

TRUE & FALSE NEW AGE

Introductory notes for Christians on The True & the False New Age

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Maranatha UK office
102 Irlam Road, Flixton, Manchester M41 6JT
Tel: 0161 748 4858 Fax: 0161 747 7379
Email: info@maranathacommunity.org.uk
www.maranathacommunity.org.uk

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The Maranatha Community

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Index

Foreword

1. Introduction
2. The New Age of Christ
3. The Old Way Discarded
4. The so-called 'New Age' and its origins
5. New Age and Theosophy
6. New Age and Spiritism
7. New Age and Occultic Channelling
8. The New Age and Paganism
9. Monism and Pantheism
10. The Human Potential Movement
11. Syncretism
12. Relativism and Morality
13. Sin and Guilt
14. The New Age and the Occult
15. The influence of Eastern Religions
16. The Gateway to the New Age
17. The Claim to Heal
18. New Age and 'One World'
19. Consequences and Casualties
20. The rejection of Jesus Christ
21. The denial of the Deity and reality of Christ
22. The Churches and New Age
23. The conflict between the Gospel and 'New Age'
24. Basic Truths
25. Conclusion

Foreword

We are called

*We are called
to deny the lie
that there can be
a Kingdom without a King
that there can be
peace without the Prince of Peace
that there can be wisdom
without the Spirit who is truth
that there can be love
without the King of Love
that there can be a flock
without the Shepherd
that there can be a family
without a Father
that there can be forgiveness
without a Cross
that there can be justice
without the Eternal Judge.
We are called to deny
that truth and falsehood
can together reign,
we are called to deny
that humankind
is the master of its fate.
We are called to warn
that there is a price to be paid
for believing
or even half-believing
the cunning wily lies
of the one who is
the father of lies.
We are called to proclaim
the victory of Christ
over all deception
over all that is not true
over all the powers of darkness
- here and now
and with no more delay.*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 These notes endeavour to present in a simple and straightforward way, the **newness** of the Christian Gospel in comparison with another belief system containing confusing and conflicting beliefs and calling itself the 'New Age'.
- 1.2 We are today seeing an increasing number of casualties of the so-called New Age Movement. People have been deeply **hurt** and thrown into spiritual, mental and emotional **confusion**. These notes therefore constitute a basic assessment of the Kingdom of God and of the counter-claims of the New Age Movement which is rooted in spiritism and astrology.

2. The New Age of Christ

- 2.1 Jesus Christ came to announce the coming of the Kingdom of God when **new** things will happen and radical changes occur.
- 2.2 This **new Kingdom** was long awaited. For centuries people yearned for the new age of God. Swords will be beaten into ploughshares (Is. 2.4), tears will be wiped away (Is. 25.8), the blind will see, the deaf hear, the lame walk and the dead live. (Is. 35.5). The hungry will be fed (Ps. 146.7), the prisoner will be set free (Ps. 146.7), the crooked will be made straight (Is.40.4), the rough place will be made smooth (Luke 3.4). The desert wastes will be changed (Is. 35.1). Light will displace the darkness (Is. 58.8).
- 2.3 The New Age proclaimed by Jesus is rooted in the hope of all the ages about which we read in the Old Testament "*a new heart...will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you*" (Ezek 36.26). It is the fulfilment of the anticipation expressed in the Old Testament about the making of "*new heavens and a new earth.*" (Is. 65.17 & 66.22) For years people had looked forward to the making of a "*new covenant*" (Jer. 31.31) - "*a covenant of peace*" (Ez. 34.25 & 37.26).
- 2.4 The Kingdom of God which Jesus comes to proclaim is in a very real sense the **New Age**.
- 2.5 Jesus establishes a **new** relationship with God - a New Covenant. (Matt. 26.28)
- 2.6 The message of Jesus is bold and full of hope - "*I am making everything new.*" (Rev. 21.5). A vision is given of "*a new Heaven and a new Earth*" (Rev. 21.1) and "*a new Jerusalem*" (Rev. 3.12 & 21.2). Reference is made to "*a new name*" (Rev. 2.17 & 3.12) and "*a new song*" (Rev. 5.9).
- 2.7 Newness was a mark of the early Church. The promise of Jesus was fulfilled - "*they will speak in new tongues*". (Mark 16.17) The early Christians boldly proclaimed "*a new and living way.*" (Hebrews 10.20) One of the nouns used to describe age in the New Testament is *aion* which means a period of indefinite duration - i.e. eternity (see 2 Peter 1.11). Jesus offers the hope of eternal life.
- 2.8 There is newness in terms of **time** and the word for this is *Neos*. There is newness in terms of **quality** and the word for this is *Kainos*. We are told that the **new** wine referred to in Mark 2.2 is *Neos* because it has recently been produced, whereas the **new** wine of the Kingdom (Mark 14.25) is *Kainos* because it is fundamentally different from the Kingdom of this world. Most of the references in the New Testament use the word *Kainos*. The **new** man referred to in Col. 3.10 emphasises the change which has not only occurred at a point in time but one which is still continuing in God's on-going work of renewal and perfection.
- 2.9 The word Gospel (*Euaggelion*) means **Good News**. It points directly to a **new** way which contrasts with the old. The Kingdom preached by Jesus is "*Good News*" (Matt. 4.23).

3. The Old Ways Discarded

- 3.1 Primitive man searched for **meaning** in his life. He respected those elements of nature which seemed to have a dominant and controlling influence on his life. An example of this is the sun and the rain which clearly influenced the harvest.
- 3.2 Primitive man treated the elements as objects which needed to be revered, feared and even **worshipped**. They were frequently seen as gods to be appeased. These gods were often associated with particular places such as a mountain, a specific territory or a particular nation or tribe.

- 3.3 Primitive belief in a multiplicity of gods - **Polytheism** (Poly = many, Theos = god) continued until the Roman Empire and inevitably many of these 'gods' were man-made idols. Even the Emperor was made a deity as have been many tyrants this century.
- 3.4 The Old Testament lays the foundation for **Monotheistic** belief. (Mono = one).
- 3.5 The Bible shows how God revealed himself as the one and **only** God, the Lord and great Creator of all. *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1.1). *"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good"* (Genesis 1.31).
- 3.6 God not only reveals His oneness but, through Israel, He revealed His nature as a **person** - not as an impersonal force. He revealed Himself as a great God of power and love. He revealed himself as overwhelming and **transcendent** but also as near and **immanent**.
- 3.7 The Bible affirms - *"For us there is but **one** God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live, and there is but **one** Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live."* (1 Cor. 8.6)
- 3.8 Jesus Christ comes as Lord to set people free from the **old** superstitions and the darkness and fear of the past. Followers of Jesus believe their *"old self was crucified with Him"*. (Romans 6.6). They are taught *"to put off your **old** self...to be made new in the attitude of your minds and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."* (Eph. 4.22-24) They are urged to *"put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge and in the image of its creator."* (Col. 3.10)
- 3.9 The way of Christ is not a compromise with the past. It does not involve a slight modification of lifestyle. It involves a total change and a complete break with the past. We are to be born again. *"If anyone is in Christ, He is a **new** creation; the **old** has gone, the **new** has come!"* (2 Cor. 5.17).

4. The so-called 'New Age' and its origins

- 4.1 New Age springs from a **mixture** of ancient paganism, earlier deviations from the Christian faith, astrology and Hinduism. It is fundamentally occultic and is an alternative belief system strongly antagonistic to the Christian faith.
- 4.2 Its emergence in its present form took place in the **19th century** with the sudden growth of spiritism, interest in astrology and the influence of Eastern religions.
- 4.3 The term New Age refers to what astrologers (not astronomers) believe to be the **Age of Aquarius** which they claim is due to start shortly. Astrologers divide the heavens into twelve segments each associated with a sign of the zodiac. The segment in which the sun rises at the spring equinox is supposed to give its name to the astrological age. It takes just over 2000 years for each age to run its course. Most astrologers believe that the age Taurus (the Bull) began about 4000 BC. The next age - the Age of Ram (the age of the Jews) began in 2000 BC. It is the belief of New Agers that the age of Pisces (the fish) - the Age of Christ, which started at the time of Jesus is now coming to an end and will be replaced by the Age of Aquarius (the water carrier).
- 4.4 New Age originates in the desire for a 'New World Order' whose characteristic is 'group consciousness' and a **New World Religion**.
- 4.5 New Agers believe in an 'inner government' of the planet by a **hierarchy of spirits** or 'masters of wisdom' i.e. demonic spirits.
- 4.6 Aldous Huxley's '**Perennial Philosophy**' was a dominant influence upon the New Age thinking in the 1960's. His book *"recognises a divine Reality substantial to the world of things, lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or identical, with divine Reality."* Huxley joined with others in actively promoting a Zen cult encouraging the use of drugs and offering a religious experience to students without dogmas or institutions. He heavily influenced the **Esalen** Institute from which many New Age teachings have emanated.
- 4.7 **Process Theology**, is a modern form of theism. It has led many into New Age and teaches that God's work in the world is a slow evolution and that God himself, because of His involvement in the world is Himself evolving. It robs God of his absolute and unchanging presence and power. Theologian Emil Brunner says *"Were God one who is '**becoming**', then everything would founder on the morass of relativism. We can measure nothing by changing standards: changeable norms are no norms at all; a*

- God who is constantly changing is not a God whom we can worship. He is a mythological being for whom we can only feel sorry.*" (The Christian Doctrine of God).
- 4.8 **Teilhard de Chardin**, eminent priest and palaeontologist, in his well-known 'Phenomenon of Man' undoubtedly accelerated the movement towards Process Theology and to some extent pantheism. He believed that matter evolves into life and then into consciousness. He saw the universe converging ultimately to an 'Omega Point' where it is totally unified and finds its meaning.
- 4.9 Psychologist **Carl Jung** has had a profound influence upon New Age thinking. He reduced God to the status of the so-called "collective unconscious" and diminished the absolute claims of Christ to mere symbolism. Jungian thinking permeates much New Age practice.
- 4.10 New Agers search for **lost wisdom** in the ancient Eastern Religions, in old pagan religions, in North American Indian culture and in mythology. The impetus for this search grew with the increase in international travel in the 19th century which was also the time when many basic Christian beliefs were under attack.
- 4.11 Christians believe that they are held in the hands of **God** and that their destiny is with Him. In marked contrast with this, New Ager Canon Peter Spink says "*at the heart of the new creed is belief in a destiny determined by **astrological influences***" ('A Christian in the New Age'). The astrological beliefs of Theosophy conflict with Christianity.

5. New Age and Theosophy

- 5.1 The New Age is rooted in the **Theosophical Society** which was founded in 1875. Its co-founder, the much travelled Helena Blavatsky, was a spiritist who believed in the existence of guiding 'masters'.
- 5.2 Theosophy was strongly influenced by **Hinduism**. It emphasised **esoteric** teaching i.e. confidential truths revealed only to the initiated, and endeavoured to bring together the truths of all religions into **one** belief system.
- 5.3 One of the prominent members of the Theosophical Society, Alice Bailey wrote many messages claimed to be dictated by spirits. In 'The Plan for the New World Order' which rejected 'personal immortality' religions, it is stated "*The source of all great world religions and philosophies is the **spiritual Hierarchy of the Planet**, whose members are called the custodians of the divine plan*". She also specifically claimed "*Lucifer is the Ruler of Humanity*".
- Similarly, a contemporary leader of New Age David Spangler writes "*Lucifer is the angel of man's inner light... He is an agent of God's love...and as we move into a New Age, each of us...must say, Thank you Beloved (to Lucifer), for all these experiences. They have brought me to you.*" He also says "*the light that reveals to us the path of Christ comes from Lucifer...Christ is the same force as Lucifer*".
- 5.4 Theosophy offers a pattern of religious teaching. It makes the claim of having a close and direct knowledge of God for its followers. They are given the special privilege of access to 'hidden' truths through so called '**higher masters**'.
- 5.5 Theosophy, with Hinduism, believes in **reincarnation**, with a belief in the existence of previous lives and the transmigration to future lives (even as animals or plants!). When all these cycles are complete individuals are supposed to become Christs.
- 5.6 **Rudolph Steiner** was associated with the Theosophy Movement but left because leading theosophist Annie Besant, proclaimed an Indian, Krishnamurti, to be the World Teacher with authority over all the Great Masters and mahatmas, including Jesus. Krishnamurti himself renounced this role in 1929.
- 5.7 Steiner broke away to establish the **Anthroposophy** Movement but continued his occultic practices and his belief in reincarnation and the wisdom of the so-called ancient 'Mystery Religions'. Anthroposophy shares many theosophical beliefs but claims that people have a three-fold nature - physical, etheric and astral.
- 5.8 Theosophy like Anthroposophy is a form of spiritism combined with a mixture of Hinduism and Buddhism. It uses many Biblical phrases, but **rejects** fundamental Biblical teaching.
- 5.9 **Helena Blavatsky** was a practising spiritist medium. She admitted of the Theosophical Society that "*it is the same spiritualism under another name.*"

- 5.10 Theosophists refer to Jesus as **one** of the 'Great Masters' and totally reject the truth that Jesus is unique.
- 5.11 Theosophists have a complex belief about the **nature** of man. They claim that we have one life principle (Prana) one spirit (Atman) but three souls (Buddha, Manas and Kamarupha) and two bodies (astral and physical).
- 5.12 Theosophists reject **all** moral absolutes and therefore repudiate the existence of sin.
- 5.13 Interest in Theosophy accelerated after the emergence and rapid spread of **spiritism** in the United States in the early part of the 19th century.

6. New Age and Spiritism

- 6.1 Spiritists (who call themselves 'Spiritualists') claim to make contact with the spirits of 'the departed' through '**mediums**'.
- 6.2 In reality Mediums do not make contact with the dead but with **masquerading evil spirits**.
- 6.3 Spiritists **exploit** the sadness of the bereaved, they **reject** Biblical warnings against those who endeavour to contact the dead. (Deut. 18.10-12, Lev. 20.6, Is. 8.19)
- 6.4 Most spiritists strongly deny the uniqueness and divinity of Christ. They reject the need for the Cross as atonement. They reject the Resurrection. They do, however, use the **symbol** of the Cross and some, although opposing basic Christian teaching, call themselves 'Spiritualist **Churches**'. There is even a movement called the 'Greater World **Christian** Spiritualist League', a title which has misled many.
- 6.5 The general **beliefs** and **practices** of Spiritists are an integral part of the New Age lifestyle.

7. New Age and Occultic Channelling

- 7.1 Although the **occultic** practices of New Age may not be immediately evident, they are fundamental to its belief system.
- 7.2 The New Age positively **encourages** efforts to contact spirits.
- 7.3 Those contacting spirits are called '**mediums**' by the spiritist organisations at the seances which they arrange.
- 7.4 In the New Age Movement Mediums are called '**channellers**'. A channeller is a person who, having made contact with the spirits, including the so-called 'masters of wisdom', channels their messages to others.
- 7.5 Spirits' messages may be **visual, aural, or written**.
- 7.6 The channeller or medium is not neutral or a mere observer. The spirit influence can **contaminate** and even **control** the individual concerned. It can also **infect** others who accept these messages.
- 7.7 The distinction between what may be **internal** inspiration or imagination as opposed to **external** inspiration is blurred.
- 7.8 New-Agers are unable to give assurances that the 'spirits' are not in fact **demonic**.
- 7.9 Jon Klimo in 'Channelling' refers to the channel activity as "*an identity (the source), apparently foreign to that of the channel, exercising **control** over the perceptual, motor, cognitive, or self-reflective capacities of that person once he or she has relinquished or altered control or sense of self-identity.*"
- 7.10 The process of 'channelling' is that of accepting information and receiving power from an **external** being, the integrity of which the channeller may know little or nothing. John Klimo explains this as "receiving information from paranormal sources and claims that these are all channelled entities, personalities who claim to come from somewhere outside our normal consensus reality - through people among us. Their purpose, they say, is to help humanity to grow and mature." ('Channelling')

- 7.11 A high proportion of New Age books are claimed to have been **dictated** by spirits and, not unexpectedly, most of these contain denials of the Christian faith, which are usually hidden in a text which appears to be innocuous.
- 7.12 Leading New Age writer J.Z. Knight passes on the following words from her spirit guide Ramtha - *"Yeshua ben Joseph, whom you call Jesus of Nazareth, is a great god, just as you are a great god. But he is not the only son of God, he is a son of God. He was a man who became God, just as you will become God."* **"Yeshua is your brother, not your saviour."** *"Love the beautiful entity that you are and the God that you are - and cease reading your insidious book (The Bible)."*
- 7.13 One of the best-known channelled books is the 1200 page '**A Course in Miracles**'. Channelled to Helen Schucman, a Jewish atheist, and published in 1975, it is claimed to have come from Jesus, yet in the text it states *"the name of Jesus Christ as such is but a symbol. But...it is a symbol which is safely used as a replacement for the many names of all the gods to which you pray This course has come from him"*. The manual to the course claims *"Christ takes many forms with different names until their **oneness** can be recognised."*
- 7.14 New Age followers believe in a great range of 'higher intelligences'. New Ager Machaelle Small Wright in the book 'MAP' (The Co-creative White Brotherhood Medical Assistance Programme) identifies these as the so called **White Brotherhood** who *"exist beyond time and history."* They are *"a large group of highly evolved souls dedicated to assisting the evolutionary process of moving universal reality, principles, laws and patterns through all planes and levels of form. They hold the major patterning and rhythms now being utilized for the shift we are all going through from the Piscean to the Aquarian era. When we link with them, they support and assist us by assuring that any work we do maintains its forward evolutionary motion and its connection to the new Aquarian dynamics."*
- 7.15 New Age groups attach considerable importance to occultic prayer and occultic invocation at agreed times, such as The World Instant of Co-operation on the 31st December 1986. The extensively used 'Great Invocation' is addressed to the 'Ascended Masters'. The meditators at the **World Instant of Co-operation** (or world healing day) declared *"I am co-creator with God, and it is a new Heaven that comes, as the Good Will of God is expressed on Earth through me...in Truth, I am the Christ of God."*
- 7.16 New Agers believe in the presence of Masters of Wisdom in the highest state of spiritual being. They believe that these Masters can impart their wisdom to human kind, particularly through those who are initiated i.e. the **New Group of World Servers**. Alice Bailey believed that all people in the world could be divided into four groups - the uniformed masses, the middle classes, the thinkers, and the New Group of World Servers gathered out of every nation, class, group, church and party. *"Behind this fourfold vision of humanity stand those Enlightened Ones whose right and privilege it is to watch over human evolution and to guide the destinies of men. In the West we call them Christ and his disciples. In the theologies of the East they are called by many names. They are also known as the Agents of God, or the Hierarchy of liberated souls, who seek ceaselessly to aid and help humanity. This they do through the **implanting of ideas** in the minds of the world thinkers, so that these ideas in due time receive recognition and eventually become controlling factors in human life. They train the members of the New Group of World Servers in the task of changing these ideas into ideals. These in their turn become the desired objectives of the thinkers and are then taught to the powerful middle-class and worked up into world forms of government or religion, thus forming the basis of the new world order, into which the masses are patiently incorporated."* ('Esoteric Psychology')
- 7.17 David Spangler declared that *"only the so-called 'fit' i.e. those awakened to their divinity should be allowed to lead the planet."* New Age is wedded to **elitism** and has dangerous undertones particularly in its attitude to race. Ina Crawford ('A Guide to the Mysteries' published by Lucis 1990) says *"humanity is now emerging in the Aryan race, into mental consciousness but most of us are still Atlantean in consciousness, that is we are emotionally polarised."*
- 7.18 New Age leaders believe that the New Order will take power when a 'critical mass' of individuals have undergone 'personal transformation'.
- 7.19 A channelled vision given to 'Levi' H Downing led to the publication of '**The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ**'. This puts spurious words into the mouth of Jesus who is quoted as saying, "All things are God; all things are one." Books such as this are being widely read and are given authenticity by New Age. New Agers, influenced by this and other books believe that Jesus travelled to the far east in his so-called 'lost years'. There is no reputable historical evidence for this.
- 7.20 At first glance channelled material may appear to be innocuous but embedded in the text are **false** and often **conflicting** teachings.
- 7.21 The New Age totally **rejects** Biblical warnings against the dangers of involvement with spirits through mediums and so-called channelers. They assume that all messages from the spiritual world are good.

8. The New Age and Paganism

- 8.1 Much of the New Age movement is rooted in **Paganism**.
- 8.2 Paganism is fundamentally a **Nature Religion**, pre-Christian in origin.
- 8.3 Paganism is based on worship of **creation** rather than the Creator.
- 8.4 Paganism gives great significance to what it believes to be **spirits** and **gods** to be found in all areas of nature.
- 8.5 Paganism is highly **superstitious** and it has given rise to great fear and trauma.
- 8.6 The New Age Movement is fundamentally involved in **nature religion**. In the Findhorn literature it is stated that one of their founders Eileen Caddy "*found that through her meditation, she could contact what she called the "devas", the archetypal formative forces of light or energy that underlie all forms in nature - plants, trees, rivers etc. She asked them for advice...*" New Agers seek advice from virtually every other source than Jesus Christ Himself - good or evil. The name **Jesus** is rarely spoken by New Agers who speak of 'the Christ' - an entity present in different places and different people.
- 8.7 Paganism takes **many forms** including witchcraft, druidry, asatru and satanism.
- 8.8 Sensitivity to the urgent need for the protection of the **environment** has led many towards a position where they acknowledge and praise the created world, both material and physical, rather than God. There is a growing fear of an impending ecological disaster caused by human kind and instanced in the damage to the atmosphere's ozone layer and depletion of the rain forests.
- 8.9 The name for the Greek earth goddess or universal mother was Gaia. The concept of an **earth being** was welcomed by the New Age in general, and witches alike.
- 8.10 The **Gaia Hypothesis** was put forward in a book of this title by James Lovelock who claimed "*that the entire range of living matter on Earth, from whales to viruses, and from oaks to algae, could be regarded as constituting a single living entity, capable of manipulating the Earth's atmosphere to suit its overall needs and endowed with faculties and powers far beyond those of its constituent parts.*"
- 8.11 From ascribing personhood to the earth New Age leads people to worshipping 'Mother Earth' and then '**Goddess Earth**'. This is the core of witchcraft belief.
- 8.12 The growth of **occultic practices** in Britain this century is evidenced in spiritist seances, the use of Ouija boards, rune stones and tarot cards, and growing sorcery. These, together with a variety of New Age concepts and techniques, have inevitably led to a revival of and growing participation in witchcraft.
- 8.13 Witches meet in **covens** which are usually led by 'priestesses'. They have secret rituals, often involving nudity and three levels of initiation into the 'craft'. The repeal of the Witchcraft Act in 1951 enabled the wicca to grow in Britain to the point where today there are hundreds of covens throughout the country. The revival of witchcraft in Britain was directly influenced by four figures. Aleister Crowley, Margaret Murray, Gerald Gardner and Alex Sanders.
 - 8.13.1 **Aleister Crowley** was a spiritist, a heroin addict and a promiscuous bi-sexual, who lived a debauched life and practised magic which he defined as 'the art of causing change in conformity with the will of the magician'. Crowley was deeply influenced by O.T.O. (Order of the Temple of the Orient) which used masonic secrets to teach 'sexual magic'. Crowley, whose writings are widely circulated today amongst New Agers, has had a grotesquely corrupting influence on many.
 - 8.13.2 **Margaret Murray** wrote an article on 'witchcraft', in Encyclopedia Britannica in 1929, calling herself an anthropologist. The article was widely read and hotly contested, and she later admitted she was a witch. She propagated the so-called Dianic witchcraft which draws heavily on mediterranean folklore.
 - 8.13.3 **Gerald Gardner** wrote 'Witchcraft Today' in 1955, leading to the rapid growth of the so-called Gardnerian form of witchcraft. Gardner encouraged the use by witches of the 'Book of Shadows' which includes material by Aleister Crowley, who profoundly influenced him. He

introduced rituals and 'craft laws' including ritual nudity and the 'Great Rite' of sexual intercourse between priestess and priest.

- 8.13.4 **Alex Sanders** who claimed to have been initiated into witchcraft by his grandmother in 1933 promoted the so-called 'Alexandrian' form of witchcraft based on the experience of a coven which he established. Initiation into his coven, as in many covens, involved being blindfolded and bound, and also the use of blood oaths.
- 8.14 The supposed **rule** of witching is 'harm no one and do as you will', but the decision as to what is right or wrong is left to the witch. The practice of magic by the coven depends on the 'group mind' and 'collective unconsciousness'. Witchcraft like spiritism has left a trail of casualties.
- 8.15 Interest in **Shamanism** has grown in recent years as New Age writers have identified the influence of key people claiming special power and enlightenment such as magicians, witch doctors, medicine-men, sorcerers and Shamen, Indians in North America, Eskimos and tribes in South America and primitive people elsewhere.
- 8.16 The **Shaman** claims to be a powerful healing influence in the community and uses spirit guides and trances in the context of nature religion, often involving animals. There are increasing numbers in the New Age Movement today claiming to be Shamen.
- 8.17 Shamanism aims to exercise control in the spirit world by using visions and dreams. They are often medicine men who claim powers of healing, and sorcerers, and they use altered states of consciousness to contact 'gods and spirits' of the natural world. It is closely linked to animism and imaginary journeying. The most prominent exponent of shamanism in New Age is **Carlos Costenanda**.
- 8.18 The modern Shaman claims to combine the skills of native healers and magicians, is frequently involved in **sorcery** and offers prayer to the 'great spirit' or 'spirits'.
- 8.19 Many New Age movements have appropriated old **initiation rights** (often involving blood oaths) for entry into shamanic, metaphysical 'healing', and nature religion groups and a variety of secret societies. The basic concept is that of a hierarchy of wisdom, limited to the few.
- 8.20 A common characteristic of paganism is its emphasis upon **darkness** with night activities and black clothing. By contrast Jesus comes as the "light of the world".

9. Monism and Pantheism

- 9.1 The New Age Movement is universally committed to forms of **monism** or **pantheism**.
- 9.2 **Monism** teaches that **all is one**, and that one is all.
- 9.3 Monism claims that all life, including animals, plants and people, is one impersonal, undifferentiated whole. New Agers claim that everything including individual men and women are **fragments** of the same 'cosmic consciousness'.
- 9.4 Monism denies separateness. It asserts that we are **part of one another** and part of nature. This takes away our individuality and uniqueness and therefore robs us of our personal worth and value.
- 9.5 **Pantheism** teaches that **all is God** and that God is all. Everything that exists, is God.
- 9.6 Pantheism destroys any **distinction** between creation and the creator: God and the universe are identical.
- 9.7 Pantheism states that we are God, having the 'God **source**' or the 'God **force**' within us.
- 9.8 Pantheism deliberately **challenges** the God who is over all, **expels** him from his position of authority and **reduces** him to our life form.
- 9.9 Pantheism **depersonalises** God and sees God as 'life force'.
- 9.10 Because pantheism sees the individual as God, its teaching is that "**to know yourself is to know God**".

- 9.11 Because pantheists claim that everything is God, they claim that everything, whether **good or evil**, is divine and so totally reject the concept of a perfect God. They also reject the existence of a sinful human race. Inevitably, therefore, pantheists have great problems in accepting any framework of morality.
- 9.12 Pantheists claim that the predicament of the human race lies not in sin but in lack of wisdom. Pantheists therefore seek '**enlightenment**' rather than forgiveness of sin.
- 9.13 Monism and pantheism are to be found in **Gnosticism** (both today and in the time of the early Church) and in **Hinduism** and other Eastern religions.
- 9.14 **Gnosticism** believes that humanity's greatest weakness is ignorance not sin. Gnostics claim "your wisdom is within".
- 9.15 **Hinduism** believes that the ultimate reality is *Brahman* - an impersonal principle. Human beings and the world are seen as manifestations of *Brahman*. The individual soul is the universal soul.
- 9.16 **Buddhism** (whose founder is called 'the enlightened one') denies the separate and personal God. Hinduism claims "*Thou art That*" which means that the *Atman* (the individual soul) is integrated with the all-embracing and pervading *Brahman*.
- 9.17 The contrast between the **impersonal 'life force'** of the New Age and the **loving Father God** who Jesus teaches us to address as *Abba* (daddy) could not be greater.
- 9.18 There is nothing new about the New Age teachings which consistently **deny** God as revealed in Jesus, and consistently **deny** the reality of sin and the need for forgiveness.
- 9.19 Leading New Age writer Benjamin Creme in 'Reappearance of the Christ' states "*God is the sum total of all that exists in the whole of the manifested and unmanifested universe...you are God. I am God...and because all is God, there is no God.*"
- 9.20 Another leading New Age writer David Spangler in 'Revelation..The Birth of the New Age' states "*Am I God? Am I a Christ? Am I a Being come to you from the dwelling places of the Infinite? I am all these things, yet more.*"
- 9.21 New Age Guru Sathya Sai Baba boldly states, "*you are the God of this universe*" (quoted in his biography published by the Sri Sathya Sai Foundation).
- 9.22 In the controversial film 'The Last Temptation of Christ' based on a novel by Nikos Kazantzakis, Christ is made to say "**everything's a part of God**". In his instruction to the script the author says "*it is not God who will save us - it is us who will save God...*"
- 9.23 Prominent New Ager Shirley MacLaine in 'Dancing in the Light' says "**We are not under the law of God. We are as the law of God. We are God.**" "*Each soul is its own God. You must never worship anything other than self. For you are God. To love self is to love God.*" This attitude is precisely defined in Romans 1.25 "*they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the creator - who is forever praised.*"
- 9.24 In spite of its inward-looking preoccupation with self, monist and pantheist New Age robs us of our individuality. Leading New Ager Fritjof Capra admits "*all individuality dissolves into universal, undifferentiated oneness.*"
- 9.25 **Self worship** is an inevitable characteristic of the New Age - Swami Muktananda (quoted in 'The Cult Explosion', David Hunt) says "*Kneel to your own self, Honour and worship your own being. God dwells within you as You.*"
- 9.26 '**Enlightenment**' and '**self actualisation**' means in New Age language, the fulfilment of our potential to the point where we realise our **deity**. 'Christ consciousness' means for New Agers, not having a close relationship with Jesus Christ, but rather being aware that we are Christ or God.
- 9.27 Those who claim divinity are strongly rebuked by the Prophet Ezekiel - "*This is what the Sovereign Lord says: In the Pride of your heart you say, 'I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god'...But you are a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god*". (Ez. 28:1-2)
- 9.28 New Agers claim that matter, energy and consciousness are all one. Christians do not deny the inter-relatedness of humanity and all creation but insist on the 'otherness' of God who is not tainted by our **sin**, or restricted by our **weakness**. Christians also believe in the uniqueness and value of each individual person, who God calls by **name** and who were **known** in their mother's womb.

10. The Human Potential Movement

- 10.1 The New Age claims that we have infinitely greater powers within **ourselves** than those which we exercise. They therefore put great emphasis upon 'expansion of consciousness', '**self**-enlightenment', '**self**-discovery', and '**self**-improvement'.
- 10.2 To release our powers within, New Agers see no need for a God apart from and external to individual men and women. They may hold this view because they are pantheists, or simply because they are secular humanists who believe with Protagoras (the ancient Greek Philosopher) that "*man is the measure of all things*".
- 10.3 New Agers may be atheists who totally reject the supernatural or agnostics seeking a new spirituality. They both look **within** for help. They both seek to tap an **inner life force**.
- 10.4 The message of the New Age is "*your healing is within you*".
- 10.5 The Human Potential Movement accepts this message, rejects **monotheistic** belief and the **Christian God** and embraces numerous systems and techniques for 'personal growth', 'consciousness expansion' and 'self-enlightenment'.
- 10.6 The Human Potential Movement has emerged at a time of growing preoccupation and obsession with **self** which often precludes all else and certainly excludes God. It fits in well with a society which encourages greed and gain.
- 10.7 The New Age offers systems of 'self-management' and 'self-analysis' which frequently lead to a form of introspection and self-reliance which brings confusion and distortion of judgement and frequently causes immeasurable **damage**.
- 10.8 New Age systems include EST (Erhard Seminar Training) - an authoritarian and confrontational technique of 'brain-washing'. Its founder Erhard was heavily influenced by the Scientology cult and Zen Buddhism and his 'personal growth' seminars have involved **systematic thought manipulation, self-hypnosis, verbal abuse** and **visualisation** techniques. He states "*in actuality, each of us, as the sole creator of our universe, is a God, and because we have created all, everything is as important as everything else*". "*When you get in touch with yourself...you will experience yourself as the creator of your own circumstances*".
- 10.9 Human Potential Movement seminars, arranged by growing numbers of New Age companies, have now deeply penetrated **management training** programmes in industry and in the public sector in the United Kingdom, mainland Europe and the United States. They all preclude the concept of the Christian God and many of them embrace occultic practices.
- 10.10 MSIA, a New Age company which runs '**transformational seminars**', operates extremely strict disciplines. It has 250 centres in the USA and links with Eckankar whose founder Paul Twitchell encouraged astral projection.
- 10.11 Another similar group - Silva Mind Control, uses '**psychic counsellors**', **hypnosis** and the **invocation of spirits**.
- 10.12 One of the techniques widely used in Human Potential Movement courses, including Silva Mind Control, is that of endeavouring to **empty** ourselves and to become nothing. In meditation people are encouraged to **visualise** a box or room deep within themselves. They are encouraged to empty this completely and then after much waiting to **invite** two 'friends' to enter. Sometimes people are invited to visualise two chairs in this room with the 'visitors' or 'inner counsellors'(actually spirit guides) sitting on them. They visualise themselves kneeling before them and are then asked to **listen** to what these 'visitors' in this trance-created inner sanctuary have to say. In doing this, people are directly led to invite spirits into their lives. They are then encouraged to obey what these 'visitors' say. The power of these spirits enters into them and has a profound and damaging influence upon both their mind and body.

Those who exercise this technique invariably **deceive** participants by initially hiding the fact that they are using 'trance-channelling'. Usually these spirits, often referred to as 'ascended masters', identify themselves by name.

- 10.13 In the 1993 programme of the Findhorn Foundation which is the motivating force behind the New Age in Britain, course descriptions give an indication of the direction in which the New Age Movement is going - *"We open our hearts to the spirit **within** us", "together we can explore the Christ and Buddha **within**", "opportunities for individuals to turn **within** for a deeper understanding of their essential self..."* Workshops are held dealing with *"self-help for stress", "healing and **higher-self** contact"* and participation in *"research of Our **Inner Knowing**".*
- 10.14 All Human Potential courses raise fundamental questions about human **identity**. Our understanding of ourselves is fundamental to our attitudes and beliefs -
- 10.14.1 If we regard ourselves **uncritically**, blinding ourselves to our greed, selfishness and sin we become dangerously self-centred. Obsession with self (narcissism) can destroy us and we can be eaten up by our own ego. This is the experience of many involved in the New Age.
- 10.14.2 If we regard ourselves as of **little value**, our low self-esteem will cause us and others great damage. Self-contempt robs us of hope and love and it can become nihilistic (life-denying). New Age teaches people to build up their own self-esteem by den`ying the reality of sin and weakness in their lives. The ultimate recognition of their true unworthiness often leads people into deep depression. The Bible consistently teaches that we can never be perfect and thus create good self-esteem, through our own efforts. God alone enables us to love ourselves as He shows us our true identity.
- 10.14.3 If we try to make ourselves into **God** and worship ourselves we drift into the folly of idolatry and have no external point of reference to guide us in moral and personal judgements. When our 'god' fails we have nowhere else to go and are left in desolation. This is the experience of many New Age victims.
- 10.14.4 Improvements in our human condition are seen by New Agers as attainable only through our own **personal** efforts or through the influence of **spirits**, rather than through the grace of God. The Christian believes that God alone can meet his fundamental needs, can deal with his sin and can enable his true humanity to be released. Thus the Christian discovers his real identity, personal worth and significance through experiencing the love of God manifest in Jesus Christ.
- 10.15 Within the New Age an integral part of 'developing potential' is the achievement of 'expanded consciousness' or **Altered State of Consciousness** - ASC, with a claimed increased perception and awareness of one's 'inner self'.
- 10.16 In many parts of the world people have been led into a so-called 'higher consciousness' or 'mind expansion', or ASC, by the use of **drugs**. A sense of time and space is often lost in a drug-generated hallucinatory experience. The damage caused to individuals and society by drug dependence and addiction is enormous and growing.
- 10.17 Some New Agers including Richard Alpert (who changed his name to **Ram Dass**) promoted the discovery of new truths through psychedelia experiences with LSD, mescaline and special forms of mushrooms. Their message was - *"turn on, tune in, drop out"*. They opened up areas of the mind to a variety of external influences some of which were inevitably dangerous and destructive. The external influences and spirits which entered frequently brought about a radical change in personality. Although it is claimed to be '**enlightenment**', for most it becomes **bondage**.
- 10.18 Many New Age systems involve people opening themselves to powerful external influences and **control** by others. For example, the 60 hour EST course (Erhard Seminar Training) involves considerable personal abuse and temporary loss of freedom in order to gain what they call *"a break-through in the art and science of achievement"*. It has left some profoundly damaged and many deeply confused.
- 10.19 New Agers pay particular attention to the significance of the two hemispheres of the **brain**. They believe that we are today moving to a greater emphasis upon the right side. The left side tends to be logical and verbally orientated (male) and the right side creative and intuitive (female).
- 10.20 New Agers frequently use the phrase '**cosmic consciousness**' to explain the experience of becoming one with the whole cosmos and going beyond all that we would recognise as reality. Marilyn Ferguson ('The Brain Revolution') spells out the various experiences encountered in trance. These include "a sense of expanding like a bubble or bounding upward", lights, colours, thrills, patterns, "a roaring sound", "a sense of liberation", "a feeling of being separated from physical self", and a belief "that the experience is the only reality and that ordinary consciousness is but its poor shadow".
- 10.21 Biblical teaching points to radical changes of perception which occur when we are in Christ. "...be transformed by the renewing of your **mind**". (Rom. 12.2). The affirmation of the early Christians was "we

have the **mind of Christ**" (1 Cor. 2.16). The Bible emphasises that we cannot save ourselves - we need a Saviour.

11. Syncretism and Pluralism

- 11.1 The New Age Movement **warmly embraces** syncretism - the attempt to bring together diverse or opposite beliefs and practices.
- 11.2 Syncretism claims that the same fundamental truths are to be found in **all** religions. It totally rejects the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.
- 11.3 Syncretism argues that there are many **equally valid** ways to God other than through Jesus Christ. The words of Jesus "*No-one comes to the Father except through me*" (John 14.6) are scorned.
- 11.4 New Agers are undoubtedly offering a new, if confusing, religion. Alice Bailey in her channelled book 'The Reappearance of the Christ' states "*we are...visioning a new and vital world religion, a universal faith which will have its roots in the past, but which will make clear the new dawning beauty and the coming vital revelation*". "*The great theme of the **new world religion** will be the recognition of the many divine approaches..*"
- 11.5 Syncretism challenges the **Lordship** of Christ. It denies His ultimate **authority** and it refuses to accept that Jesus has "*the name that is above every name*", "*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*" (Phil.2.9,10).
- 11.6 New Age syncretists are highly **selective** in their reading of the Gospels. We cannot choose between the various teachings of Jesus because they are indivisible. Neither can we separate what He says from what He does, and from who He is.
- 11.7 In denying the **distinctiveness** of Christ New Agers believe in the oneness of all religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Taoism, Christianity etc. They choose to ignore mutually exclusive beliefs and dogmatically assert that God is in all the 'enlightened' founders and prophets of the various religions.
- 11.8 New Agers dismiss the claims which Jesus makes about himself and rank him together with Hercules, Hermes, Krishna and Buddha as one of many men who became sons of God. 'Christ' is a title which they bestow upon many and Jesus is **dethroned**.
- 11.9 Annie Besant in 'Esoteric Christianity' states "*the historical Christ, then, is a glorious Being belonging to the great **spiritual hierarchy** that guides the spiritual evolution of humanity, who used for three years the human body of the disciple Jesus.*"
- 11.10 Leading New Ager Benjamin Creme in 'Reappearance of the Christ' states "*Jesus is divine in exactly the sense that we are divine*" and also "**The Christ is not God.** *When I say, 'the coming of Christ', I don't mean the coming of God, I mean the coming of a divine man, a man who has manifested his divinity by the same process that we are going through - the incarnational process, gradually perfecting Himself.*"
- 11.11 New Agers assert the **divinity** of all men and women, thus robbing Jesus Christ of His uniqueness and His authority. Annie Besant in 'Is Theosophy anti-Christian?' claims "*all men are innate divinity...in time all men becomes christs*".
- 11.12 Adelaide Bry in '60 Hours that Transform your Life' (linked with Werner Erhard's EST system) claims "*Jesus is just another **guru** who happens to be popular here in western civilisation.*" "*The church totally misinterpreted what Jesus said. He kept telling over and over that everyone was like He was; perfect.*" In propounding his theories of relativism he inevitably came to the conclusion (stated in the same book) "**wrong is actually a version of right.**" This is at the root of much of the confusion within New Age today.
- 11.13 **Today** we live in a **pluralist** society in which many different and contradictory beliefs compete. The early church existed in a pluralist society with many of the same beliefs which we encounter today - pantheism, monism, gnosticism, the occult - **all of which deny Christ**. In a pluralist society there is always a danger of seeing different religions as each being part of a greater and higher truth. This inevitably leads to the rejection of Christ and His Gospel. It robs Jesus of His uniqueness and His divinity.

- 11.14 Today we face twin dangers - syncretism and triumphalism. **Syncretism** would have us believe that there are other ways to God other than through Jesus Christ. This denies the absolute truth expressed in Christ's ministry. **Triumphalism** would have us reject everything within other religions. This denies the possibility of God, through His Holy Spirit, who is the spirit of truth, working and speaking beyond the circle of Christian believers and the churches. Both these positions are untenable.

12. Relativism and Morality

- 12.1 **Relativism** rejects all absolute standards. It denies the existence of absolute truth. The New Age Movement embraces relativism.
- 12.2 **Morality** is concerned with the distinction between right and wrong and the principles of conduct based on this distinction. New Age claims that moral value systems are tied to individual cultures and that each one of us needs to create our own morality - rooted in ourselves. It refuses to accept absolute values in morality.
- 12.3 Because it fuses good and evil ("*all is one*") the New Age denies **moral distinctions** and simply speaks of 'knowledge' - "*there is no evil - only the lack of knowledge*" "*Everything in life is either as a result of illumination or ignorance. Those are the two polarities. Not good and evil*" (Shirley MacLaine: 'Dancing in the Light'.)
- 12.4 Contrary to the Christian belief in the laws of God, Shirley MacLaine states "*We are **not** under the law of God. We are as the law of God. **We are God.***" ('Dancing in the Light')
- 12.5 New Age centres all morality, all authority and all healing in **human beings**. They claim we are our own saviours. Because of the 'all is one' philosophy, David Spangler even claims "*Man is his own Satan just as man is his own salvation*" ('Reflections of the Christ').
- 12.6 The spirit entity 'Emmanuel' speaking through Pat Rodegast in 'Emmanuel's Book' clearly states "**nothing in your human world is absolutely wrong.**" This, like so many channelled messages, is clearly demonic.
- 12.7 Modern New Agers propound moral standards which differ little from paganism and in some instances satanism. For example Matthew Fox states "*love life - and **do whatever you want***". ('On Becoming')
- 12.8 The New Age exponent of creation theology, Matthew Fox, sweeps aside the tradition of Judaeo Christian Biblical **ethics**. His commandment is "**pleasure first**", he states "*hurting others in itself is not evil*", He claims our divinity declaring "*We are we; and we are God*". (All in 'Whee! We, Wee All the Way Home'). Having dismissed the historical Jesus, Fox opens the floodgates of paganism claiming that "*the cosmic Christ of sexuality urges us*" to re-establish "*the sacredness of the phallus. Phallus as God-image.*" "*It takes courage to be lustful*". (All in 'The Coming of the Cosmic Christ').

13. Sin and Guilt

- 13.1 The Christian faces up to the **reality** of sin manifest in the world. The New Age dismisses sin as **illusory** and therefore there is no need for forgiveness and redemption.
- 13.2 The Christian believes that we are healed and transformed by the **grace of God**. The New Age insists this is done by **human effort** alone.
- 13.3 The Christian believes that good and evil are **opposites** and mutually exclusive. The New Age believes that they are the **same**.
- 13.4 The Christian recognises that **forgiveness** is a fundamental element in our healing. The New Age claims that all that is needed is **knowledge and enlightenment**.
- 13.5 We are urged by New Age writers such as Annie Besant in her book 'Karma' to "*surrender all the fallacious ideas of **forgiveness**, vicarious **atonement**, divine **mercy** and the rest of the opiates which superstition offers to the sinner*". Not surprisingly New Age followers find it difficult to come to terms with basic problems of guilt.
- 13.6 Christians see Christ upon His Cross as their only hope of **healing** and **redemption**. New Agers discount the Cross because they say there is no sin and we are not separate from God.

It was on the Cross that Jesus confronted the powers of darkness and, as Bishop Lesslie Newbigin says, "cast the ruler of this world out of his usurped throne."

- 13.7 The Christian, recognising that we live in a fallen world, sees the necessity for **redemption** and recognises that this is to be found in Jesus Christ alone. New Agers totally reject this - Matthew Fox says "*the fall and redemption model is wrong*" and instead speaks of 'original blessing' rather than 'original sin'.

14. The New Age and the Occult

- 14.1 Occult means hidden, secret, concealed and kept from view. It is inevitably surrounded by mystery and darkness. It is essentially concerned with the supernatural and the magical. The New Age is fundamentally **occultic**.
- 14.2 Many New Age concepts are presented as **esoteric**. This means truths which are purported to be private and confidential and available only to the initiated.
- 14.3 In contrast with the dark, hidden and often confusing esoteric messages of the New Age, the Christian Gospel is fundamentally **exoteric**. This means it is capable of being understood by all, that its Truth is for all to see and that Christ died for **all**. There is nothing hidden. Jesus is the Light of the World - "*the fool walks in darkness*" (Ecc. 2.14)
- 14.4 The way of God is always proclaimed as a movement from darkness into **light**. "*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light*". (Is. 9.2) The occult and much in New Age invites us to move from light into **darkness**. In the New Testament we are clearly warned "*have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*" (Ep. 5.11).
- 14.5 The New Age embraces many **secret** sects and societies with oaths and initiation ceremonies which bind members. The words of Jesus are very clear - "*there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops.*" (Luke 12.2,3)
- 14.6 In a New Age book dealing with the menopause, 'The Wise Woman' by Judy Hall, readers are encouraged to visit a statue of a goddess in a museum, the author comments "*many of them were magically impregnated*". The readers are then told to take a picture or a statue then "*focus your attention on the statue of the goddess until it begins to live...*" "*She may take you back to relive her myth, she may take you into a inner experience. Do not be afraid; allow the goddess to reveal to you what you need to know.*" "*This visualisation should be repeatedly daily until the goddess is revealed in a living presence.*"
- 14.7 New Agers draw heavily on Jewish mysticism and the **Kabbalah**. The Kabbalah is a complex system frequently presented in diagram form indicating paths along which followers may travel. Those who were involved in Kabbalah claimed to have a secret knowledge of an unwritten Torah, and Kabbalah supposedly enables its users to approach God directly. Kabbalah involves the use of magic formulas and a framework of describing the descent of 'spirit' into 'matter'.
- 14.8 S.L. Mathers, who was a Freemason and a spiritist, translated the Kabbalistic text and was instrumental in establishing the 'Isis-Urania Temple' of the Hermetic Order of the **Golden Dawn**. Although Golden Dawn virtually came to an end this century it has influenced countless New Age groups.
- 14.9 Theodor Reuss, another Freemason, had an obsession with Tantric Yoga and after establishing a masonic 'academy' in Germany led to the establishment of 'The Order of the Temple of the Orient' - **OTO**. This has a continuing influence upon New Age and also upon groups committed to satanism.
- 14.10 Aleister Crowley, a drug-taking spiritist, has had a dominant influence upon the development of the New Age in the United Kingdom and also upon satanism and witchcraft. He was initiated into Golden Dawn and OTO, the latter because of its sexual attractions. He claimed to have received a message from a spirit called Aiwass which said "*do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law*". Crowley's books are available in most New Age bookshops today and his writings have directly influenced Gardnerian witchcraft in Britain.

15. The Influence of Eastern Religions

- 15.1 New Age consciously makes the effort to **synchronise** aspects of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and Zoroastrianism with selected Christian beliefs. The growing influence of the East on the West is seen in the extensive practice of Yoga in the West. It is also seen in the extensive belief in reincarnation and the fusion of the individual with other beings and generations.
- 15.2 New Age embraces various **Hindu** concepts.
- 15.2.1 Ultimate reality is known as **Brahman** - an impersonal principle. Human beings and the world are seen as manifestations of Brahman.
- 15.2.2 'God' is seen as **Brahma** - the creator. The other two godheads are known as **Vishnu** - the sustainer and healer and **Shiva** - the destroyer.
- 15.2.3 Human life is seen as a birth-death-rebirth cycle of **reincarnations** in which we exist in different forms and are in a higher or lower state.
- 15.2.4 The Hindu aim is to come through these cycles by means of good Karmas. **Karma** is a Hindu term for the 'law' of justice, i.e. cause and effect. The result of our actions, both good and evil, in this life, are believed to determine the form of our existence in our 'future lives'. Experiences which are evil or painful may be deemed good because they empty us of so-called negative Karma. Both Hinduism and Buddhism stress Karma and reincarnation.
- 15.2.5 The final stage of human life after a cycle of reincarnations, in which our spirits are supposed to evolve through many lifetimes, is seen as **Nirvana**.
- 15.2.6 There are countless Hindu sects and many scriptures - written between 1400BC and 500AD. The oldest are The **Vedas**. The most sacred is the **Bhagavad Gita**. Basic teachings and speculations are to be found in The **Upanishads**.
- 15.3 New Age embraces various **Buddhist** concepts.
- 15.3.1 The Buddha - the so-called '**enlightened one**' taught that Nirvana could be reached through meditation and his followers could proceed to pass on truths to the world. Earlier Buddhism was known as Tharavada and later Buddhism (outside India) as Mahayana. Dhama contains the teachings of Buddha.
- Buddhism developed from Hinduism, as did Jainism (with a strong emphasis upon asceticism and Sikhism which combined much Hindu and Islamic teaching).
- 15.3.2 Buddhism basically subscribes to **monism** and denies the personal god.
- 15.3.3 The Buddhist belief **Samsara** describes a cycle of birth, suffering, death and rebirth.
- 15.3.4 Tibetan Buddhism started in the 7th Century AD. Buddhism mixed with occult practices led to **Lamaism**. They believe that enlightenment comes through **Bodhisattvas** who, though they have experienced liberation, forego Nirvana to bring the message of enlightenment to others.
- 15.3.5 **Zen** is a branch of Mahayana Buddhism. Zen is a Japanese word meaning meditation. It implies an experience of enlightenment which flows from a turning away from the logical and cerebral. Enlightenment for Zen Buddhists is known as **Satori** and their sitting meditation is known as Zazen.
- 15.4 New Age embraces various **Taoist** concepts.
- 15.4.1 Taoism was founded by **Lao-tzu-m** of whom little is known. He rejected ambition, chose the simple life and wrote the Tao Te King. His teachings were promoted in books by Chuang-tzu.
- 15.4.2 Tao can be described as a way or path of **passivity**. It emphasises withdrawal, inactivity, indifference and inaction (Wu Wei). The Tao Te King (chapter LVI) states "*He who knows the Tao does not care to speak about it. He who knows it will keep his mouth shut.*"
- 15.4.3 Chuang-tzu writes "*It is the way of the Tao to act without thinking of acting...To taste without discerning any flavour*", and he asserts "absence of desires brings **tranquility**".
- 15.4.4 Taoism teaches that all things emanate from Tao and propounds the **Yin Yang** concept of elements contrary to each other - interacting forces from which all life flows. Yang equates

with the male, life, activity and is positive. Yin equates with the female, death, passivity and is negative. Yang equates with goodness, light, summer. Yin equates with evil, darkness, winter. Those who believe in this, see Yin Yang as a process of continuous interaction, change and evolution.

- 15.4.5 Philosophical Taoists teach that **feelings** and instincts, fantasy and imagination should be freely exercised. In this they contrast with Confucius who saw man primarily as a rational and moral being.
- 15.5 New Age embraces various **Zoroastrian** concepts.
 - 15.5.1 **Zoroaster** lived in what is now known as Iran many centuries before Christ. Zoroastrianism believes that the favour of the impersonal God can be gained by good works.
 - 15.5.2 They believe in two **co-equal deities** Ahura-Mazda (the good) and Angra-Mainyu or Ahriman (the evil).
 - 15.5.3 Zoroastrian priests use **magic** in their religious ceremonies.
 - 15.5.4 Many followers of Zoroastrianism use hallucinogenic **drugs** in their worship. Fire has always been a central symbol of their cult.
- 15.6 Because the New Age Movement essentially contains many **contradictory** elements drawn from different religions and philosophies and is fundamentally pluralistic, there is inevitably much **confusion** within and amongst its adherents.
- 15.7 Practices and beliefs of Eastern Religions are **selectively adopted** by a wide variety of New Age cults. Many of them involve accepting a rigid discipline and total unquestioning **obedience** to the cult leader. Many, although not all, involve high subscriptions which limit them to the comparatively wealthy.
- 15.8 Most New Agers have only a slight knowledge of Eastern Religions but derive their beliefs from teachers and **Gurus** in whom they place implicit trust. Each Guru tends to have his own 'system' and set of 'techniques'. Well known New Age Gurus include Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Swami Muktananda and Sri Aurobindo. When trust in the Guru or system is broken followers invariably go through a period of great crisis and distress.
- 15.9 The collision between the teaching of Jesus and the teaching of many gurus is seen in the statements of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh "***I don't believe in morality***", "***I am bent on destroying it***" (Sannays Magazine September/October 1978). He also states "***my ashram (spiritual community) makes no difference between the demonic and the divine***" (The Sound of Running Water 1980).
- 15.10 Swami Vivekananda, a dominant influence on New Age thinking proclaimed "***good and evil are one and the same***" and "***the murderer too is God***" (Vivekananda The Yogas and Other Works 1953).
- 15.11 Basic ideas drawn from Eastern Religions permeate many of the teachings of New Age movements. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who has influenced large numbers of people through the Transcendental Meditation movement teaches in 'Science of Being and Art of Living' "***each individual is, in his true nature, the impersonal God***". The Maharishi strongly rejects basic Christian belief and states "***I don't think Christ ever suffered or could suffer***" (Meditations).
- 15.12 The adoption of many basic ideas drawn from Eastern Religions inevitably involves the **rejection** of fundamental Christian teaching, experience and practice, or alternatively a compromise which is intellectually dishonest.
- 15.13 **Secrecy** is a fundamental element of many New Age movements. An instance of this is Transcendental Meditation. Initiates are given a Mantra which they must not disclose to any other person. Furthermore the initiation ceremony into TM is invariably in Sanskrit and therefore unknown to most initiates. It contains invocations to 'Lord Naryana', 'Brahma', 'Vashishta', and others and in the offering rites initiates bow down before Shri Guru Dev. Although their teachings are rooted in Hinduism, TM bodies persist in claiming that they are not a religious movement. John Harding writing in the Sunday Times Magazine (11th December 1988) about going to a TM course said "you must undertake not to reveal it to others, which limits what I can tell you about it".

16. The Gateway to the New Age

- 16.1 Many people, dissatisfied with a materialistic society, are seeking a **deeper spirituality**. Sadly, many of them are not finding it in the churches and turn to New Age.
- 16.2 Increasing numbers of people are concerned about the damage being done to the **environment** and are drawn into New Age ecological movements.
- 16.3 Society is becoming more aware of the need for **holistic healing**. Many are turning to alternative practices including occult techniques offered by New Age.
- 16.4 The recognition of the need for **global** solutions to many contemporary social, political and economic problems has led many people into 'One World' New Age movements.
- 16.5 In a highly competitive society people are encouraged to seek personal growth and improvement. Industrial corporations and public bodies facilitate this in special courses. These are increasingly influenced by the **Human Potential Movement** fostered by New Age.
- 16.6 A major element in life today is a sense of **insecurity and fear**. This, together with the emergence of the mobile society where people, products, ideas and images move further, faster and more frequently than ever before, has led to confusion, instability and vulnerability.
- 16.7 People are looking for **certainty** - hence the growth of dogmatic political movements and religious cults - many associated with New Age. People are searching for comfort, relaxation and healing which has inevitably drawn them to New Age related meditation and spiritual exploration.
- 16.8 At a time when radical changes are taking place in society New Agers refer to a '**paradigm**' **shift** in conventional thinking. They recognise a need for fundamental change but do not accept that this can be achieved through the Christian faith.

17. The Claim to Heal

- 17.1 New Age rejects many of the foundations of Western medicine and claims to be able to heal using **esoteric** techniques including crystals, pendulums, and I Ching. I Ching is an old Chinese technique of divination. Forty-nine stalks of Yarrow are thrown down and arranged into hexagrams; patterns are then interpreted.
- 17.2 The New Age is preoccupied with the source, channel and direction of '**energy**'. It is concerned with energy routes within the world (so-called ley lines) and energy routes in the body. Great significance is given to the routes and crossing points of these in the human body (chakras).
- 17.3 Because of its absorption of **eastern** ideas inevitably New Age has accommodated a broad range of therapies and techniques which have been prevalent in the East for many years. Some of these undoubtedly have value, although the basic religious rationale is often highly suspect and potentially dangerous.
- 17.4 For the Taoist, Chi is a vital energy flowing through everything - similar to the Hindu Prana (breath). From their concept of Wei-Chi (meaning unity), there developed **Tai-Chi** - the holding of opposing energies in equilibrium - Yin and Yang.
- 17.5 **Acupuncture**, an ancient Chinese technique for the relief of pain, uses needles to free blockages and thus ensure an unimpeded flow of energy along body lines or 'meridians'. Some practitioners see this as a basic physical process. Others however, try to tie it to a spiritual belief system.
- 17.6 Numerous forms of **meditation** are put forward by New Age for therapeutic purposes. Many of these involve the effort to totally empty the mind, thus causing a vacuum into which anything may enter. In comparison with this, Christian meditation involves focusing upon the real presence of Jesus Christ who is the Light of the World and the Prince of Peace.
- 17.7 Books are today flooding onto the market teaching us methods of **self-healing**. The message is very clear - it is man or spirit entities who heal and not God. A typical instance of this is 'Your Hands can Heal: How to channel Healing' Rick Weinman. Another 'You can Heal your Life' by Louise Hay offers techniques on the basis of "I open myself to the wisdom **within**".
- 17.8 Many therapies developed by psychologists, notably **Carl Rogers**, seek to emphasize that our healing comes from within us. Although Rogers opened up beneficial areas of counselling, his influence upon the development of EST, Gestalt techniques and psychosynthesis has raised many doubts.

- 17.9 While claiming to be healers, many New Age practitioners do in fact contribute to **disease and disorder**. By dismissing God who is the source of all healing, they frequently leave their casualties with emotional deadness and a feeling of despair. There is mounting evidence of attack by evil spirits upon those who have opened themselves to these practitioners.
- 17.10 There is also an **occult** 'National Federation of Spiritual Healers'. These 'healers', as in the case of most mediums, leave a trail of human misery. Various descriptions are used such as 'spiritual healing', 'psychic healing', 'esoteric healing' and 'faith healing'. Although there are some instances of cure, involvement with these mediums frequently leads to severe spiritual and emotional disorder.
- 17.11 New Age spawned a bewildering range of techniques for healing and supposed liberation. One of these, **Holotropic Breathing** is used at Findhorn conferences. By use of hyperventilation, music and so-called 'body work' it achieves some of the same results as LSD. The proponent of this 'therapy' which is claimed to lead to 'expanded mystical and spiritual dimension' in life is Stanislav Grof. Commenting on the 'therapy' (in his book 'The Adventure of Self Discovery') he states *"among the reactions that might spontaneously occur...are violent shaking, grimacing, coughing, gagging, vomiting, a variety of movements, and a wide range of sounds that include screaming, baby talk, animal voices, talking in tongues or a language foreign to the client, shamanic chanting, and many others. ... This activity should be encouraged and continued until the emotional psychosomatic discomfort disappears"*.
- 17.12 Describing his experience of holotropic breathing (One Earth Magazine, Issue 4), Dr David Mead writes, *"I ... became aware of a **demonic face** in front of me and about to consume me. I fought this off but then allowed the image to become a part of me."*

18. New Age and 'One World'

- 18.1 The New Age influence emphasises universal brotherhood and the establishment of international co-operative movements. They speak of peace, harmony and 'greater awareness'. New Ager Marilyn Ferguson spelt out the pattern in her book 'The Aquarian Conspiracy'. She presents a blueprint for a **new world order** involving the rejection of most current world views and also the Christian concept of God.
- 18.2 Alice Bailey propounded the concepts of One New **World Government** and One New **World Religion**. These, together with her occultic ideas have been taken up by international bodies such as 'World Goodwill', and 'Planetary Citizens' (founded by Donald Keys, Consultant to the United Nations).
- 18.3 Leading New Age thinker, **Fritjof Capra** (in 'Green Politics: the Global Promise'), states *"My own working definition of spirituality is that it is the aspect of human existence that explores the subtle forces of energy in and around us, and reveals to us profound inter-connectedness."* Whereas Christians have long asserted the fundamental physical interdependence of the created world they relate to a God who has revealed Himself to them personally and powerfully, rather than through the operation of an impersonal energy.
- 18.4 The pollution of the earth and its environment is rapidly becoming the major political issue. New Agers have been quick to link up with the Green movement. Bob Hunter writing in 'Greenpeace Chronicles' (August 1979) said *"Nature is quite obviously the physical totality of God's work. Within it, as part of it, viewing what is Our Self from the individual compartments of our little selves, we become aware that Nature is in fact us. The world is **Our Body**...Mother Earth is not passive. To align oneself with her energies is to liberate the **Godhead within** you, to be lifted up into a higher state of being, to align yourself with her energies is to liberate at the same time the true animal within."*
- 18.5 New Agers having removed God, increasingly refer to '**Mother Nature**' and see the earth as feminine, self-creating and self-nurturing.
- 18.6 That the world is facing an ecological crisis of enormous magnitude is now beyond dispute. The concern to protect God's creation has led some Christians into a form of 'Creation-Centred Spirituality' which is in danger of committing them to Creation-Centred belief as opposed to God-centred belief. Christians hold firmly to the statement in Psalm 24 - *"the earth is the **Lord's**, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."*
- 18.7 In 1922 Alice Bailey launched the Lucifer Publishing Company - she saw **Lucifer** as a "bringer of light". The name was changed to Lucis Trust whose subsidiary 'World Goodwill' is affiliated to the United Nations as a non-governmental organisation. It has close links with many international bodies and has endeavoured to establish world-wide credibility for New Age and theosophical ideas.

- 18.8 The former United Nations Secretary-General, U Thant, a Buddhist, strongly influenced his deputy, **Robert Muller**, who became a powerful exponent of the New Age setting up the 'Robert Muller School of Ageless Wisdom' in Texas. He was totally committed to "global transformation" as presented by the New Age movement and he expounded world government and a World Religion.

19. Consequences and Casualties

- 19.1 Many New Age courses and cultic communities involve a powerful **control** mechanism.
- 19.2 This mechanism may take the form of a cult **leader**, a so-called **focaliser** or a so-called **spirit guide**.
- 19.3 The control process may reduce personal initiative and the exercise of will to the point where a person may lose their sense of **identity**.
- 19.4 People who have repeatedly withdrawn into an **imaginary** and/or **hallucinatory** environment (sometimes promoted and encouraged by the use of drugs such as LSD) become listless and unable to relate freely to others.
- 19.5 Those endeavouring to escape from New Age influences frequently experience profound **fear**, extreme **depression**, and other **withdrawal symptoms**.
- 19.6 Former New Agers need to have **bonds** with the past broken and to be set free from controls which have been deliberately imposed upon their intellect and emotion.
- 19.7 Increasing numbers of people who have innocently drifted into New Age occultic practices need deliverance ministry. Those who have been subjected to so-called '**re-birthing**' techniques may be deeply damaged and invariably need to experience a genuine healing of memories in Christ.
- 19.8 Involvement with **meditation** techniques such as TM, which have focused attention upon self to the exclusion of a loving heavenly Father, will inevitably reveal the need for a prayerful relationship with God and a liberation from the 'gods' to which the TM participant, perhaps unwittingly, committed himself on initiation.
- 19.9 The ease with which people may drift into New Age activities can be seen in the way in which **tarot** cards have led people into practising witchcraft, obsession with **astrology** has led people into occult practices and even the 'Dungeons & Dragons' and other **role-playing games** into nightmares, involvement with occult literature and a close knowledge of the terms of witchcraft and satanism.
- 19.10 New Agers inevitably find themselves led into amoral positions. Shirley MacLaine in 'Dancing in the Light' proclaims "*there is no such thing as evil...evil is what you think it is.*"
- 19.11 **Charles Manson** - the mass murderer was deeply involved in the occult and firmly believed in pantheism and monism. Like many New Agers he was deeply involved in the use of LSD and swept aside the distinction between good and evil, with disastrous consequences. This has been documented in many books, e.g. 'Our Savage God' by R C Zehner.
- 19.12 One of the proponents of the use of LSD at Harvard University, which led to misery and death for many is a hero figure within New Age and a close friend of the Findhorn Foundation. He calls himself **Ram Dass** but was known during his days in America as Richard Alpert a close colleague of the discredited Timothy Leary. Like Leary he was expelled from University. Leary and his team helped open the LSD flood gates in the USA in 1960's.
- 19.13 Encouraged by Ram Dass and his team, ten students of the **Andover Theological Seminary** went into Marsh Chapel at Boston University on Good Friday 1963. *"Nine of the ten who took the LSD reported mystical experience - one began to read out passages from Donne's poetry, ripped the buttons off his clothes and claimed he was a fish. Another wandered out into the Boston traffic, believing he was Christ: nothing, he thought, could harm him. Confusion reigned in the chapel as the untouched students watched their colleagues gyrating like snakes or stretched out rigid on the pews."* ('The Brotherhood of Eternal Love' - by Stewart Tendler and David May). By the early 1980's **thousands** of young lives had been irreversibly damaged by LSD.
- 19.14 The Maranatha Community has ministered to countless people whose lives have been **damaged** by involvement in New Age. Most of these had been searching for a spiritual dimension in life and a very high proportion of them (like most New Agers) have at some time had close involvement with the church.

- 19.15 There is no doubt that there is a very high price to be paid for involvement with New Age practices. Equally there is no doubt that the New Age movement is **fundamentally anti-Christian**.
- 19.16 It has been established beyond doubt that **Adolf Hitler** and a large proportion of the senior Nazi leadership were deeply involved in occultism. One of Hitler's closest advisers was Dietrich Eckhart the High Priest of the Thule Society a secret occult society. The concept of a millennial new age dominated by a race of **Aryan Gods** was at the centre of Hitler's dreams. Hitler was deeply influenced by a well known occultist von Lievenfel who edited the magazine Ostara believed in the superiority of the Aryan race and propound Norse mythology. Significantly there is evidence that the Nazi's sought "the cosmic power that makes a man a God in his own right" ('Hitler's Secret Sciences' by Nigel Pennick).
- Hitler's concept of a new era and a new millenium undoubtedly sprang from his connections with **occultic bodies** which has been well documented in books such as 'the Occult Messiah' and 'the Occult and the Third Reich'.
- 19.17 Concerted efforts are currently being made to influence **children** with New Age teachings. In 1989 a special Children's Workshop was held at St James Church "for children aged 7 - 12 years old to explore their inner and outer selves". This includes 'voyage visualisations' (Alternatives Programme 1989).
- 19.18 To establish credibility and legitimacy, New Age is making full use of the teachings of Meister Eckhart and Hildegard von Bingen and more recent writers such as Bede Griffiths. Ironically, the latter wrote "The great tyrants of history, Nero, or Stalin or Hitler, are examples of **man making himself God**. This goes all through human history." (in 'A New Vision of Reality').
- 19.19 Many people are drawn into New Age activities by experiences when they were children. Steve Harrill-Morris a witch said his "interest in witchcraft started when he was a **schoolboy** when he was given a pack of tarot cards." (The Independent). He then went on to become a ritual magician.
- 19.20 New Age seeks to **diminish** the importance of Jesus and **erodes** Christian belief. It is fundamentally antagonistic to the teaching of the Church.

20. The rejection of Jesus Christ

- 20.1 Just as Jesus was **denied** even by His closest friends so, in all the centuries Jesus has been **denied** in a variety of different ways. His nature and person have been doubted, distorted and rejected. This continues today.
- 20.2 **His divinity has been denied.** Yet Jesus says "*Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father*" (John 14.9) and "*I and the Father am one*" (John 10.30).
- 20.3 **His authority has been denied.** Yet the Gospel records "*He taught as one having authority*" (Matt.7.29) and "*He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases*". (Luke 9.1)
- 20.4 **His miracles have been denied.** Yet Jesus says "*go back and report to John what you hear and see. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the good news is preached to the poor*". (Matt. 11.4-6)
- 20.5 **His claims have been denied.** Yet He said "*I am the bread of life*" (John 6.35) "*I am the light of the world*" (John 8.12) "*I am the gate for the sheep*" (John 10.7) "*I am the good shepherd*" (John 10.11) "*I am the resurrection and the life*" (John 11.25) "*I am the real vine*" (John 15.1) "*I am the way, the truth, and the life*" (John 14.6) "*I and my Father are one*" (John 10.30)
- 20.6 **His reality has been denied.** Yet the eye witnesses testified that they had seen with their own eyes and touched - "*we proclaim to you what we have seen and heard*". (1 John 1.3)
- 20.7 **His crucifixion has been denied.** Yet it is clearly recorded in human history, and no one at the time was in any doubt. "*And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up His Spirit*". (Matt. 27.50) "*When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away*". (Luke 23.48)
- 20.8 **His Resurrection has been denied.** Yet Paul says "*if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith*".(1 Cor. 15.14)

- 20.9 **His promise of the Spirit has been denied.** Yet the promise made (John 14.16,17) has been fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2) and in the life of the Church with the gifts of the Spirit (Romans 12.6-8) and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5.22,23).
- 20.10 Most of the **cults** which emerged in America in the 19th century at the time of the early development of New Age, deny or diminish the deity of Jesus Christ. These include Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons. Significantly, they each deny the person of the Holy Spirit.

21. The denial of the deity and reality of Christ

- 21.1 At the time of the early Church some people refused to accept the person of Jesus Christ and their various views are shared by the various strands of the New Age Movement today.
- 21.1.1 The **Ebionites** denied the deity of Christ.
- 21.1.2 The **Gnostics** denied the full humanity of Christ. The orthodox Gnostics said that Christ had a real body but denied that it was physical (because flesh was fundamentally evil).
- 21.1.3 The **Cerinthians** claimed that Jesus was man and Christ was the power of the Spirit of God come upon Him.
- 21.1.4 The **Docetae** claimed that Christ's body was not real but ghostlike.
- 21.1.5 The **Arians** taught that Christ was not God in the fullest sense - he was divine but not a deity, he was a created being.
- 21.1.6 The **Apollinarians** taught that Jesus had two natures and that He was not a full and whole being.
- 21.1.7 The **Nestorians** taught that Christ was a human being filled with God
- 21.1.8 The **Eutychians** taught that Christ was neither man nor God but a mixture of the two.
- 21.2 Throughout human history there have been religious movements which are highly exclusive and elite. Christ came with a Gospel for **all**. Christians challenge those who would have us believe that 'higher wisdom' is restricted to the **few** to whom secret truths have been revealed. Christ's Gospel is not to be found in esoteric circles but in the market place where He moves, speaking the language of ordinary people. We need neither education nor special training or insight to be followers of and believers in Jesus.
- 21.3 The human Jesus born into a real family, in a real village at a specific time in human history comes in terms that we as human beings can understand. In Jesus we **see** God. In Jesus we **meet** God. In Jesus we discover the **power** of God. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit which He promised we experience the **reality** of God both as individuals and corporately.

22. The Churches and New Age

- 22.1 New Age influences are increasingly being brought to bear on Churches. These influences have gradually **undermined** the basic teachings of Jesus and **diluted** Christian belief.
- 22.2 Father **Matthew Fox** a Dominican priest, but now rejected by his order, is one of the leaders of New Age. Ostensibly preaching 'creation theology' he does in fact propound creation-centred spirituality. He declares "*the fall and redemption model is wrong.*" He sees the world not in terms of 'original sin' but of 'original blessing'. He rejects traditional Christianity as patriarchal, guilt-ridden and sin-obsessed.
- 22.3 Matthew Fox runs the 'Institute for Culture and Creative Spirituality' and he has a **practising witch** ('Starhawk') on his staff who regularly speaks with him. He attacks the God of the Bible as "*a vengeful, sadistic deity - peeping and judging, denouncing and spying; a God of guilt.*" ('Whee! We, Wee All the Way Home'). He bluntly claims "*in reality prayer is useless.*" and "*God is useless.*" ('On Becoming a Musical Mystical Bear').

- 22.4 One of the most important Anglican churches in London, **St. James Piccadilly** now hosts numerous New Age activities including visits by Matthew Fox who claims *"the Christ is incarnated in the historical Jesus, but also in the Earth - the Earth also has been crucified."* These activities include the celebration of 'Wesak', the full moon when the sun is in Taurus. In literature handed out at the church it was stated *"there is also a living legend that states at this full moon, the Buddha and the Christ join together with all other liberated beings and with the communion of saints to invoke a great annual blessing of the planets."* The Rector of St. James, Donald Reeves, has stated *"I am fed up with receiving letters from...people saying that Jesus Christ is the sole saviour, the sole mediator."*
- 22.5 **Peter Spink**, Canon Emeritus of **Coventry Cathedral** converted to New Age beliefs and set up the New Age 'Omega Order'. He specifically states that people of integrity, faith and wisdom drawn from all religions *"are the saviours of the race"* ('A Christian in the New Age'). In the same book, although he claims to be a Christian, he admits *"if you are truly New Age you believe in reincarnation, and for many it is the cornerstone of Aquarian belief."* And *"at the heart of the new creed is belief in a destiny determined by astrological influences."*
- 22.6 Church organisations in various parts of the United Kingdom are hosting a variety of 'human potential events' at which New Age ideas are being introduced. They are also hosting courses which classify personality types as a basis for spiritual understanding and growth. One such categorisation system, the **Enneagram**, was devised by two men with deep occult involvement - George Gurdjieff and Oscar Ichazo and is currently raising doubts amongst some Christians.
- 22.7 New Age **books and cassettes** have now flooded into Christian Bookshops and there is an increasing number of dedicated New Age shops. New Age and occultic publications are even infiltrating into Christian bookshops (as in the Friends Bookshop in London). Many Church bookstalls and noticeboards display material advertising New Age events, largely through ignorance. Increasingly articles favourable to the New Age are appearing in religious journals.
- 22.8 The New Age deliberately **usurps** Christian language and symbols. They use the symbol of the **Cross** but deny Christ's sacrifice. They speak of **"rebirthing"** but not "being born again". They speak of **"The Christ"**, but not of "Jesus". They speak of a 'universal pentecost' while denying the gifts and fruits of the Spirit. The apparently harmless language of New Age publications has misled many. In a book by Eileen Caddy ('The Dawn of Change'), the co-founder of the Findhorn Foundation, there is much talk of peace and love and the divine will. Closer reading, however, reveals a diminution of the Gospel - eg. *"true happiness comes from deep within yourself"* - not from the Lord. *"You contain all within you"*.
- 22.9 Many New Age activities appear to be innocuous to Christians, but in fact are not what they seem. An instance of this is **'Triangles'** in which it is said people meditate *"to create and sustain a healing web of energy around the planet"*. Triangle workers *"visualise a tide of light and love released from on high into their triangle, filling it with energy. At the point of maximum intensity, this energy is directed out across the planetary web."* The groups involved say "the Great Invocation". It is based upon Alice Bailey's concept of a 'planetary etheric field'. (See 'Rainbow Ark' - October 1991)
- 22.10 New Age has actively encouraged inter-faith acts of worship, sometimes in cathedrals. These have undoubtedly challenged the uniqueness of Jesus. Syncretism is being practised in many churches such as St. Margaret's in Whalley Range. The Priest of this church has said *"people often ask me: 'has Christianity got anything distinctive to offer'. I say: 'no it hasn't'. I see no difference between Jesus and Mohammed in the terms of the message they bring us' "*. (Independent 13th July 1992)
- 22.11 In a confused world **confusion** is the hallmark of New Age thinking. For example the Priest at St. James' Piccadilly states *"Christians have rarely agreed about anything."* Speaking of the fragmentation in the world he states *"it is inevitable therefore that a church community which is aware of this fragmentation, and the chaos this is causing, will itself be fragmented and chaotic. Christians use distinctive language, yet generally behave like everyone else: we at St. James' Piccadilly are **part of this chaos.**"* ('A Vision for Ten Years').
- 22.12 One of the most active proponents of the New Age, David Spangler who was involved in spiritism as a child, and who rejects most of the claims of Jesus is in fact the Lindesfarne fellow associated with the **Cathedral of St. John the Divine** in New York City.
- 22.13 New Age totally displaces the concept of Christian worship and Christian prayer. Alice Bailey states *"The science of **invocation** and **evocation** will take the place of what we now call 'prayer' and 'worship'...It is in reality the intelligent organisation of spiritual energy and of the forces of love, and these, when effective, will evoke the response of spiritual Beings who can again walk openly among men, and thus establish a close relationship and a constant communication between humanity and the spiritual Hierarchy"*. (The reappearance of the Christ')

- 22.14 Christians in Britain have been profoundly influenced by an '**enlightenment**' culture which has emphasised the supremacy of human reason. We have wrongly tended to believe that what we can see and explain is more real than what we cannot see and cannot explain.
- 22.15 Because the British churches have neglected the use of **meditation and contemplative prayer**, many people have turned to Yoga and TM. This has impoverished our spiritual roots and led many to turn away from the churches altogether seeking a deeper spirituality elsewhere.
- 22.16 A high proportion of New Age leaders come from Christian backgrounds. Because churches have neglected the healing ministry for so long people are looking **elsewhere** for healing - to spiritist 'churches', spiritual healers and a wide range of occult practitioners.

23. The conflict between the Gospel and 'New Age'

- 23.1 The Christian faith has been under severe **attack** from the beginning.
- 23.2 Many of today's attacks are merely **repetitions** of past endeavours to undermine Christ's life and teachings. New Age is in fact not new at all.
- 23.3 There have always been serious efforts to compromise the gospel and to **dilute** its message with false teachings. *"Certain men...have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men who...deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord"* (Jude v.4)
- 23.4 Wherever the Church grows it is inevitably under **demonic** attack. In the Letter to the early church it is stated *"all over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing"* (Col. 1.6) The writer however goes on to warn *"see to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ"* (Col 2.8). He then strongly affirms *"in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the Head over every power and authority..."*(Col. 2.9)
- 23.5 Affirming the **absolute supremacy** of Christ the writer declares about Jesus - *"he is the image of the invisible God"*. (Col. 1.15) *"He is before all things and in him all things hold together"*. (Col. 1.17) *"He is the head of the body of the church"*. (Col. 1.18)
- 23.6 There can be no doubt whatsoever about the clear understanding of the nature of Jesus in the early Church, which incidentally was actively engaged in mission to a **plural** society.
- 23.7 The early Church (like the Church today) was experiencing people *"teaching false doctrines"*. In 1 Timothy it is clearly stated - *"These promote controversies rather than God's work - which is by faith "* (1 Tim 1.4) Damage was (and is) caused - *"some have wandered away...and turned to meaningless talk"*. (1 Tim 1.6)
- 23.8 In the days of the early church there was a head-on **collision** between the Christians and those involved with idolatry. In 1 Thessalonians we read *"you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God"* (1 Thess 1.9)
- 23.9 In Philippians 3.18 Paul says with tears, many whose minds were on earthly things *"live as enemies of the cross of Christ"*. Today, as then, there are enemies of the Cross of Christ actively at work in our country. We ignore their work at our peril. There is a real need to defend the faith. At present too many battles are being lost by default. We in the church bear a very heavy responsibility.
- 23.10 The fact that people can easily be led to turn away from Christ is clearly recognised in the letter to the Galatians. Paul says *"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel - which is no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ."* (Galatians 1.6 & 7)
- 23.11 Today, as then, this perverting activity is evident both in the Church and also in the plethora of sects and cults which are so active . Paul spoke out strongly against the kind of **subversion** of the Gospel which is so prevalent today - *"I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ."* (2 Cor. 11.3)
- 23.12 The seriousness of the spiritual conflict faced by Paul and Christians today is seen in this sombre warning - *"The God of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ."* (2 Cor. 4.4)

- 23.13 It cannot be denied that Jesus foresaw and **warned** His church about the attacks they would sustain. He clearly told us of the coming of Anti-Christ. He would not have us be silent as they attack, or submit meekly to their onslaught today.
- 23.14 Today we face fierce **conflict** as demonic powers build up their onslaught on Christ and His Church. Let us be warned - *"if the trumpet does not sound a clear call who will get ready for battle?"* (1 Cor. 14.8)
- 23.15 The demonic nature of the attack upon the faith in our culture is sadly underestimated in many churches. In the instructions to Timothy there was no misunderstanding - *"the Spirit says that in later times **some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron**".* (1 Tim 4.1&2)
- 23.16 *"Watch out for false prophets"* warns Jesus (Matt. 7.15). He clearly states *"**false Christs and false prophets will appear**"* (Matt. 24.24).
- 23.17 Jesus is surely not talking about minor disagreements on belief or theological emphasis. Neither is he talking about free and open debate and questioning about the Gospel. He is talking about the dangerously false and misleading activities of **demonically** inspired and activated people. This is spiritual warfare.
- 23.18 Spiritual warfare involved a direct attack upon our **individual** beings and our individual worth. In contrast with the Christian concept of the individual having great value and uniqueness, the New Age submerges the individual into the mass of creation.
- 23.19 Marilyn Ferguson ('The Aquarian Conspiracy') claims **"the separate self is an illusion"**. The great assurance of biblical teaching and Christian experience is that God calls each one of us by name, that He holds us in the palm of His hand, that He knew us in our mother's womb, and that He will never leave us. Jesus even says that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without God knowing it.
- 23.20 Ram Dass dogmatically rejects the idea *"that there is some sort of divine thing outside of the rocks, trees and the rain"*. He asserts *"the wisdom is inherent in the collective consciousness and the way the forms manifest"*. Rejecting the concept of a separate being he says *"whatever we call that being, **it is us, our deepest truth, what we are**".* ('One Earth' - Winter 1991)
- 23.21 The aim of the New Age is to discover **'the God within'**. The God within us then determines our own morality and gives us our authority. We are no longer sinners, as the Bible teaches, but gods and therefore we worship not the Lord but ourselves. In the context of the Bible this is clearly idolatry as we see in the first and second Commandments. Warning is consistently given in the Bible of the disasters which follow idolatry. St Paul says, "Beloved, flee from idolatry" (1 Cor. 10.14). Ezekiel warns "You will...bear the consequences of your sins of idolatry." (Ezek. 23.48).
- 23.22 In 1987 advertisements appeared for a meeting to be addressed by **Benjamin Creme** a New Ager who propounds the theories of Alice Bailey and H.B. Blavatsky. He said *"Maitreya the Christ is in the World"*. He said he would soon emerge in London and has continued to make this claim. Benjamin Creme has a high standing in the New Age Movement and is currently struggling with the problem of an unfulfilled prophecy. The warnings of Jesus about deception undoubtedly apply in this instance. (See Matthew 24.4,5 & 23).
- 23.23 New Age challenges the concept of the **Holiness** of God which dominates the Old Testament. God is presented in the Bible as wholly other, high and mighty and beyond our comprehension. The basic attribute of the God of Israel is Holy which means separate, although God wishes humankind to share in his own divine life.
- 23.24 New Ager believe in a series of reincarnations. Christians believe they are called to eternal life. Christians believe that salvation is a **gift** of God's love, New Ager believe in self-realisation and achieving enlightenment through our own **efforts**. Christians accept the reality of sin and evil, these are seen as New Ager as ignorance of our true potential.
- 23.25 The **rejection** of God as revealed in Jesus Christ has fundamental consequences - *"When you abandon the centrality of God's divine initiative - our unmerited election in Christ and the faith given us by God through the proclaiming, loving activity of the one, holy, apostolic and catholic church - you are on the naked plains of the human spirit where any demon that comes along can consume you."* (John C. Cooper - 'Religious Pied Pipers')

24. Basic Truths

The following basic truths of the Christian faith are rejected by the New Age -

- 24.1 There is **one** God - creator of all.
- 24.2 God is **transcendent** - Lord of Lords.
- 24.3 God is **immanent** - personal, our loving Father.
- 24.4 Man is made in the **image** of God (but is not God).
- 24.5 Man is in a **fallen** state in need of redemption.
- 24.6 Jesus Christ is **unique**. He died on a cross and rose again.
- 24.7 He sent His **Holy Spirit**.

The New Age is fundamentally -

- 24.8 **Man-centred**.
Primarily concerned with self-improvement. Expansion of personal consciousness.
- 24.9 **Creation-orientated**.
Worship of creation not creator.
- 24.10 **Rooted in monism**.
All is one. One is all.
- 24.11 **Rooted in pantheism**.
All is God. I am God.
- 24.12 **Rooted in relativism**.
No absolute values. No distinction between right and wrong, true and false.
- 24.13 **Rooted in syncretism**.
Equal value of all religions.
- 24.14 **Rooted in gnosticism**.
Man's greatest weakness is ignorance, not sin. Hence they appeal to 'ancient wisdom'.
- 24.15 **Antagonistic to the idea of a knowable God**.
Acceptance of God-force, spirit force, cosmic Christ.
- 24.16 **Antagonistic to the concept of guilt and sin**.
Therefore, no need for salvation or forgiveness.
Original sin is replaced by original goodness.
- 24.17 **Permeated by the occult**.
It rejects all Biblical warnings against involvement with mediums, witchcraft etc.

25. Conclusion

- 25.1 The emergence of New Age has occurred at a time of great decline and uncertainty in British churches. There is a widespread and profound hunger for a **belief system** and a **spirituality** which is not being offered effectively by the churches. Inevitably people are turning to false gods.
- 25.2 New Age undoubtedly expresses a widespread desire for understanding the meaning and purpose of life. It reaches out for **spiritual values**. It is sensitive to the environmental crisis which is upon us. However, it fails to address the fundamental needs of humankind and is riddled with dangerous occultic influences.
- 25.3 New Age serves as a powerful challenge to the Church in the western world. In the face of this, Christians urgently need to reveal God's truth and love in the person of Jesus Christ. The Christian Church must be

seen as the living Body of Christ, bringing renewal, healing and reconciliation to a hurting, divided and dying world. Today we are called to reveal the essential **newness** of the Gospel.

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Dennis Wrigley

maranatha

The Maranatha Community is a growing Christian Community committed to Renewal, Unity and Healing. Its members include Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Salvationists, Pentecostals and members of the United Reformed and Independent Churches. We are one in Christ. Our aim is to be more effective as Christians in the places where we live, worship and work. Maranatha has spread throughout the country.