

Do They Really Teach That?

It is well known that New "Age" Spirituality teaches the pantheistic view that we are all God. However, you would be surprised by who else teaches this.

Though hidden in the massive text of the Catechism, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that we can become God or gods:

The Word became flesh to make us "*partakers of the divine nature*": "For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God" **"For the Son of God became man so that we might become God."** "The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, **so that he, made man, might make men gods.** (460)
[emphasis mine]

This paragraph is made up of several quotations. In the footnotes, it shows 2 Peter 1:4 as the reference for the first statement.

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. [KJV]

This verse is used by other groups to teach that man can become God. However, this is twisting the verse to say something that it doesn't. The Greek word translated "partake" may be familiar to you. It is "koinonos" and it means "a partner, associate, comrade, or companion." It is translated as "partake or partaker" in four other Scripture passages, and it never means that they *become* what they are partaking of.

Matt. 23:30 "...partakers with them in the blood of the

prophets.”

1 Cor. 10:18 “...are they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?”

2 Cor. 1:7 “...as ye are partakers of the sufferings...”

1 Peter 5:1 “...and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.”

The partakers in Matthew—did not *become* the blood of the prophets. The partakers of the altar—did not *become* the altar. The partakers of the sufferings—did not *become* sufferings. The partakers of the glory—did not *become* the glory. To partake of something, never means to *become* what you are partaking of.

The second quotation from the Catechism is from St. Irenaeus:

“For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God”

There is nothing wrong with this statement, because believers do become sons of God. However, it does nothing to support the other statements.

The third quotation is given as from St. Athanasius in *De Incarnatione*:

“For the Son of God became man so that we might become God.”

The fourth quotation is from St. Thomas Aquinas:

“The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods.”

It is quite possible that these are being taken out of context and their translation into English may be faulty, but there is no explanation in the Catechism to indicate anything different, and it has never been modified since first

published, so we have no choice but to take it at its word—the Catechism teaches man can become gods or God.

The Daniel Plan

In January of 2011, the Saddleback Church and Rick Warren kicked off a new year-long program to lose weight and get healthy called “The Daniel Plan.” It is the first initiative in what Warren calls “a Decade of Destiny.”

Three well-known doctors have been enlisted to develop and implement a comprehensive plan. They are—Dr. Daniel Amen, Dr. Mark Hymen and well-known TV doctor, Dr. Mehmet Oz.

Undoubtedly, these doctors have a lot of excellent medical advice, however, interspersed with all of the good advice are New (Age) Spirituality techniques such as mystical meditation, and energy healing methods such as Reiki (pronounced Ray-kee).

This was made evident by the very first interview of **Dr. Amen** for the Daniel Plan, he stated *“There is a meditation exercise from Harvard—It’s not religious at all, it’s called the ‘relaxation response.’ Take a big breath, blow it out. Every time you breath out, say the word ‘one.’ Do it for 10 minutes, you’ve got all these thoughts coming into your head. Imagine a big broom—sweep them away.”* [Emphasis mine]

Well, I could possibly be persuaded to agree that it might not be actually religious, but it certainly has mystical/spiritual effects. The instructions given are the exact ones given for any form of mystical meditation—relaxing, slow methodical breathing, repeating a single word over and over again (it doesn’t matter what word you choose), doing this for at least 10 minutes a day, and clearing your mind of all thoughts.

You'll find these basic instructions for any form of mystical meditation you hear about including the "Christianized" version called Centering or Contemplative Prayer. It doesn't matter what you call it, it is still mystical meditation which produces an altered state of consciousness and opens you up to negative influences from the spiritual realm.

In an article by Lighthouse Trails Research...

*"On the video interview with Rick Warren and Dr. Amen, Warren states that **Dr. Amen's resources would be available for those attending the seminar this coming weekend.** In almost all of the 'resources' by Dr. Amen, he advocates eastern meditation. In some of the books, he devotes many, many pages to meditation practices. On page 238 of Amen's *Making a Good Brain Great*, he states: 'I recommend an active form of yoga meditation called Kriya Kirtan. It is based on the five primal sounds saa, taa, naa, maa, aa.'" He tells readers to repeat these sounds for 12 minutes straight.' "* [Emphasis mine]

Dr. Hyman also is a strong advocate of mystical meditation. In the same article by Lighthouse Trails Research, it states...

*"In his book, *The Ultramind Solution*, Hyman emphasizes meditation, saying that it doesn't matter what religion one has to benefit from it (p. 322). Dr. Hyman suggests that "Mindful meditation is a powerful well-researched tool, developed by Buddhists" (p. 384)."*

And last, but not least, On January 9, 2010, **Dr. Mehmet Oz** told 2 million viewers to "try Reiki." Dr. Oz's wife, Lisa, is a Reiki Master who called Reiki "my favorite treatment that could change the future of medicine forever."

Reiki supposedly balances out your energy to facilitate healing. A Reiki treatment typically consists of the Reiki Practitioner holding their hand a few inches above different parts of the body. According to many Reiki experts and

websites, it incorporates the assistance of Spirit Guides, whether the practitioners choose to acknowledge them or not.

New (Age) Spirituality practices of all kinds—mystical meditation and contemplative prayer, Yoga, Reiki, labyrinths, communication with the spirit world, etc., all lead to the same belief system that is diametrically opposed to Biblical Christianity—interspirituality (all paths lead to God), Panentheism (God is in all), and universalism (all are saved). They are paving the way for the one world religious belief system yet to come.

Spirit Guides: Coming to a Church Near You?

In a previous article entitled “Whatever Happened to the New Age, Part I,” I showed that many famous New (Age) Spirituality writers claim to receive their inspiration or works directly from Spirit Guides:

- **Alice Bailey**, occultist and New Age Matriarch, who some credit with coining the phrase “New Age,” and of which the New (Age) Spirituality leaders reference quite often, had a spirit guide called Djwhal Khul (DJ).
- **Helen Schuchman** transcribed “A Course in Miracles” as dictated by her Spirit Guide—an inner voice which identified itself as “Jesus.
- **Barbara Marx Hubbard** transcribed her book “The Revelation: A Message of Hope for the New Millennium” from her Spirit Guide—an inner voice which identified itself as “Christ.”
- **Neale Donald Walsch** wrote an angry letter to God and was

amazed when “God” immediately answered his letter by speaking to him through an inner voice which resulted in his book “Conversations with God.”

- **Ester Hicks** bases her best selling books on translations of thought she claims she channels from a group of non-physical entities called “Abraham.”
- **David Spangler** wrote many New Age books including “The Birth of a New Age” which he said was a compilation of channeled transmission he received from his disembodied spirit guide “John.”
- **Bernie Segal**, an author and leader in the New (Age) Spirituality, claims to have a spirit guide named “George” whom he met the very first time he meditated.

Spirit Guides, which in scripture are described as “familiar Spirits,” are a common factor in New (Age) Spirituality practices. Many times these Spirit Guides are acquired through Mystical Meditation either purposely, or unexpectedly. Communication or the use of familiar Spirits is forbidden in **Deuteronomy 18:10-11** *“Therefore shall not be found among you any one ... (who is) a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard...”*

- **Consulter of familiar spirits** – communicator with fallen angels or demonic entities in the spirit world.
- **Wizard** – one who has supernatural knowledge which is attained through communication with familiar Spirits, a “knower.”

Familiar Spirits are simply demonic entities which commonly manifest themselves as “angels of light” (**2 Corinthians 11:14-15**) and are believed to be beneficial and benevolent by those involved with them.

Another method of acquiring Spirit Guides is through another New (Age) Spirituality practice—Reiki (pronounced Ray-key) a form of energy healing. It incorporates the assistance of Spirit Guides, whether the practitioners choose to acknowledge

them or not.

One Reiki practitioner was a Reiki Master before he finally discovered that he had Reiki guides. He first met one of them through a meditation session. He then created a meditation specifically designed for each Reiki practitioner to find and communicate with the Spirit Guides assisting them in the Reiki sessions: *"In all my Reiki courses, I offer a simple meditation for students to meet their Reiki guide. I am pleased to say that nowadays most do."*¹

Although the most frequent definition given of the word "Reiki" is "Universal Life force," Reiki practitioners give a variety of explanations:

When seeking a definition from a more spiritual context, we find that Rei can be defined as the Higher Intelligence that guides the creation and functioning of the universe...Ki is the non-physical energy that animates all living things. Ki is flowing in everything that is alive including plants, animals and humans.²

In Japan, the word Reiki is not commonly associated with Dr. Usui's healing system at all, but is simply a generic word that **refers to the occult**, to healing, or to things relating to spirit.³ [Emphasis mine]

The word Reiki is made of two Japanese words – Rei which means "God's Wisdom or the Higher Power" and Ki which is "life force energy." So Reiki is actually "spiritually guided life force energy."⁴

The last definition is from Reiki.org, a website called "The International Center for Reiki Training." In another section called "Developing Your Reiki Practice" it states:

"...There are higher sources of help you can call on. Angels, beings of light and Reiki spirit guides as well as your own

enlightened self are available to help you. They can help you develop your Reiki practice by directing clients to you and assisting with treatments...⁵

Origins of Reiki

According to an online medical-dictionary:

“Reiki was developed in the mid-1800s by Dr. Mikao Usui, a Japanese scholar of religion. According to the story that has been passed down among reiki teachers, Usui was a Christian who was intrigued by the idea that Christ could heal sick people by touching them with his hands. Searching for clues that would explain the secrets of healing with hands, Usui made a long pilgrimage around the world, visiting many ancient religious sects and studying ancient books. Some reiki teachers claim that Usui found clues leading back nearly 10,000 years to healing arts that originated in ancient Tibet. During his intense studies, Usui claimed he had a spiritual experience, which enabled him to heal with his own hands by becoming aware of and tapping into the universal life force.”⁶

When Dr Mikao Usui died, his power was transferred to one of his students. Many Reiki Masters are able to trace their Reiki “lineage” back through the various masters to Dr. Mikao Usui himself.

What is a Reiki Treatment?

A Reiki treatment is usually performed by the practitioner holding his or her hands a few inches above different areas of the body, holding each position until they sense it is time to move to the next position. The traditional Reiki hand positions (especially in the West) cover all the important major chakras and many acupuncture points. Chakras are part of the eastern religions such as Hinduism and addressed in Yoga and Mystical Meditation.⁷

During a Reiki treatment some feel as if there are more hands on them than just the practitioners hands or sometimes feel that the practitioners hands are over a different area of the body than they actually are. This common occurrence is called "Phantom hands."

There are four Reiki symbols used by many Reiki practitioners and one of them is used to perform Reiki treatments over long distances.

"This symbol broadly means, having no past, no present and no future. Another way of interpreting this symbol is saying, "The Buddha in me contacts the Buddha in you". The Reiki distance-healing symbol is used to send Reiki energy from one place to another. The Reiki practitioner is in a particular place and from there he sends the Reiki energy to another place. When you use the Reiki distance-healing symbol time and distance have no meaning. Most Reiki practitioners believe that the distance-healing symbol is the most helpful and powerful symbol of Reiki. Using the symbol gives the practitioner access to the life records or "Akashic Records", of a person...⁸

The attention to Chakras, the involvement of Spirit Guides, New (Age) Spirituality practices, Mystical meditation and many Eastern religion practices all add up to something a believer should not be involved in.

Reiki for Christians??

The term "laying on of hands" is used to describe Reiki and also another energy healing technique called Therapeutic Touch. Many, including Dr. Usui who founded Reiki, have the belief that energy healing is what Jesus used to heal people and is the same thing as having the "Gift of Healing" spoken of in scripture.⁹

But the power of God resides in God Himself, His power does

not exist separate from Himself so that everyone can somehow tap into it and use the same power. Jesus had the power to heal (just as he was able to forgive sins) because He was and IS God.

The Gifts of the Spirit are given and operated through the power of the Holy Spirit. There are no instructions whatsoever that indicate the Gift of Healing can be transferred from one person to another or that it requires a number of different hand positions to balance life energies. It is given to specific believers by the Holy Spirit.

A Nitrous Oxide Boost to Reiki

On January 9, 2010, Dr. Mehmet Oz told 2 million viewers to “try Reiki.” Dr. Oz’s wife, Lisa, is a Reiki Master who called Reiki “my favorite treatment that could change the future of medicine forever.”¹⁰

Regarding this TV program, one Reiki website, The Reiki Digest” stated:

“As word spread via the Internet across the global Reiki community, web traffic here at The Reiki Digest increased tenfold, and hundreds of new readers subscribed to our email edition. To accommodate the many inquiries coming in from people seeking Reiki treatments, training, or more information, we set up a free referral service to help clients and students find qualified practitioners.”¹⁰

Dr. Oz is one of three doctors chosen (the other two are Dr. Daniel Amen and Dr. Mark Hyman) to give health advice to the thousands of Christians who are or will be participating in the Daniel Plan, a year-long program to lose weight and to get healthy that was kicked off in January 2011.

Undoubtedly, these doctors have a lot of excellent medical advice, however, interspersed with all of the good advice are

New (Age) Spirituality techniques such as Yoga, meditation, and energy healing (Reiki)

In the first interview of Dr. Amen for the Daniel Plan, he stated *"There is a meditation exercise from Harvard—It's not religious at all, it's called the 'relaxation response.' Take a big breath, blow it out. Every time you breath out, say the word 'one.' Do it for 10 minutes, you've got all these thoughts coming into your head. Imagine a big broom—sweep them away."*

The instructions given are the exact ones given for any form of Mystical Meditation—Relaxing, slow methodical breathing, repeating a single word over and over again (it doesn't matter what word you choose), doing this for at least 10 minutes a day, and clearing your mind of all thoughts. You'll find these basic instructions for any form of Mystical Meditation you hear about including Contemplative Prayer.

Thousands of Christians are and will become involved in the Daniel Plan and trust these three doctors to help them. The fact that no warning was given as to the dangers of mystical meditation in this first interview with Dr. Amen is disconcerting and may indicate the acceptance of other New (Age) Spirituality practices such as Reiki later on.

The mystical practices have already entered the church through other avenues, but the influence of the Daniel Plan if not handled properly, has the potential of opening up a floodgate.

¹<http://www.articlesnatch.com/Article/Do-Reiki-Healers-Channel-reiki-Guides-/177437>

²<http://www.reiki.org/reikinews/whatislg.html>

³<http://lightworkers.org/blog/48134/reiki-a-woking-definition>

⁴<http://www.reiki.org/FAQ/WhatIsReiki.html>

⁵<http://www.reiki.org/reikipractice/practicehomepage.html>

⁶<http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/reiki>

⁷<http://www.reiki.nu/treatment/chakra/chakra.html>

⁸<http://www.indobase.com/reiki/info-for-practioners/reiki-symbols.html>

⁹<http://www.christianreiki.org/>

¹⁰<http://reikidigest.blogspot.com/2010/01/try-reiki-dr-oz-tells-millions-on-tv.html>

Whatever Happened to the New Age? Part II

As discussed in Part 1 of this series, the New (Age) Spirituality which is “paganism (the occult) in modern dress” continued to grow through the 1990’s and has become even more prominent during the first decade of the 21st century. It currently can be found in the work place, hospitals, public schools, prisons, on television, in bookstores, and as we will be discussing, it has been welcomed by the church with open arms!

In **2 Corinthians 2:11**, Paul took it for granted that the people of Corinth were not ignorant of Satan’s devices. Sadly that can’t be said of many believers today. The discernment skills of many believers are either very weak or nonexistent. The combination of a profound Biblical illiteracy and lack of a literal hermeneutic, i.e. “God says what He means and means what He says,” has left the church wide open for New (Age) Spirituality deception.

Spiritual Discernment and the Mature Believer

Both **Hebrews 5:14** and **Ephesians 4:14** describe the discernment skills characteristic of a mature believer. Specifically, **Hebrews 5:14** describes a mature believer as one who through practice has exercised vigorously their faculty of the mind for perceiving, understanding, and judging to discern both good and evil—truth and lie.

Although there is a specific gift of the Spirit given to some called “discerning of Spirits,” as spoken of in **1 Corinthians 12:10**, the discernment skills referenced by both **Hebrews 5:14** and **Ephesians 4:13, 14**, are characteristic of ALL mature believers.

Jesus declares in **John 17:11**, “*Thy Word is Truth.*” Mature believers use objective reasoning skills to compare unfamiliar or new teachings and practices with the Truth of God’s Word to prove all things. The word “prove” as used in **1 Thessalonians 5:21** means: to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), to recognize as genuine after examination.

As mature believers, let’s examine some of the main forms of New (Age) Spirituality which have crept into the church.

“Christian” Yoga?

Mystical Meditation is the foundation of New (Age) Spirituality and has entered the Church in two main forms. The most transparent of which is called “Christian” Yoga. The word “yoga” comes from the Hindu Sanskrit root “yuj,” which means “to join” or “to yoke.” The question then comes to mind, what is the practitioner joining with?

“Traditionally, yoga is a method joining the individual self with the Divine, Universal Spirit, or Cosmic Consciousness. Physical and mental exercises are designed to help achieve this goal, also called self-transcendence or enlightenment.”¹

This “joining” is becoming one with the divine and becoming enlightened to the fact that you ARE divine—self-realization. All creation is God (Pantheism) and God is in all creation (Panentheism)—God is everywhere and is IN everyone.

Some supporters and promoters of “Christian” Yoga claim they only use the physical exercises (as in the Hatha form of Yoga). Their intentions are to worship God not the Hindu gods so they have no problem with “Christian” Yoga.

However, Hatha Yoga concentrates on the Yoga positions called Asanas. In Hinduism everything is god. Each position is representative of a different being of creation. Hinduism teaches that the creative force that runs through all creation is called Kundalini.

The Sanskrit word Kundalini means the curled one, and is referenced as Kundalini awakening or the awakening of the serpent power (Kundalini Shakti).

Jean Lim, author/speaker and expert on the supernatural states:

“Yoga is actually a form of spiritual exercise, and those who practice Yoga will be filled with the spirit of Yoga, which is the spirit of the serpent...I don’t think we can separate Yoga, the practice of Yoga, from the spiritual into just a form of exercise, because every form of the Yoga movement derives from the serpent and there is a root behind it, so when a person practices Yoga, they actually are inherently bowing down to the god of the serpent.”²

God commands His people to not bow down or worship any other god in **Exodus 34:14**. The Israelites are warned in **Joshua 23:7** that when *“ye come among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear [by them], neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them”*

“Christian” Yoga is as incongruous as “Christian” Ouija. Intent doesn’t matter. You wouldn’t use Yoga to worship the true God anymore than you would use an Ouija board to speak to Jesus Christ. Both are an entry point into the spirit world that opens the door to spiritual deception.

There are many Believers who understand this concept and do not have anything to do with Yoga. However, they may have fallen for something even more deceptive.

Centering / Contemplative Prayer

The terms Centering Prayer and Contemplative Prayer are becoming well known in Christian circles. For the most part, these terms have been used interchangeably. However, Centering Prayer appears to be the methodology which creates the “spiritual” environment for Contemplative Prayer which is defined as contemplating God with the soul, NOT with your mind or rational thought.

Centering Prayer/Contemplative Prayer was brought into the Roman Catholic Church in 1977 by three trappist monks: (Abbot) Thomas Keating, William Meninger, Basil Pennington. This was in response to Vatican Council II’s call for “the revitalization of the path of contemplative prayer”

These three joined with ecumenically oriented Catholic theologians, an Eastern Zen master who offered retreats on Buddhist meditation and a former trappist monk who taught transcendental meditation. Together they created “centering prayer.”

In the forward to the book Kundalini Energy and Christian Spirituality by Philip S. Romain, Thomas Keating (the most famous of the three trappist monks) wrote:

“Reading the Christian mystics from the perspective of his [Philip St. Romain] own experience of kundalini energy, the author sees many examples of its working in the lives of

Christian saints and mystics. Since this energy is also at work today in numerous persons who are devoting themselves to contemplative prayer, this book is an important contribution to the renewal of the Christian contemplative tradition. It will be of great consolation to those who have experienced physical symptoms arising from the awakening of kundalini in the course of their spiritual journey, even if they have not experienced it to the fullest extent described by the author. His [Philip St. Romain] compelling testimony is a powerful affirmation of the potential of every human being for higher states of consciousness.”³

Read the Full Text of Forward

Although its proponents will argue against it, Centering/Contemplative Prayer IS most definitely a form of Eastern Meditation, i.e. Mystical Meditation. Below is a comparison between what is taught by the New (Age) Spirituality and the method of meditation that is taught for Centering/Contemplative Prayer:

Mystical Meditation	Centering / Contemplative Prayer
Sit comfortably, with your eyes closed and your spine reasonably straight	Sit comfortably with your eyes closed
Choose a mantra and repeat it silently	Choose a sacred word or phrase and introduce it silently

<p>If and when you notice that your attention has drifted completely off the mantra, gently begin repeating it again, and continue with minimal effort</p>	<p>Whenever you become aware of anything (thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, associations, etc.) simply and gently return to your sacred word (This obviously results in repetition of the word)</p>
<p>The intended Goal: become enlightened, knowing truth by experience and ultimately “ascension” – which is self-realization, knowing that “I am divine”</p>	<p>The intended Goal: To reach “The Silence” when all distractive thoughts are gone, a thin place where the spiritual barrier is the thinnest, where you can contemplate God with your soul NOT with your intellect.</p>

As you probably noticed, the steps taken are identical. Both use the same method to induce an altered state of consciousness – void of thought, just contemplating spiritual truth in an experiential fashion and accepting it as truth without discernment. This is a spiritually dangerous condition. The door to the spiritual realm of intense experience becomes the basis for truth instead of the Word of God.

Be Not Deceived

Each Believer has the ultimate responsibility to use his/her discernment skills and not be deceived. However, the shepherds of the flock such as Pastors, Bible teachers and Christian leaders also bear responsibility for teaching the whole counsel of God and warning of false doctrine.

In Paul’s farewell instructions to the Ephesian elders in [Acts 20:27-31](#), Paul declared *“For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto*

yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.

Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

May all pastors as shepherds of the flock of Jesus Christ follow Paul's example, and may we as Believers practice our discernment skills and heed Jesus' warnings to "be not deceived."

¹ "Yoga Definition" Answers.com.
<http://www.answers.com/topic/yoga>

²Matrisciana, Caryl. Yoga Uncoiled Part III
http://www.radiofreechurch.com/topics_display?page=31&sort=alpha

³Philip St. Romain, Kundalini Energy and Christian Spirituality: A Path to Growth and Healing, pp 7
New York: The Crossroads Publishing Company, 1994

Whatever Happened to the New Age? Part I

During the 1980's, Bible believing pastors, teachers, and watchmen for "The Faith" stood up and began to prevail against

the New Age Movement.

By the mid 1990's, it appeared as if the church assumed the threat had passed. It was as if a veil of deception enveloped the church to hide the truth – not only had the New Age Movement NOT faded away, it was spreading exponentially into the very fabric of society.

Ray Yungen, author of "A Time of Departing" describes this New (Age) Spirituality as "The Invisible Denomination."¹ It has been hiding in plain sight for over two decades. It is time for the Church to remove the veil of deception and see this New (Age) Spirituality that has permeated evangelical denominations, Bible schools, seminaries, Christian publishers and also the teachings of respected Bible teachers.

Paganism in Modern Dress

Walter Martin evaluated these practices in his 1989 book "The New Age Cult" in which he states, "The New Age Cult is a revival of this ancient occultism. It holds historical ties to Sumerian, Indian, Egyptian, Chaldean, Babylonian, and Persian religious practices."²

The following occult practices (among others) are described in Deuteronomy 18:10-11:

Divination – a "catch all" name for using any method to discover details of what is happening around you or to learn what will happen in the future by any means other than through God himself, who alone knows the beginning from the end

Enchanter – another name for a sorcerer, one who practices the arts of magic of all kinds—magical remedies, potions, drugs and hallucinogens to see into the future.

Witchcraft – "the craft" or WICCA, includes sorcery and the worship the mother Goddess, nature, trees, etc.

Charmer – binds something physical with the

spiritual—charms, amulets, something worn or carried on one's person (i.e., good luck charm or religious article supposedly with a supposed blessing attached)

Consulter of familiar spirits – communicator with fallen angels or demonic entities in the spirit world.

Wizard – one who has supernatural knowledge which is attained through communication with familiar Spirits, a “knower”.

Necromancer – one who attempts to communicate with the spirits of the dead to acquire knowledge or to ask for assistance in some way by praying to anyone other than God Himself

New (Age) Spirituality includes the practice of many of these things; most notably consultation with and channeling information from familiar spirits, called “Spirit Guides.”

Common New (Age) Spirituality Practices

There is one key practice called “Mystical Meditation” from which certain beliefs emerge. Mystical Meditation is an essential part of New (Age) Spirituality, as well as other Eastern religions, mystical sects (i.e., Muslim Sufis and Jewish Kaballah), and the occult (i.e., Satanists and witchcraft).

There are a multitude of variations of Mystical Meditation. Some are given specific “brand names,” such as, Transcendental Meditation and Silva Mind Control, but they commonly share the following characteristics:

1. Comfortable Positions (i.e., sitting, laying down or an accepted Yoga position) to maintain a relaxed physical state without distraction.
2. Methods of concentrated focus (i.e., rhythmic breathing, maintained visual contact on a single object, or silent word repetitions) often accompanied by specific types of soft music, assist the practitioner in reaching an altered

state of consciousness in which the mind is cleared of all conscious thought. This state of consciousness has often been referred to as “The Thin Place” – a state of mind in which the physical and spiritual worlds meet.

When the practitioner experiences random thoughts, he reacquires the altered state quickly by returning to the focus method.

At this point, the practitioner may “experience a sense of unity with all creation.” Many attain new knowledge or understanding, become “enlightened,” and may also experience various physical sensations. It is important to note, as discussed earlier, that the Hebrew word for “Wizard” means “a knower.” This practice is wizardry.

Channeling from Spirit Guides

During meditation, practitioners are often instructed to use visualization to connect with their Spirit Guide(s). Others may be instructed to await the appearance of a Spirit Guide in either human or animal form. Some choose religious personages, including Jesus, admired historical figures, angelic beings, or a “more successful self” created in parallel reality to teach how to become more successful in life.

Many famous New (Age) Spirituality writers claim to receive their inspiration or works directly from their Spirit Guide(s):

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The New (Age) Spirituality is not just a fad practiced and believed by a minority. It has entered society today through many different avenues.

The New Spirituality/Occultism in Post-modern Society

Following are some of the areas in which the New (Age) Spirituality is accepted in society today:

Meditation in the work place

A number of corporations (i.e., Apple, Google, McKinsey, Deutsche Bank, Texas Instruments, AOL, Yahoo!, Raytheon, Nortel Networks, Medtronic’s, Viacom International Inc., and Monsanto) provide meditation training to reduce stress and increase productivity. [As of 2008 when this was originally published]

Napolean Hill & A Positive Mental Attitude

Napolean Hill, author of the famous book “Think and Grow Rich,” credits his foundational teachings of the success, motivation and positive mental attitude books, courses and

seminars to the teachings of disembodied spirits who called themselves "Ascended Masters." Apparently Mr. Hill earned the right to reveal a Supreme Secret to others, "You have been under the guidance of the Great School...now you must give the world a blueprint..."³ Millions of business people, including Christians, have taken these courses and seminars not realizing that they are being taught "doctrines of demons."

Reiki in the Health Care System

The ability to heal came to Mikao Usui during a spiritual experience on a sacred mountain. The ability was called "Reiki" (Ray-key). According to the American Hospital Association, Reiki is being offered in a growing number of hospitals within the U.S.

A Reiki.org article entitled, "Developing Your Reiki Practice" clearly identifies the practice:

"Sensing the presence of spiritual beings, feeling their touch, knowing they work with you. Being raised into ever greater levels of joy and peace by simply placing your hands on another. Watching your life grow and develop as your continual immersion in Reiki transforms your attitudes, values and beliefs. Sensing that because of your commitment to help others, beings of light are focusing their love and healing on you and carefully guiding you on your spiritual path..."⁴

Meditation in the Prison System

The Dharma Foundation is a nonprofit organization which produces a newsletter about meditation for those who are in correction facilities. Volunteers from their organization work with programs such as centering prayer, Zen meditations, and conflict resolution. They assert that 85% of inmates who have practiced substantive meditation never return as repeat offenders.

In an online presentation of the Dharma Seeds Foundation, it

states:

“For any human to transform into the natural spiritual creation they are, they first must accept their own salvation from lower self towards the true SELF. Once they have done this they can then incorporate their own spiritual upbringing...”⁵

Meditation in the Public School System

The children in the Nataki Talibah Schoolhouse in Detroit meditate for ten minutes twice a day. The University of Michigan followed 140 of the school's 10-14 year olds and reported the children were more connected, happy, satisfied, peaceful and calm. Their studies indicate that children who meditate do better in school than those who do not.

The so-called benefits of meditation practices can be found in many websites. An example from a Health & Yoga website:

“Though meditation is usually recognized as a largely spiritual practice, it also has many health benefits. The yoga and meditation techniques are being implemented in management of life threatening diseases; in transformation of molecular and genetic structure; in reversal of mental illnesses, in accelerated learning programs, in perceptions and communications beyond the physical, in solving problems and atomic and nuclear physics; in gaining better ecological understanding; in management of lifestyle and future world problems.”⁶

If all these results come from mystical meditation, then how could God possibly object to it? Scripture, especially Deuteronomy 18, does not allow for a “if it feels good, do it” attitude.

We as Christians should not be ignorant of Satan's devices and should recognize when these practices creep into our lives and our churches. However, repackaging New Age fundamental

practices with Christian words has allowed an unsettling infiltration of both.

GO TO: Whatever Happened to the New Age? Part II

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<http://www.reiki.org/ReikiPractic /PracticeHomepage.html>

⁵ Dharma Seeds Foundation, Inc.
<http://st-raphael-monastery.org/dharmaseeds/pdfs2008B0A%20presentationPDF.pdf>

⁶ Health & Yoga.
<http://www.healthandyoga.com/html/meditation/objectives.html>