in Los Angelos, CA., known as “The Institute for Religious Science.” Their standard text is “Science of Mind” (1926). RS is a syncretistic system which attempts to harmonize all religions by claiming they all contain the same divine truth.

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANIY -- Founded by Charles and Myrtle Filmore, who were influenced by Emma Curtis Hopkins—once the editor of the “Christian Science Journal.” Unity is the largest of the mind science groups. Membership is roughly about 100,000. A new group is founded every month somewhere in the world. Their influence goes well beyond their membership. They have one million subscribers to literature; 260 TV, and 600 radio stations that carry Unity programs. Norman Vincent Peale, a mason who supported non-Christian and occult practices, stated the he was an orthodox preacher until reading Charles Filmore. The Modern Charismatic’s “positive confession” movement through E.W. Kenyon, was derived in part from Unity and related teachings.

NEW THOUGHT – The INTA, “International New Thought Alliance” founded in the 1930’s and 1940’s by Frank B. Robinson and Roy Eugene Davis. They operate the “Center for Spiritual Awareness.” New Thought teachings originate from P.P. Quimby.

VENDATA SOCIETY – was the first Hindu movement in America. Founded by Shankara (9th Century), Ramanuja (11th-12th Century), Madhva (13th Century).

SELF REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP – Founded by Paramahansa Yogananda. SRF was the second Hindu movement introduced to America at the 1920 International Congress of Religious Liberals in Boston, sponsored by the American Unitarian Association. They chose Yogananda to come to America to represent India and Hindu spirituality. Yogananda personally led over 100,000 students in kriya yoga. “Like all yogas, kriya yoga is designed to awaken and energize the chakras, the purported psychic centers along the spine, which is said to lead to “God-realization”, the personal awareness of one’s underlying unity with the ultimate divine essence”.[[5]](#footnote-5) Today SRF has 500 yoga meditation centers on 5 continents in 55 countries. In the US there are 30 temples and meditation centers. Their most popular lay minister at the Los Angeles headquarters is television star Dennis “McCloud” Weaver.

THEOSOPHY – Founded by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891), and Henry Olcott (1832-1907), headquartered in Wheaton, IL. One of their successors Alice Bailey, is created for having coined the phrase “New Age.”

SCIENTOLOGY – Founded by L. Ron Hubbard (1911-1986), wrote the popular book “Dianetics,” to clear the planet of “Thetans.” The Hollywood film, “The Matrix” is based on scientology.

ISCKON – the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The Founder is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

ECKANKAR – Founded by Paul Twitchell, Darwin Gross, and Harold Klemp.

CHURCH UNIVERSAL AND TRIUMPHANT – Found by David L. Prophet and Elizabeth Clare Prophet. Their teachings are linked to Christian Science, Buddhism, and Gnosticism. The group began in 1958 at the Summit Lighthouse in Washington, D.C.

UFO CULTS – i.e.: HEAVENS GATE – 70% of Americans believe in extraterrestrial life. 10% believe they have personally been contacted by an extra-terrestrial, ET. The “Church of the Star” believes aliens will bring permanent peace and prosperity.

SILVA MIND CONTROL – Founded by Jose Silva as a spiritualist New Age, “self-help seminar. A central premise is the tremendous power of words to impact the psyche. **It attempts to abdicate negative thinking**. Executives at RCA and Mary Kay incorporate Silva Mind Control motivational concepts into their business practices. Numerous physicians and psychiatrists use it, as well as 9 million Americans, and people in 107 countries and 29 languages. **It has influence in the “Christian Faith” movement.**

HUMAN POTENTIAL SEMINARS: EST, THE FORUM, LIFE SPRING, ACTUALIZATIONS, MOMENTUS, INSIGHT & IMPACT SEMINARS, AND LIFE DYNAMICS **–** All are offshoots of the philosophy of Werner Erhard, and Jose Silva. They supposedly use “the ability to radically empower individuals through unleashing the untapped powers of the mind.”[[6]](#footnote-6) They use altered states of consciousness, physic development, and spiritism. Similar to Scientology and Zen Buddhism. Many characteristically use 4 intense, 13-hour days, of group personal teachings and exercise. Celebrities who were “EST-ed” in the 1970’s were Yoko Ono, Carly Simon, Diana Ross, and John Denver.

SIX DISTINCTIVES OF NEW AGE THINKING:

1. All is One – **Monism:** the belief that all that is, is One.
2. All is God – **Pantheism**: all things—plants, rocks, snails, and people are said to partake of the one divine essence. Whatever is, is god, and therefore perfect.
3. Humanity is God – “**We are god in disguise**. Only ignorance keeps us from realizing our divine reality.”
4. A Change in Consciousness – New Age (Hindu) techniques open **“the door of perception”** so that we can see true reality. By a change of consciousness, whatever the means (yoga exercises, meditation, chanting, drugs, etc.), leads to an awareness of oneness and spiritual power.
5. All Religions are One – **Syncretism**; there are many paths to the one truth, many methods to become one with the One, but all differences are superficial and external. Within all religions is a core belief of “the god within,” the essence common to all.
6. Cosmic Evolutionary Optimism – “**a progressive evolutionary harmonization and unification of world consciousness** eventually reaching “the Omega Point” where all consciousness is fused, and all become one with the One.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

NATURE OF GOD – Pantheism or Panentheism; Monism; common beliefs found in Buddhism and Hinduism.

“ALL is God and God is ALL”

“ALL is One and ALL is God and God is Good. Therefore, ALL is Good because ALL is God. Everything is perfect, regardless of our sense perception that tells us otherwise.”[[8]](#footnote-8)

 All things are essentially made of the same spiritual substance and at a certain level are merged into the oneness of All. All matter and energy are made of the same basic substance – **Spirit**, all divine. God = Matter. Matter/Spirit is eternal. God is an **impersonal** and nebulous being: an “**IT**”. In the end, “God is whatever one wishes him to be” – One’s imagination – “The Only Reality”. As a result, God is an impersonal energy that can be easily manipulated for one’s own purpose. God is often referred to as the **higher self**.

NEW AGE NAMES FOR GOD:

* Brahman – the Hindu name for God; an impersonal being; consciousness and bliss.
* Krishna – Hare Krishna; He is one of the nine incarnations of the Hindu god Vishnu.
* “IT”; The Sigma – Eckankar.
* The 8th Dynamic/Infinity - All Theta Life; Purposely Undefined – Scientology.
* The Absolute, Tao – Zen

NEW AGE TRINITY – is **Modalism**, the threefold nature of the Universal Being:

**CS** – Life, Truth, and Love – Triple Divine Principle.

**RS** – The thing / the way it works / what it does; Absolute Intelligence / Absolute

 Law / Result Manifestation; Spirit, Soul, Body – Various triune aspects of

 reality.

**USC** – Principle / Principle Revealed / Executive Power of the Principle carrying out

 the creative plan.

**ECK** – Isness / Nowness / Hereness; Wisdom / Charity / Freedom.

JESUS – Jesus and the Christ are not the same person. Jesus was **a mere man**, while the Christ is the divine or spiritual idea. Jesus was **a great man**; a highly evolved and **enlightened man**; “An Advanced Being”. **He was a man who simply realized his full Christ/God consciousness** -- his own divinity.

 Jesus was a **highly evolved individual** who used CS, RS, etc., New Age principles to an expert degree to achieve divinity. He was a master of Eastern Mysticism, who traveled to India according to “The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ.”

 Jesus was **divine**, but not uniquely divine. Jesus was a god/man, like every other man and there were no distinct, transcendent attributes of deity in his being. He was divinely minded.

CHRIST – **All people** are potential Christ’s or Sons of God. **Jesus became the Christ** when he recognized his own essence with God. He developed his Christ consciousness fully and became a **yogi** and a “way-shower” – he shows the way to Christ consciousness. He demonstrated Christ.

 Christ is not limited to one person. The Christ is the eternal impersonal god – god’s idea of himself. The Christ is the individualized God-part of mankind; God realized.

HOLY SPIRIT – is an **impersonal creative principle**. Sometimes described as the feminine quality of god or the **feminine aspect** of the divine trinity. It is simply a characteristic of the impersonal god; a synonym for god. In Christian Science the Holy Spirit is CS.

MAN – is a **part of god** and **inwardly divine**. He is a spiritual being, except many do not realize it. **We are all potential Christ’s**. The more conscious of our divinity the more Christ-like we become. **Man is sinless, and perfect**, a part of the divine essence. CS states that man is not matter, “man is incapable of sin, sickness and death.” The body is the reincarnation of the soul. All human souls are constantly recycled in one incarnation after another, until one gets it right. The number of incarnations can run into the millions.

SIN – is simply **ignorance** of your Christ consciousness or divinity; **the lack of spiritual knowledge**; a mistake. Sins are errors or mistakes resulting in an unenlightened consciousness. They redefine sin to minimize its seriousness. The world is not lost, just confused. In reality, **sin is not real**. Forgiveness is unnecessary since there is nothing to be forgiven. No atonement is necessary. Nothing needs to be atoned. There is no true evil in the world, because God is all there is and God is neither good nor evil. On the other hand, he is good and evil. God is amoral.

THE FALL– is into **wrong thinking**. “The story of the Fall in the Old Testament is a symbolic presentation of the evolution of Man and his spiritual awaking. Taken literally, this story would be ridiculous”.[[9]](#footnote-9)

JUDGEMENT/PUNISHMENT – is the **consequence of ignorance**. “Bad Karma” is the result of bad actions one has committed in this life and a previous life or existence. All human souls are continually recycled / **reincarnated** until one learns total God consciousness – “Nirvana”, only then does one break out of the cycle.

HEAVEN AND HELL – are **states of mind**. They are mental or physical conditions on earth. The Biblical hell of eternal physical punishment is a Christian myth. The New Age **hell** is simply the absence of the knowledge of Christ consciousness. **Heaven** is present within us right now. It’s your state of consciousness. “Heaven and hell exist only in our minds. We can create a heavenly experience for ourselves, or we can subject ourselves to a mental hell. But **they do not really exist objectively.**”[[10]](#footnote-10)

DEATH AND DISEASE– Physical death and disease are an **illusion**. According to CS disease does not really exist except in our mind. Sickness and poverty are unnecessary, only conditions created in our mind. **Positive thinking** through meditation (yoga, chanting, etc.) will reduce or even eliminate any disease. Death is a progression to a higher and higher plane of existence and final absorption into God; spiritual and personal advancement. **We will all ultimately progressively evolve into a higher form of spiritual consciousness**. It may take some time, but we will progress from one dimension of life to another, ever onward, upward godward. We all return to God.

SALVATION – is knowledge and positive thinking, **a release from ignorance**. Salvation comes to the one who **realizes his Christ consciousness**. The more conscious you are of the “Christ” within, the more saved. All people will ultimately gain **salvation through self-effort**. The ultimate goal is “Nirvana” – total bliss -- to escape the cycle of karma and reincarnation, - the bondage of the flesh. “Nirvana” can be more quickly achieved by the purification of our sins of the mind through meditation and the sins of our bodies through a vegetarian diet. Greater consciousness is accomplished through meditation; yoga exercises, chanting one’s mantra, soul travel, hypnosis, and/or drugs.

**“Karma”** is the result of the spiritual law of cause and effect. We all need to purify ourselves of karma/sin. At the end of one’s life, if a person is still possessed with karmic debt concerning this physical life, then that person must return, and return and return, until he pays for the debt completely. Once he achieves total purification of karma, we can then escape additional payment.

**New Age Lingo**

* To **trust** Christ is to trust our higher divine self. **Faith** is directed towards one’s own self-potential / divinity, not toward the person of Jesus Christ.
* We **follow** Christ’s example into a higher consciousness of our own divinity. We are to follow the light of our own being.
* We are **born anew** in consciousness.
* **Sanctification** is growing or awakening into a new level of consciousness.
* **Grace** is an uplifting from bondage through a greater awareness of one’s divinity.

SCRIPTURE – is a spiritually relevant text when it is **interpreted metaphysically** in accordance with CS, RS, USC, etc., New Age principles.

“The Bible is not held in high regard… All New Age groups abandon conventional rules of biblical interpretation, which supports its literal interpretation.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

 Earnest Holmes believed, “A person who believes the Bible should be interpreted literally needs to be healed of spiritual ignorance.”[[12]](#footnote-12) The Bible is **figuratively reinterpreted** into rejecting what it actually says: “If the Bible says that God is love, there is no certainty that he is, simply because the Bible says so.”

OCCULT– Because the Bible is not spiritually sufficient, additional knowledge is sought. All New Age groups stress “**inner listening” as a means to spiritual advancement and guidance**. As a result, one enters into the psychic realm. Concepts like “inner self”, “Christ self”, “higher self”, “intuition”, and “inner divinity” are guises for spiritualistic inspiration or demonic suggestion.[[13]](#footnote-13) New Age authors often claim their books were written by spirit beings claiming to be God or Jesus Christ.

CRITIQUE OF NEW AGE BELIEFS

NATURE OF GOD – The God of the Bible is **transcendent and separate** from His creation. He is a spirit and **does not** have flesh and bones (Num. 23:19; Luke 24:39). Only God as spirit is eternal (Ps. 90:2). The material world had a beginning (Gen. 1:1) and will come to an end (II Peter 3:10). God is in no way a part of His creation, though at the same time His Spirit is omnipresent. “The God of the Bible is a unique, non-analogous being, separate and distinct from His creation.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

 Scientifically speaking mineral substances (rocks) are not considered to be alive. The God of the Bible is a living God, and therefore cannot be a rock.

JESUS – is the unique God/Man. Jesus was fully human, who claimed to be and is fully God (Col. 2:9). **ONE PERSON possessing TWO NATURES** – Human and Divine in its fullest and complete sense. He alone **possesses the five essential attributes of deity**: **1)** Eternality; **2)** Immutability; **3)** Omnipresence; **4)** Omniscience; **5)** Omnipotence (**God’s Incommunicable Attributes**). Jesus was much, much more than a mere human, a great, enlightened man. He was God made in the likeness of a man, in order to save man.

CHRIST – Jesus and the Christ are the **same person**. Jesus did not become the Christ/Messiah – **“Anointed One”**, He was the **Christ from the very beginning** (Luke 2:11). Jesus (Personal Name) Christ (Title) refers to an individual who was set apart for a specific task as a **Prophet, Priest, and King**.

* Jesus personally claimed to be the Christ (Mt. 26:63-65; Mk. 14:61-64; 15:2; Luke 4:21; Jn. 4:21-26).
* Others claimed that He was the Christ (Jn. 11:2; 20:31; Mt. 16:16-20; Acts 2:36; 9:22; 17:3; 18:5).
* One must acknowledge Jesus as the Christ in order to be saved, not oneself (Jn. 11:25-27; Mt. 16:13-20).
* A liar is one who denies that Jesus is the Christ (I Jn. 2:22-23; 4:3).
* Jesus Christ did things that a divine idea could never do (Luke 2:11; Rom. 7:4; I Cor. 1:23; 10:16; Acts 3:18; 26:23).
* Jesus claimed to be “the way” (Jn. 14:6), not just a “way-shower.”[[15]](#footnote-15)
* Jesus was not reincarnated but was raised bodily from the dead (I Co. 15:4; 20). He did not reappear in a different body or form that He once had but retained his physical appearance (nail prints in his hands and feet) though in a glorified state.

 **The person of Jesus is the one and only “Christ”.** We can become Christ-like with regards to God communicable attributes (love, peace, joy, holiness, goodness, kindness, etc.), but we cannot and will not come to possess God’s incommunicable attributes.

HOLY SPIRIT – is the **eternal third person** of the Trinity. He is described with **personality** terms and is referred to with **personal pronouns**. He also **possesses the five essential attributes of deity**. He is equal in power, nature, and essence with the Father and the Son (Isa. 6:8-10; Acts 28:25-27; Mt. 3:16; 28:18; Lk. 1:35). For a more in-depth study of the Spirit see pages 19-21.

MAN – has a **human nature** (Acts 14:14-15) and **cannot** **become Divine** in nature. God is not a man, and man is not God (Hosea 11:9; Num. 23:19). Man is not a part of God who is separate and transcendent from all that He created. Man is both material and immaterial – body, soul/spirit (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7; 5:1, 3). Man possesses a personal and distinct spirit, apart from the “Spirit”. Man’s spirit is limited to space and time. The Spirit of God is omnipresent and eternal. Man’s nature is sinful and far from perfect (Jer. 17:9; Ro. 7:14-25). God is holy and completely perfect in every way (Isa. 6:3). If man claims to be sinless, he is self-deceived and without truth (living a fantasy).

SIN – is **much more** than simply ignorance of the truth, a little mistake.

* It is very serious and grievous (Ro. 6:23).
* It is rebellion against God.
* Sin is universal: “for all have sinned” (Ro. 3:23; 3:10; I Jn. 1:10; Isa. 53:6a).
* Man is a sinner in action and nature (Jer. 17:9; Mk. 7:21-23; Ro. 5:12-21).
* Sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:2).
* Christ came into the world to save sinners (Mk. 10:45; I Tim. 1:13).

 **Sin, sickness, and death are a real part of man’s existence**. To deny their reality is to live in an illusion. If any doctrine has empirical evidence of its reality, it is the doctrine of sin! For most common folks the denial of sin in the world is the demonstration of an unenlightened mind!

 **The solution to man’s problem** is to **confess the reality of sin** and its consequences, take responsibility for it, and look to the One who found victory over it. We are not just survivors, “But in all things we **overwhelmingly conquer** through Him who loves us” (Ro. 8:37). Sin, sickness, and death run its course in this life, and it comes to a conclusion. There is no cycle of death and rebirth, death and rebirth… The **Good News** is that in Christ sin and its effects (bad karma) are defeated (I Cor. 15:56), and we can live in peace and harmony with God and His created world. Biblical Christianity provides a climatic and permanent hope, **the best hope**, given freely to all those who will accept it.

THE FALL– **is man’s attempt to become Divine/God, an impossible task**, for “There is only One God (Isa. 44:6)! Every man attempts to place himself in the place of God – to take God’s place. Satan tempted Eve with superior knowledge -- knowledge that would make her omniscient. However, God will judge all people who attempt to claim divine qualities that only belong to God (Ezekiel 28:19; Ro. 1:23-25).

SALVATION – **is in the knowledge of the Gospel**. It is the **immediate release** from the power of sin and its effect is on those who receive this knowledge. Salvation comes only to those who realize that Jesus is the Christ – “The Anointed One**”.** All who reject Jesus Christ and His Gospel will be punished by God in an eternal hell (II Th. 1:8-9; Rev. 19:20; 20:15). **Salvation through self-effort is an unnecessary doctrine**, totally foreign to the pages of the Bible. Salvation cannot be earned by self-effort but is a gift of God received by grace through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7).

 Only God through Jesus’ work can purify a person. Sin is removed by the substitutionary atonement of the only perfect God/Man Jesus Christ and our faith in Him. Meditation on one’s self, yoga, chanting, and a vegetarian diet, weakens us both physically and spiritually. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by foods (Heb. 13:6). Christians are to meditate on the truths found in God’s written Word. When praying we are specifically told not to use meaningless repetition (chanting, modern day tongues, Hail Mary’s, etc.) as the pagans do (Mt. 6:7).

 **Assurance of our salvation** is **completely** based on what a Sovereign and loving God has accomplished. It is notbased on **anything** we achieve. Salvation by works leaves a person with no assurance. If salvation is based on works, a person is left wondering: “Have I done enough to earn my own way”:

How Much Is Enough?

Enough Is Never Enough!

 Are 8,400,000 reincarnations enough? How many doors knocked is enough? How many missionary tours are enough? How much clean living is enough? What does it cost?

 The Salvation that God provides now is **“Total and Complete”** (Col. 2:10).After Christ made purification of sins, He sat down (Heb. 1:3). The work is done: **“It is Finished”**. It’s truly “Amazing Grace”!

JUDGEMENT – is the consequence of sin, only made worse by its denial. Man, escapes judgment by the confession of sin and placing one’s trust in Christ who paid the penalty of sin. The payment for sin was paid in full -- “One simple, not so easy payment”. There is no need for an endless cycle of Karmic debt to be paid over many, many lifetimes.

HEAVEN AND HELL– The Bible describes heaven and hell as **objective places of conscious existence after death**, not just states of mind.

* **Hell** is described as a place of separation from the blessings and presence of God, a place of punishment for all who reject God’s means of salvation, Jesus Christ and His work of redemption (Daniel 12:2; Mt. 8:11-12; 13:42,50; I Th. 4:14).
* **Heaven** is described as a place of eternal communion with God. Heaven is a real objective place, truly absent of pain, sin, sorrow, suffering and death. It’s a place of eternal bliss (Mt. 25:34, 37; Jn. 3:5, 16, 18, 21; Rev. 21-22).[[16]](#footnote-16)

DEATH AND DISEASE – **are realities that our daily existence continues to confirm**. It’s not uncommon for the leaders of the New Age Movement, while denying outwardly the existence of sickness, secretly sought conventional medical assistance when confronted with a physical illness. Some even boldly proclaimed that they would never die, i.e.: Charles Fillmore (founder of the USC) firmly believed that he would never die. Fillmore believed that the very idea of death could make and mold it into a reality. Making positive affirmations of eternal life and not allowing the idea of death into our consciousness can make eternal life a reality:

“When confronted with error or evil, instead of giving them reality and thus power over us, we must choose to mentally affirm their unreality and powerlessness while positively reaffirming the Good”.[[17]](#footnote-17)

 When reality sets in and these New Age fakes pass from this earth, they themselves and their foolish teachings are rightly discredited. There are just too many situations in this life where all the positive thinking in the world is ineffective.

 New Age thinking on death and disease **does not adequately provide a useful way** of dealing with these serious matters. The Biblical worldview that explains the entrance of sin and death into the universe of a holy God, and His finite creation (Ro. 5:12), and God’s solution -- Christ’s death and resurrection, is **far superior** and truer to life than any other worldview.

**SCRIPTURE** – The New Age method of interpretation is **purely subjective** and cannot logically the teach truth about anything. New Agers arbitrarily gives all places, names, and words, etc., some inner hidden meaning, a meaning that is **never consistent**. They literally make communication impossible. Their speculative interpretations are of little value. They lack any authority.

 Jesus **never interpreted Scripture** like New Age groups do. He always interpreted Scripture literally or normally. Jesus spoke of Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jonah, etc., as real people of history. Jesus’ words never have an inner hidden or secret meaning.

 New Age cults, like all cults, say that the Scriptures are **not sufficient for spiritual life and growth**. Something more is always needed -- a new interpretation, additional revelation. A variety of sources are suggested: listening to our inner voice; tapping into the vast reservoir of the Universal mind made possible by one vacating the mind in a self-induced trance; or superior knowledge can be obtained through the spirits of past humans, animals, and even plants.

 Historical Evangelical Christianity gives a better, more valuable, and consistent method of interpreting the Scriptures.

“The Historical and Grammatical Method of Interpretation”

 This method uses normal and universally accepted rules of interpretation, the same method that any legitimate scholar would use to interpret any historical document.

**OCCULT** — New Agers use crystals as a vehicle to amplify their energy to cause an effect in the force to gain insight into the spirit world. The Bible specifically forbids spiritism of any kind. It prohibits contact with disincarnate spirits directly or through a medium (De. 18:19-20). “In reality, people are contacting demons who lie about their origin and impersonate any type of being for the sake of deception and malice.”[[18]](#footnote-18)

 **A better solution** is to **ask the Holy Spirit** to illuminate the already plain literal meaning of the Bible, and then to **trust God** for what it says!

Zane Hodges states,

 “At present there is a movement gathering momentum, one related to so-called “contemplative spirituality”, in which Roman Catholic and Buddhist mysticism are merged. Within this system of thought Jesus is stripped of His uniqueness as “the only begotten” Son of God and is ascribed a divinity which in character is no different than the divinity belonging to all men. According to this perspective, each and every individual is “one” with God and Jesus simply realized this oneness to a greater degree than others. He is thus not the Christ in the Johannine send of mankind’s one and only Savior (John 1:29; 4:42).

 The literature being produced by this “new wave” sometimes called New Age II is copious. It tends to regard the ancient Gnostics as wrongly marginalized by an increasingly Hellenized Christianity.

 It is striking that this system has a place for “darkness” as the contemplative person meditates wordlessly and reaches down into the darkness of his own inner self in search of a rediscovery of oneness with Ultimate Reality from which humanity has become estranged. Man’s “fall” is the loss of a realization of this oneness, while his “salvation” is “enlightenment” in the sense of a renewed realization of his union with God and with the cosmos…

 Such ideas could easily form the basis of a universal synthesis of mankind’s religions. It could clearly also become the basis for the new world religion sponsored by the Man of Sin, the Beast of Revelation, and the False Prophet. Since this latter figure is best understood as the Antichrist referred to by John, it would be ironic if the contemporary system closest to the false doctrine of the “many antichrists” (2:18) should turn out to be the final form of religious deception.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Francis Schaffer stated in 1970,

 “…much of modern theology is in the direction of pantheism”; almost all the new theologians are drifting toward pantheism…”

 “There was recently a conference in Buck Hill Falls, PA, called “The Conference on Environment and Population.” At one session, there was a light show presenting the modern problem of ecology, then the proposition was set forth that the answer must be in the direction of pantheism. We are going to hear much of this in the immediate future. Pantheism will be pressed as the only answer to ecological problems and will be one more influence in the West’s becoming increasingly Eastern in its thinking.”

 Pantheism is seen by many as the solution to the destruction of the environment. If one elevates nature as something sacred and divine, then people will be less likely to harm it, so they think. However, in many case those who claim to be protecting the environment do the most damage.

1. Ankerburg, pg. 343. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Idib,. P. 393. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Idib., p. 427. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Craig Carter [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ankerburg, p. 427. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ankerberg, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Douglas R. Groothuis, *Unmasking the New Age*, (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL) 1986, pp. 18-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ankerberg, p. 397. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
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10. House, p. 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ankerberg, p. 397. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Idib., p. 397. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Idib., p. 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. House, p. 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ibid., p. 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. House, p. 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Ankerberg, p. 544. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. House, p. 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
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