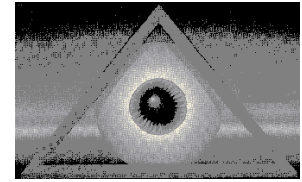


Cults III

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

By E.W. Lutzer & J.F. De Vries



INTRODUCTION

The New Age Movement is rapidly growing throughout the world. Almost 60 million people dabble in some form of New Age or occultic practices. There has been a tremendous increase in its popularity and acceptance which is influencing world politics, educational methods, and media.

Many people today view the New Age Movement as having positive ideas capable of promoting world peace and helping people become more sensitive to ecological concerns. Most, however, do not understand the underlying dangers of this movement.

The New Age Movement is known by various names. Some of the most common designations are the Age of Aquarius, the New Consciousness, the New Orientalism, Cosmic Humanism, the New World Order, the New Esotericism, and the New Globalism. Whatever the name, the basic presuppositions are the same.

Then there are symbols that represent the movement: the rainbow, pyramids, concentric circles, rays of light, crystals, and the unicorn are the most popular. Often the number 666 is worked into various diagrams and signs. All of these signify that we are saying farewell to the Piscean Age (the era of Christianity) and welcoming the New Age of Aquarius. We are, according to the New Agers, leaving darkness to enter into the era of light.

Most of us have heard of the booklet entitled *The Four Spiritual Laws*, written by Bill Bright of Campus Crusade, which summarizes the Good News of the Gospel for the man on the street. In brief, the laws are: (1) God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life; (2) man is sinful and separated from God; (3) Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin; and (4) we must individually receive Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Satan has his "gospel" too. Thousands of years ago he gave his basic sales pitch to Adam and Eve in which he set forth four lies which have surfaced in different forms among the major non-Christian religions of the world. We can dub his "gospel" *The Four Spiritual Flaws*.

THE FOUR SPIRITUAL FLAWS

The best way for us to understand Satan's gospel of deception is to take a careful look at his first "evangelistic" presentation in the Garden of Eden. There he suggested his own philosophy of life, which Eve accepted with her husband standing by in quiet acquiescence.

Though his methodology changes, the essential content of the message remains the same from generation to generation. In effect, Satan gave Adam and Eve an alternative to obedience to God, spelling out the benefits of such a rebellion.

Eve reminded Satan that God had warned them not to eat of the forbidden tree or they would die. His response was, "You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:4-5).

Let's take a closer look at what Satan told our first parents.

1. You will be like God.

Satan promised Adam and Eve that they could set up a rival kingdom; they could be their own God. The teaching is not, "You shall be like gods", but rather, "You shall be as God" (Elohim).

To be like God is an awesome thought. Man is intelligent enough to know that he is not the creator of the planets, stars, and trees. So this flaw had to be adapted for public consumption. It was easier for man to say, "Yes, I am God, but so is nature - in fact, *everything is God and God is everything.*"

And so pantheism came into being to make Satan's lie more believable. This view of God which lies at the heart of the New Age Movement is the foundation of ancient Hinduism: the universe is fundamentally a spiritual reality because everything that exists is God. It follows that matter is an illusion; through meditation we can be released from the influence of the material world and become one with God. We really

Cults III

already are God, but in a sense we are still becoming God too!

Just glance through a typical New Age journal and you will see that the movement is profoundly spiritual. Here are a few samples of the seminars you will see offered: *Trance States and Healing, Being More Than Psychic, Miracles and Other Realities, Hypnosis and Sleep Programming*, and the list goes on. We are told to move away from religion toward true spirituality.

For the New Age Movement, God is an impersonal energy force that we can plug into if we have the right mindset. In the process we come to realize our basic unity with the whole universe; then we are prepared to accept our own divinity. As Shirley MacLaine put it, "We already know everything. The knowingness of our own divinity is the highest intelligence."

The implications of this view will be explained later. For now it is sufficient to remember that the idea of man's deity originated through the words of a snake who "channeled" (see Glossary of Terms on page 29) Satan in Eden. This lie is widely believed.

2. *You surely shall not die.*

This was a second fabrication used by Satan to minimize the consequences of disobedience. Death is the one event we all fear most. Even atheists have been known to dread the final step into the unknown.

This myth must also be adapted for wholesale distribution. The fact is that people do die; a trip to the local cemetery is a convincing argument for the universality of this experience. How then can this lie be believed by the general population?

The answer is found in the doctrine of reincarnation. Yes, your body (which pantheism believes is illusionary anyway)

may die. But *you* go on living in another body. You go round and round, getting as many chances at perfection as you need. Death is not to be feared because it changes nothing essential in one's personality. You take with you the wisdom accumulated in this life and use it in the next. This experience is to be accepted as the natural consequence of cyclical time. There is no personal God to whom you must give account. The laws of karma (see glossary at the back) move relentlessly onward. Thus the fear of death can be confidently removed from man's mind and imagination. In fact, death is welcomed. A New Age couple who kissed each other before they jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco left a note in the car in which the man wrote, "I love you all; wish I could stay, but I must hurry. The suspense is killing me."

This has astounding implications for understanding suffering and morality. In fact, as reincarnationism gains popularity, we can almost predict what this will mean for our culture and values.

3. *You will know good and evil.*

"Indeed, has God said?" Satan began (Genesis 3:1). He got Eve to doubt whether a good God would actually restrict her and her husband from something as good as a beautiful tree. If they ate of the tree, he went on to say, they would be able to make their own decisions regarding morality. They, of themselves, would have secret knowledge about good and evil. The decision to take Satan's suggestion led to relativism in morality.

While watching an interview on television, I heard a woman admit to having an affair with another woman's husband. Sensing that this still may be considered improper by some of her listening audience, she felt constrained to add, "Of course, what I am doing may not be right for everyone, but it's

Cults III

what is best for me."

This is what is known as relativism - what is good for me is not necessarily what is good for you. Nothing is intrinsically right or wrong; the situation determines morality. No need to consult God about moral choices. You can do whatever seems good, depending on the circumstances.

Though such a view might sound rather harmless, it has far-reaching implications for governments as well as marriages. Indeed, as will be shown later, relativism leads to unrelenting cruelty and mindless despair.

Morality poses an especially formidable problem for what is known as the New Age Movement. After all, if all is God and God is all, then *evil must be God too!* Distinctions between right and wrong end up being illusory.

Satan's strategy is to dupe the world into believing that it can make its own decisions about right and wrong. A teenager gave himself to the devil and later, in an effort to break all 10 of the commandments, killed his mother and two siblings. He commented, "Satanism has made me a better person."

Mankind has paid an incredible price for believing this lie of Eden.

4. Your eyes will be opened.

At the beginning of the conversation in Eden, Satan undermined Eve's faith in what God had said. Now that an objective source of truth was nicely set aside, what would serve as a substitute? The answer was Eve's sensual desires. The text reads, "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate" (Genesis 3:6).

When Eve saw that the tree was pleasant to the eyes, she disregarded God's command

and ate the fruit. Satan had promised that her eyes would be opened; her disobedience would lead to an experience of enlightenment. Her motto was, "If it feels good, do it!"

This philosophy, known as *esotericism*, lies at the heart of the New Age Movement. We are told that there is a "transformation of consciousness" that initiates us into true spirituality. Historically, the esoterics believed they were privy to special knowledge that was hidden from the masses. We must leave religion behind and venture into new dimensions of knowledge and enlightenment. The eventual goal is spiritual conversion. (Sounds like Gnosticism, doesn't it?)

Those who promote the New Age Movement believe that there can be no universal theology (the religions of the world have contradictions that cannot be resolved); therefore doctrine is not important. What is important is a religious experience, the feeling of oneness with the force, the energy called God. Reason doesn't help you. You must use the right technique to get plugged into ultimate reality. Irrationality is in; reason is out. The basic lie is: *feel, don't think!*

Like the other lies of Eden, this one has some interesting implications. Logically, it leads not only to absurdities, but to the destruction of any objective truth.

Let's review the four lies:

1. *You will be like God (Pantheism).*
2. *You surely shall not die (Reincarnationism).*
3. *You will know good and evil (Relativism).*
4. *Your eyes will be opened (Esotericism).*

Taken together, these four lies have the power to mislead multitudes in this life and to bring damnation in the life to come. Whatever we may say of the New Age Movement, it is certainly not new. Its basic beliefs were enunciated in Eden and have

Cults III

The Development of Satan's Religion of Paganism

Original Lie	Classical Names	Resulting Beliefs	Some Contemporary Expressions
<p>"You will be like God"</p> <p>PRIDE: "I AM GOD"</p>	PANTHEISM	<p>God is a force</p> <p>God is all that exists</p> <p>Matter is illusionary</p> <p>We are all God</p>	<p>Animal rights</p> <p>Environmentalism</p> <p>Human potential</p> <p>Confidence in the deity of man</p>
<p>"You surely shall not die"</p> <p>PRIDE: "I DETERMINE MY OWN DESTINY"</p>	REINCARNATIONISM	<p>Time is cyclical</p> <p>We keep "going around"</p> <p>Evil is explained by karma</p> <p>Evolution</p>	<p>Studies in death/dying</p> <p>Belief there is no judgment</p> <p>Channeling</p> <p>No fear of suicide</p>
<p>"You will know good and evil"</p> <p>PRIDE: "I DETERMINE MY OWN MORALS"</p>	RELATIVISM	<p>There are no absolutes</p> <p>Morality depends on the situation</p> <p>Whatever feels good is right</p> <p>Evil is illusionary</p>	<p>Immorality</p> <p>Rock music</p> <p>Values clarification</p> <p>Confusion because God is both good and evil</p>
<p>"Your eyes will be opened"</p> <p>PRIDE: "I HAVE ALL THE KNOWLEDGE I NEED"</p>	ESOTERICISM	<p>You can achieve enlightenment</p> <p>You can consult inner guides</p> <p>You are the light</p>	<p>Drugs</p> <p>Horoscopes</p> <p>Contact with occult powers</p> <p>TM</p>

been a part of ancient paganism since the beginning of human existence.

What is the bottom line in these four spiritual flaws? It is *the self-sufficiency of mankind*, the belief that the source of all reality exists in the human mind. When we take a journey within, we find that we are God; through channeling we can contact masters who have preceded us. We can be the source of our own morality and discover the right technique to be spiritually fulfilled. On our own we can become all that we can be.

We are told that man's problem is not sin but ignorance. Through enlightenment, we can solve all of our problems and bring about a spiritual transformation that will bring peace and brotherhood to this world. All this comes by our own initiative and strength.

The New Age Movement derives much of its inspiration from Eastern religions. It's a strange mixture of Hinduism, pagan magic, and mainstream

values - good health, wealth, and individualism. It's selling well.

HISTORY OF THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

The two most dominant and influential eastern religions that lay the foundation for the NAM are Hinduism and Buddhism. It is advantageous for every Christian to understand the basic philosophy behind these two religions in order to better understand the NAM.

Hinduism

The beginning of Hinduism can be traced to the period between 2000 to 1000 B. C. Although there is no known founder of Hinduism, history records that spiritual laws and truths were revealed to men called "rishis" who were "spiritual" men living in northern India.

Hinduism teaches that "Brahman" is the infinite, supreme, absolute, spirit being. Brahman is a

Cults III

perfect god who is absolutely unchangeable. Since Hinduism teaches that only things that are permanent are real, only Brahman is real. There are hundreds of lesser gods that can also be worshipped, but only as long as people realize that these gods are merely different aspects of the supreme Brahma

Hinduism teaches that every living creature has an "atman", which is their spirit or soul. This atman is given to each creature by Brahman, hoping that the final destination of the atman will again be eternal union with Brahman.

Union with Brahman cannot be accomplished in one lifetime, therefore each individual atman must pass from body to body, lifetime to lifetime, guided directly by the laws of karma. This process of body to body experience over the course of multiple lifetimes is known as reincarnation. This is the transmigration of the soul.

According to the laws of karma, your current life is a result of the deeds performed in a previous life. Your next reincarnation depends on the deeds you accomplish in this lifetime. Man must go on through the repeated process of transmigration, until the atman is perfect enough to be with Brahman.

It is these same thoughts that are being taught today by New Age leaders, gurus, and spiritual teachers to usher in a "new age"

BUDDHISM

The beginning roots of Buddhism can be traced back to about 560 to 480 B. C. Buddhism was founded by a man named Siddhartha Guatama who later would be given the name Buddha or "the enlightened one." Siddhartha began Buddhism as a protest against some Hindu doctrines which disagreed with the answers he received while being enlightened during his meditation times.

It was during these enlightened moments that Siddhartha (now Buddha) would develop the eight basic techniques (8-fold path) that formed the structure of Buddhism.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Right Meditation | 5. Right Belief |
| 2. Right Effort | 6. Right Aspiration |
| 3. Right Occupation | 7. Right Action |
| 4. Right Speech | 8. Right Thought |

Buddha taught that these eight steps, if followed properly, would allow any person the

ability to obtain spiritual peace and happiness. The problem, when compared with Biblical teaching, is that these steps are based solely upon the works of self in an effort to obtain eternal presence with God. Today, these beliefs are being continually taught throughout the entire spectrum of the NAM.

The Bible teaches that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us ..." Titus 3:5

WHERE OLD MEETS NEW

Read the Old Testament and you will be impressed with the number of times the name Babylon appears. The city began when men rebelled against God and attempted to build a tower (called Babel in Genesis 11:9) that would reach to the heavens. From those occult beginnings, Babylon eventually rose to become a dominant power with its sorcery permeating the ancient world. The prophets of God condemned it because it represented all that was most evil in man's attempts to dethrone God.

What did the Babylonians believe that was so perverse? Isaiah 47:8-11 summarizes their religion:

"Now, then, hear this, you sensual one, who dwells securely, who says in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me. I shall not sit as a widow, nor shall I know the loss of children.'

But these two things shall come upon you suddenly in one day: loss of children and widowhood. They shall come on you in full measure in spite of your many sorceries, in spite of the great power of your spells. And you felt secure in your wickedness and said, 'No one sees me.'

Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you; for you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me.'

But evil will come on you which you will not know how to charm away; and disaster will fall on you for which you cannot atone, and destruction about which you do not know will come on you suddenly."

Take a close look at the text. Ancient Babylon had a spiritual religion built upon blasphemous premises:

1. The deity of man- "I am, and there is no one besides me."
2. A false belief in triumph over death- "I shall

Cults III

not sit as a widow, nor shall I know the loss of children."

3. Moral relativism- "Hear this, you sensual one."
4. Esotericism, or private enlightenment through mystical spiritual experiences- "Your many sorceries ... the great power of your spells."

Texe Marrs in his book *Dark Secrets of the New Age* lists nearly 30 rituals and beliefs found in ancient Babylon that are practiced today in the New Age Movement! Everything from reincarnation to occult meditation was commonplace 3,000 years ago.

The New Testament predicts that at the end of this age the religion of ancient Babylon will again stand in opposition to God. A woman clothed in purple and scarlet is described by the Apostle John as having the mystery name on her forehead, **"BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"** (Revelation 17:5).

We may not be certain that the New Age Movement of today is indeed the final Babylon of Revelation. What we do know is that *the final Babylon will practice the same occult religion as that of ancient Babylon*. That is the religion which is now sweeping the Western world and gaining widespread acceptance among all levels of our society.

The *New Age* thus is a revival of the *Old Age*. And the *New Age* may well turn out to be the *Final Age*. For as modern Babylon gains in momentum, it will once again assault the heavens and shake its fist in the face of God. Satan's plan is to initiate as many people as he can so they will stand with him in his religious opposition to God. How good will Satan's counterfeit be? The Apostle John writes, "And they worshipped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?'" (Revelation 13:4)

Let's review Satan's strategy: **First**, we've learned that he has a master plan to deceive the nations of the world. To do this he must first redefine mankind's definition of God. Rather than thinking of God as the personal Creator, Satan would like man to think of God as everything that exists. Then man can think of himself as God too.

Second, Satan wants to redefine death so that people think of it as a pleasant transition without any accountability to a personal God. You just go around as many times as you need to, and eventually you will get to nirvana.

Third, he wants us to come to our own definition of what is good or evil. Moral relativism serves his purpose because it breaks down the fiber of a nation and leads to personal emotional entrapment.

Fourth, he promotes esotericism, the belief that reality can be reduced to a personal experience of enlightenment. Man can feel initiated as an enlightened one if he has the right mystical encounter. Here is a sample of some of the more influential spokespersons, most of whom are still living.

1. Marilyn Ferguson

Her book *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, published in 1980, gives us the rationale and agenda for the New Age Movement. She says, "A leaderless but powerful network is working to bring about radical change. There are legions of conspirators in universities, hospitals, and schools. They are in the United States government, even at cabinet levels. "They have coalesced into small groups in every town and institution.... Some conspirators are keenly aware of the national, even international, scope of the movement and are active in linking others."

2. Shirley MacLaine

As an actress and author, Shirley MacLaine is presently one of the most influential "evangelists" for the New Age Movement. Several books command our attention. *Out on a Limb* was published in 1983 and relates the beginning of her transformation into the spiritual realm. She began searching for knowledge about herself and the unseen world.

Her second book *Dancing in the Light* continues the saga. She exercises with yoga, uses crystals for spiritual power, and chants Hindu mantras. Now she has progressed to the point of believing that each individual is God. Her spirit guides inform her, "If

Cults III

everyone was taught one basic spiritual law, your world would be a happier, healthier place. And that law is this: everyone is God. Everyone." Other books have followed, giving a further description of her absorption with the occult.

3. *Napoleon Hill*

His book *Think and Grow Rich* has sold millions of copies. It is the basis for many of the motivational seminars that are held for the business community in the United States. And just what does Hill teach that gives him the distinction of being a powerful advocate of the New Age philosophy?

The secret lies in the power of the mind, the ability anyone has to develop his or her raw potential. But, as in all mind-expanding techniques, there is also the power of the occult. What is his great secret? *Anything the human mind can believe, the human mind can achieve.* This is the destructive lie that undergirds the Human Potential Movement. These ideas have also been taken by Christians who have tried to integrate New Age thought with the Bible.

4. *Jose Silva*

This man has become popular because of his firm conviction that anyone who will take his 48-hour course in mind control will be able to develop psychic powers. You will be taught how to enter a higher state of consciousness and in that way tap into the higher intelligence of the universe.

Silva believes that all the school children should be taught these basic mind-control techniques. A grade school teacher in Buffalo claims that these teachings are having a profound and beneficial effect on her students.

5. *Terry Cole-Whittaker*

This woman had a great religious following in California, teaching the gospel of prosperity. Her message was simple: go after wealth, power, and success. Stop

feeling guilty for having more in a have-not world.

Her most popular book is entitled *The Inner Path from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be.*

6. *Werner Erhard*

One of the most important mind-control movements is called *Forum*, formerly *est* (Erhard Seminar Training). This is an intensive 60-hour seminar of psychological indoctrination designed to change the way we perceive reality. In 1982 there were 300,000 *est* graduates and their numbers have been rapidly expanding. Erhard's goal is to put *est* into education. Indeed, the schools, the prisons, and businesses provide many opportunities to prove the benefits of his program.

Erhard states, "We want nothing short of total transformation—an alteration of substance, not a change of form." All this is accomplished by wearing people down, by group dynamics, and by breaking down all defenses.

The training is unashamedly religious: you are God and live in a perfect universe. You no longer have to be concerned about the suffering and needs of those about you, for they too are God and responsible for their own destiny. As for rules about life, Erhard has but one: life has no rules.

7. *Edgar Cayce*

An encyclopedia on occult phenomena calls Cayce "possibly the greatest occult diagnostician of modern times." Though he died in his hometown of Hopkinsville, Kentucky in 1945, his legacy as a miracle-worker lives on.

Cayce taught that Jesus was incarnated as the biblical Adam around 12,000 B.C. Naturally this leads to the assumption that Jesus committed the first sin. So when Cayce was asked, "When did the knowledge

Cults III

come to Jesus that He was to be the Saviour of the world?" he answered, "When He fell in Eden."

Cayce appealed to millions because he skillfully combined theosophy, pyramidology, Hinduism, and Christianity. He published a journal called *The New Tomorrow*. The Cayce Foundation of America continues to honor him, and thousands of followers attempt to carry out what he had begun.

NEW AGE MOVEMENTS

There are a number of philosophical and religious movements (past or present) that basically teach the four spiritual flaws. Here is a partial list:

1. *Transcendentalism* introduced Eastern thought into America as far back as the 1800s. Two of its early adherents, Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson, were basically pantheists influenced by the mysticism of the East. Like the New Agers of today, they were eclectic, accepting or discarding whatever they wished from Eastern thought.
2. *New Thought*, often associated with the writings of the Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), also became popular in the 19th century, brought to this continent by the Austrian physician Franz Mesmer (1734-1815). Mesmer, from whom we get the word *mesmerize*, was the father of modern hypnosis. Christian Science, based upon the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, grew out of the spiritism of the New Thought Movement. The basic premise is that all that exists is mind; matter is basically illusionary. Since thought is the final reality, the mind can create whatever reality it wishes - hence the famous expression, "Mind over matter."
3. Theosophy, a name popularized by the Theosophical Society founded in 1875, stands in the Eastern tradition of Hinduism and spiritual thought. Robert Burrows, a researcher for the Spiritual Counterfeits Project, characterizes it as a "dizzy blend of

Western occultism and Eastern mysticism." 4. *Psychoanalysis*, which arrived in America at the end of the 19th century, was heavily influenced by occult theorists. Carl Jung (1875-1961) believed in the deity of man and accepted the mind-expanding insights gleaned from psychics and occult teachers. He had many paranormal experiences and attributed his book *Seven Sermons to the Dead* to automatic writing, a phenomena often found in occult circles.

PANTHEISM:

THE FIRST SPIRITUAL FLAW

If it is true, as A.W. Tozer has said, that no religion can rise higher than its conception of God, we must be as clear as possible about what kind of God is accepted by the New Age Movement. We've already learned that the New Age is built on a spiritual perception of reality. Terms such as *psychic*, *metaphysical*, *mental*, and *spiritual* continually reoccur. Whereas secular humanism teaches that there is no spiritual dimension to the universe, the New Age Movement believes that reality is primarily, if not exclusively, spiritual. Indeed, the universe is populated with spirits (entities) and the human mind can be put in touch with the mystical oneness of all things. This is a world of miracles and out-of-body experiences. And it is a world where you can encounter God in everyone and everything.

The Three Views of God

Since the beginning of time, three primary conceptions of God have vied for the allegiance of men.

Theism is the belief that God is the creator and sustainer of the universe. The Judeo-Christian tradition best exemplifies this understanding of who God is; He is personal, powerful, and independent of the universe. He can, to some degree, be known to mankind in this life and will be forever worshipped and served by those in heaven. Because He is both personal and just, He will eventually bring every individual into personal judgment so that righteousness will eventually prevail.

Atheism is the view that there is no God. The final reality is believed to be matter, not spirit. In

Cults III

fact, there is no spiritual aspect to the world. There are no souls, no angels, demons, or mystical realities. Atheism denies the possibility of life after death and insists that miracles cannot occur. Perhaps atheism is best expressed in the now famous line of Carl Sagan in his book *Cosmos*: "The cosmos is all there ever was and is, all there will ever be."

Pantheism is a conception of God that pervades the New Age Movement. It is most easily defined as the belief that "God is all and all is God." The word pan means "all" and as such refers to the idea that all that exists is God; there are merely different levels of existence that correspond to different levels of divinity. The lowest level is matter, then comes the vegetable kingdom, followed by the animal kingdom, and finally, mankind. But everything is God. Nature is God; you are God; I am God. God is all there is.

For the pantheist, the final reality in the universe is spiritual. In fact, matter is really an illusion. Borrowing from the Eastern religion of Hinduism, the New Agers believe that we must deny the existence of the material universe to escape into the world of mind, which is in touch with the spiritual universe that is truly real.

God is an impersonal force; God is energy, and energy is God.

God, then, is the great **IT**. To quote the words of New Ager Dick Sutphen, "In the beginning there existed the great energy, the gestalt. We call it God, but any other name would serve just as well."

In India the impersonalization of God is cleverly promoted. Biblical statements such as "God is love" or "God is wisdom" are reversed to read "love is God" and "wisdom is God." By changing the word order, there is a profound change in meaning. God is depersonalized; He is reduced to the collective wisdom and love found in mankind. God is not thought of as having an existence independent of the universe.

Closer to home, the Eastern idea of God as an impersonal force was introduced to millions in the *Star Wars* trilogy. George Lucas, who produced these movies, admits that they convey a religious message. "There is a God and there is both a good side and a bad side. You have a choice between them, but the

world works better if you're on the good side."

THE IMPLICATIONS OF PANTHEISM

1. *Man is his own savior.*

Christianity and the New Age Movement clash at every point. But nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the doctrine of salvation. Christianity teaches that man fell into sin and needs to be rescued by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. He paid a penalty for sinners so that through faith they can be restored to God. Man is the sinner; God is the Saviour.

Pantheism teaches that there never was a fall. What happened was this: at one time matter and mind were united as one; they were one continuous, unified force called God. But then a separation occurred. Matter and mind still are God, but they parted one from the other. *Salvation means that these two aspects of God become united once more.* This happens through meditation and the mystical experience that causes us to lose our personal identity.

Think through the words of Nikos Kazantzakis, who incidentally is also the author of *The Last Temptation of Christ*: "It is not God who will save us - it is we who will save God, by battling, by creating and transmuting matter into spirit."

Shirley MacLaine would agree. She says that the word atonement means "At-one-ment with the original creator or with the original creation." We are both creator and creation, and we can bring the two closer together. The possibility of atonement rests with us.

Man saves God!

Christianity says that man fell and God redeems him; pantheism says that *God* fell and *man* redeems Him! Man redeems God by bringing the material aspect of deity back into harmony with the spiritual.

Cults III

Here is a challenge. Read all the New Age literature you can and see if you can find a single instance where it tells you that you need help from God to experience the transformation of consciousness we are told is so necessary for a satisfactory life. In every case, you will find that we have the potential within ourselves to experience the perfection we need. The message is: *you are God, so save yourself!*

Clearly the New Testament Gospel stands in strong opposition to the new "gospel" of pantheism. I'm reminded of the words of G.K. Chesterton: "When a man ceases to believe in God, he does not believe in nothing. He believes in anything!"

He will even believe in his own divinity!

2. *Pantheism destroys morality.*

If it is true that God is everything, it follows that God is also evil. That's why Hinduism teaches that good and evil are only illusions; they only *appear* to differ from one another. Allan Watts, who is credited with making Zen Buddhism palatable to moderns explains it this way: life is like a play where you see good and bad men in conflict on the stage, but behind the curtain, they are the best of friends. Backstage, God and Satan go hand in hand. Only the uninformed differentiate between good and evil. To quote Yen-Men, one of the great Eastern teachers, "If you wish the plain truth, be not concerned about right and wrong. The conflict between right and wrong is the sickness of the mind."

Pantheism with its denial of morality is actually more dangerous than the secular humanism we have all heard so much about. Inconsistent as the humanists are, they still wish to cling to some of the standards of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Atheism still teaches the need for morality of some sort. But Eastern thought logically abolishes morality altogether.

3. *Pantheism devalues human life.*

Obviously, if everything is God, it follows that man is God too. In fact, this is the most basic doctrine of the New Age Movement. On the surface it would seem that pantheism exalts mankind to a high position in the universe, but as we shall see in a moment quite the opposite is true.

Maharishi, often known as the father of transcendental meditation, said, "Be still and know that you are God."

Terry Cole-Whittaker, who at one time professed to be a Christian evangelist, said, "You are God, I am God. Together we are God. And together with our own consciousness, awakening, and choice we create the kingdom of God. Worship yourself, you are the light."

Yes, man is God, but so are the animals such as the cows and the ants; so are the trees and the weeds and the stones and the ground. Everything is God. To say that man is God is hardly a compliment if the same can be said for worms and thistles!

Thus, in pantheism animals are not elevated to the status of man; man must of necessity be reduced to the status of animals.

In modern countries, the environmental movement often is used to promote a pantheistic world view. That we should do all we can to protect the environment goes without saying, but when we hear expressions such as "Mother Earth" we must look for clues to see whether this is just an affectionate reference to the earth that all of us depend on, or if, in fact, it promotes the belief that the earth is God.

The Sierra Club's Environmental Health Sourcebook called *Well Body, Well Earth* leaves us in no doubt about the answer. In this book we are taught how to contact the spirit of Mother Earth.

Cults III

4. *Pantheism hinders science.*

Pantheism and the scientific method are fundamentally incompatible. Pantheism calls on us to worship nature, for it is in fact God; science calls us to work with nature and to use it, since it was created for man's benefit. When God put man in the Garden, he was to keep it and till it-nature was under man's control. This does not mean that man is to squander these resources; indeed he is accountable to God for how he exercises his stewardship of the earth.

We must ask: what should our attitude toward nature be? Is it to be revered as God, or is it to be carefully used for man's benefit? The continuation of modern science hinges on the answer.

REINCARNATION:

THE SECOND SPIRITUAL FLAW

Shirley MacLaine confidently teaches that we can now eliminate the fear of death from the minds and indeed from the consciousness of the whole world. Death, says the influential actress, simply does not exist.

Reincarnation, according to the New Agers, has several advantages over Christianity. For one thing, it eliminates the fear of death; what we call death is nothing more than a transition to a new existence where nothing fundamental has changed. Second, it gives a rationale for the problem of evil. At last we find out why tragedy happens to some and not to others. While Christianity teaches that this world is filled with injustice, reincarnation teaches that all things operate according to the law of karma. There is an identifiable reason for evil in the world. Amid all the pain and trauma we endure, we can take heart.

Transmigration of Souls

Long before Charles Darwin, the Hindus had their own understanding of evolution, the notion of the gradual development of the soul to higher forms. This evolution can be illustrated by a series of continuous circles, gradually working up the scale. There is neither a beginning nor an end, but an endless process of refinement and perfection. The system

slowly but surely purges out the weak, the unfit, the undesirable.

Reincarnationism holds that plants, animals, and human life are so interrelated that souls are capable of "transmigrating" from one form of life to another. One could have been a plant or an animal in a previous existence.

Even though New Agers believe nature is illusionary, they still generally accept Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis. But they also accept an even more important spiritual evolution through which souls are perfected. On the one hand, everyone is God, but yet we are all also in the "process of becoming." The evil is being replaced with good. Our problem is that we do not have enough time to achieve this higher goodness in one lifetime. Shirley MacLaine says it's like show business-you just keep doing it until "you get it right."

So souls play a kind of musical chairs with the various bodies in the world. In this life you may be one person, but another in the next. Ever onward and upward, the process moves relentlessly forward as we better ourselves with each cycle.

Reincarnationism also teaches a kind of devolution as well as evolution. This means that if you accumulate some bad karma you could regress in your journey toward the nothingness of nirvana. You could be a spider or a worm in the life to come.

Karma

The doctrine of karma refers to an irrevocable law that *everyone gets what he or she deserves*. There is an impersonal force in the world that causes us to build future debits and credits based on our behavior. The quality of life experienced in the next life depends on our present actions and behavior. Evil is always punished in the life to come, good is always rewarded. The more the soul renounces the material world by putting away its lust and pride, the more it loses itself in "the force" or "universal consciousness," the freer it will become from this horrible material world. The final outcome will be nirvana, the salvation of the soul by being absorbed into the one eternal reality.

This means that all people begin life at different levels. No one can claim equal rights. Some, because of sin, have forfeited all privileges, while others, because of good works, have been born into high

Cults III

positions and are well on their way to the escape of nirvana, the destination for the privileged few (though eventually all will probably make it).

The best application of this theory can be seen in the caste system in which the weak must serve the strong. The lower exists for the benefit of the higher.

India is rigidly divided into four major castes. Those who are on the lowest end of the scale are so polluted that they cannot even belong to one of these four groups. They are called, "untouchables" - outcasts. Each of the four castes has its own function, which reflects a rigid division of labor. Keep in mind the basic principle: the poor exist to serve the rich. The polluted keep the streets clean for the holy; the untouchables collect the filth to serve those who are further along in their journey to perfection. *Although the lower always serve the higher; the higher are under no obligation to serve the lower.* Why should the rich help the poor if the poor are only receiving what they have coming to them? They are just reaping what they have sown.

The highest caste is the Brahmin. He is considered sacred; the worst imaginable crime is to murder him. If you assault him, you must be put to death; if you slander him, your tongue is cut off. His property is so sacred that the king cannot tax it. The Brahmin is served by those beneath him.

The Brahmin is free, however, to assault a man who is of a lower caste. If the Brahmin is upbraided for it, it is because he has polluted himself by touching someone who is defiled. This explains why wealthy men are able to leave an opulent hotel and walk out on the streets, stepping over beggars and starving children without so much as a twinge of conscience or a spark of compassion. In fact, if they were to alleviate the suffering of the poor, they just might be interfering with the delicate balance of justice administered by karma. Remember, everyone gets precisely what he or she deserves.

The bottom line is that karma teaches that there is no injustice in the world. Everything that happens is always because of some previous evil or good that was done. In fact, karma is meticulous in its distribution of justice. Whatever happens to you is determined exclusively by the deeds of your previous existence. The fact that you don't remember what

you did is irrelevant. You are responsible anyway. Because karma doles out justice with such fine-tuned accuracy, *whatever is, should be.*

Reincarnationism is appealing because it encourages people to continue to live the way they are (most people think they are at least as good as the next person) without having to admit their sin and helplessness before God. At death, God simply does not show up. There is no personal accountability, no judgment. Just the opportunity to go around one more time trying to "get it right."

So in the end, everyone wins. As F. LaGard Smith says in critiquing reincarnation:

"So *everybody wins*, including the guy at the office who cheated you out of a promotion, the parent who may have sexually abused you, the spouse who left you for somebody else. That's right, everybody wins even Attila the Hun, Adolf Hitler, Idi Amin, Colonel Gaddafi, and the Ayatollah Khomeini. Granted they may be the last wave, pulling up the rear; but as they come across the finish line, everyone will be waiting there to cheer them on. *With reincarnation, nobody loses!*"

The Bible teaches differently, of course. In the end, all those whose names are not written in the Book of Life will stand before God to be judged for every single deed they have ever done. Here is the end of all those who accept the lies of the Antichrist: "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name" (Revelation 14:11).

Those who follow Satan will be in conscious torment forever and ever. They will be alone with their memories, their regrets, and their guilt. And there will never be another opportunity to go around once more to "get it right."

A Biblical Interpretation

Some New Age writers, including Shirley MacLaine, try to make the Bible teach reincarnation. Let's consider just two of the passages frequently used.

In Matthew 17:11-12, Christ says that Elijah is coming and will restore all things, and then continues, "But I say to you, that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they

Cults III

wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands."

The disciples understood him to be referring to John the Baptist. So, the argument goes, John was Elijah reincarnated. But there are two reasons to reject this interpretation. First, John expressly denied that he was Elijah (John 1:19-21). Second, at his birth we are told in effect that John's ministry was *reminiscent* of Elijah, "And it is he who will go as a forerunner before him in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17).

Another passage frequently cited by reincarnationists is John 9:1-3, where Jesus responds to a question from the disciples about the origin of a blind man's malady. Was it because of this man's sin or that of his parents that he was born blind? Christ replies, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was that the works of God might be displayed in him." The New Ager's argument is this: if there was a possibility that this man's illness was the result of his own sin, it must be that he committed it before his birth. After all, he was born blind.

But the argument fails for two reasons. First, the disciples' question is based on the Jewish notion that sin can be inherited from one's parents. Also it was believed that a baby could sin in the womb. But there is no evidence that the Jews believed in reincarnation. Second, Christ clearly repudiates any kind of belief in reincarnation or karma. The blindness, Christ says, *was not the result of his sin or that of his parents*. So much for reincarnationism.

Reincarnationists willingly admit that they are in contact with spirits, but they believe that these "entities" are guides, who either are the dead or those who can speak to the dead for them. They assume that these spirits speak only the truth and therefore can be fully trusted. Or some New Agers actually believe that they can distinguish the evil spirits from the good ones! The lady with whom I rode on the plane admitted that she was in touch with the spirit world but assured me that she shunned evil spirits and had contact only with the good ones.

"How do you tell the difference?" I asked.

"It's easy. The good ones are always clothed with light."

Read the New Age literature and that word

light appears again and again. A poster advertising a prophetess who puts people in touch with "ascended masters" reads, "Beyond Channeling-Feel the Incomparable Light." Some who have died and returned claim they have no fear of death because they have seen a "tunnel of light."

So it is. Satan's deception is not new. Paul wrote about this form of *light*. "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:13-14).

There is still hope for the wicked in this life. Even the murderer or the rapist can take advantage of Christ's payment for sin. But once they forfeit this opportunity, they will not have another chance in the world to come, because the Bible teaches "it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment" (Hebrews 9:27)

MORAL RELATIVISM:

THE THIRD SPIRITUAL FLAW

The third spiritual flaw was Satan's attack on moral absolutes. He began by introducing doubt into Eve's mind regarding the clear command of God. "Indeed, has God said?" (Genesis 3:1) Now that the seed of doubt had been planted, he watered it with the allurements of special knowledge. If she and her husband disobeyed, their eyes would be opened and they would be like God, "knowing good and evil" (v. 5).

No need to consult God about moral choices. Adam and Eve could do whatever seemed good based on their own finite reasoning and feeling. They were the masters of their fate, the captains of their souls.

But this promise, like others made by Satan, has proved to be elusive and confusing. Yes, fallen man does have a moral nature that gives him some clue regarding morality; yes, he does have a mind that he can use to give reasons for his actions. But the bottom line is that without a revelation from God (the Bible), mankind simply does not have an objective basis for morality.

Relativism is the word we use to describe the popular belief "What is true for me may not be true for you." As far back as 1976 a survey of 9,000

Cults III

graduate students in 40 universities showed that 51 percent believed in moral relativism. But with the rise of the New Age Movement, we can expect that the slide toward relativism will continue to increase at a faster pace. The reasons why will become clear in a moment.

John Dewey, the philosopher and educator, is credited for giving relativism respectability in America. He believed that morality, like language, varied from culture to culture and therefore no one moral belief was superior to another. The Eskimos who practice infanticide and women of Tibet who have several husbands are all on the same moral plane. The only principle that should govern behavior is whether or not it works. And what works today may not work tomorrow and what works for me may not work for you.

The general concept that whatever works is right has made serious inroads into the church and has opened the door to the New Age Movement. Some Christians think that because transcendental meditation lowers one's blood pressure, it must be good. After all, it works. But astrology works too and so does acupuncture and hypnotism. A graduate of *est* said, "I don't care how much of this is [bunk]. It's changed my life."

Bunk may not be able to change a person's life, but Satan can. Listen to Christ's words recorded in Matthew 7:21-23:

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your Name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.' "

Here were people helping other people; they were doing miracles. They had found something that worked. Nevertheless they were barred from the kingdom and were told that they were practicing lawlessness!

Let's review the logic:

First, I am as much a part of God as you are. The distinctions between good and evil are illusionary; they are nothing more than the sickness of the mind.

Second, as God, we are totally in charge of ourselves and determine our own fate. You choose to have me hit you, steal your wife, or vandalize your car.

Third, whatever happens is but the outworking of justice—our karma has decreed our fate. This explains why one person is born deformed, why another is permanently disabled in an auto accident, or why you were abused by your father.

No use shedding tears; there can be neither regret nor remorse in a world where good and evil are illusionary, in a world where we have chosen our fate and in which we get our just desserts. Everything is perfectly and delicately balanced.

Rewriting the Ten Commandments

Whatever the rationale, the fact is that the New Agers have their own 10 commandments engraved in stone in Elberton, Georgia.

The commandments speak of the need to reduce the population of the earth to one-half billion, down from the present estimate of 4.8 billion. The people who remain should be protected with fair laws and just courts; there would also be a world court to resolve international disputes. The inscription ends by speaking about the need for truth, beauty, love, and harmony. And finally, we are admonished to leave room for nature.

It is difficult to know how seriously we should regard these guidelines. But the fact that their origin is shrouded in mystery and that they have as their focus a one-world government should alert us to the fact that they have more than incidental significance.

At any rate, notice the strategy. Those who desire to see the world ruled by a single government appeal to legitimate areas of concern—the environment, starvation, and the threat of war. Second, they clothe their aims in lofty platitudes that make criticism difficult. Who can argue against justice, love, and tolerance?

But Satan and his followers have no plans to be tolerant. They have an agenda they plan to follow to bring about world government. And this means that they must strongly oppose those who stand in their way. Indeed, New Age literature speaks openly about the need to purify the earth of dissenters. In the book *Prophecies and Predictions*, author Moira Timms

Cults III

says that "the plagues of Revelation are special packages of karma visited upon the obstinate that they might awaken to their wrong attitudes ... animals that don't adapt become extinct." Those who won't "get with the program" will be dealt with harshly.

The Bible predicts that Antichrist will force people to fall in line with his agenda. Those who refuse to take his mark will be ostracized, tortured, and killed. "And he causes all, the great and the small, the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:16-17).

During those days people will either choose to worship the beast or be put to death. The worship of the true Christ will be a crime. Those who refuse the coming transformation will be considered irreconcilable outcasts.

The bottom line is that the New Agers do have a morality after all. Although pantheism leads logically to the destruction of all morality, mankind cannot tolerate the obliteration of his conscience. In the final analysis, the New Agers revert back to the old pragmatic notion that the end justifies the means. The end in this case is the New World Order and the means will be to eradicate any opposition to the Grand Plan.

Thus Satan's lie that man can distinguish good from evil without divine help will bring about the eventual destruction of society as we know it. In place of God's morality, man will choose his own goals and values and the means to achieve them. For those who fall under the hand of this regime, morality will not be an illusion but a painful reality.

ESOTERICISM:

THE FOURTH SPIRITUAL FLAW

Listen to the Great Invocation of the New Age:

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men
Let Light descend on Earth
From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men

May Christ return to earth

From the center where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men
The purpose which the Masters know and serve
From the center which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells
Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

This invocation is used daily by those who are trying to work with one another and with God in bringing peace to earth. But the God referred to is the pantheistic god; the Christ is Maitreya; and the Light is that of the enlightened mind. Interestingly, according to the survey done by Andrew Greeley, 5 percent of Americans claim they have already been "bathed in light." They have had an esoteric experience, a personal encounter that has given them special knowledge.

Satan's ultimate desire is not for men and women to commit immorality or even to look to astrology for guidance or to be healed by crystals. All these techniques of the New Age Movement are but stepping-stones to his most subtle deception, namely, *the duplication of religious experience*.

All the roads lead to this one: *Satan wants humans to encounter him and think they are in touch with the living God*. The bottom line is that he wants to give his followers a "satanic conversion." To duplicate a divine encounter is the height of his rebellion. When he fell he said he would be "like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:14). He thinks this miracle is proof that he is succeeding! To effect a spiritual conversion is his most dazzling deception!

That's why Satan makes the same claims as Christ. "I am the light of the world," Christ asserted (John 8:12; 9:5). Satan responds by advertising his own brand of light. Indeed, New Age Movement literature is filled with references to "light" or "enlightenment." In her seminars Shirley MacLaine tells people about the watching bubble of white light that is revealing a part of God within them which they have not yet recognized. This light is assuredly a shroud for the darkness that will eventually come to all of Satan's followers.

Again Christ promised special knowledge to

Cults III

those who believe on Him: "And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). True to form, Satan promises that his followers can receive a special initiation, a "transformation of consciousness" that makes them members of an elite group.

Here again the New Age turns out to be a revival of the Old Age, for the teaching of the "mystery religions" during the pagan days of Greece and Rome was based on the idea that there was secret knowledge that could be obtained by searching the depths of one's own soul. Through mystical encounters with cosmic powers, enlightenment was possible.

Marilyn Ferguson says that if we want to have a new perception of reality, "the first step is an entry point ... a mystical psychic experience."

Let's pause here for a moment of analysis. The entry point is a spiritual experience, but what is a spiritual experience? Though Ferguson does not define it, of necessity it must be *an encounter with another spiritual being*. But there is more than one spiritual being in the universe. God, angels, demons, and humans all have spiritual capacities.

How can one know which spirit has been contacted?

Since a person cannot have a spiritual experience with himself, it follows that the New Agers must be making contact with some other spiritual beings. Good angels are off-limits because they respond primarily to God and minister only to those who are children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Nowhere does the Bible teach that we should make contact with these beings; rather, it forbids contacting any supernatural power except God.

So either the New Agers are making contact with the true God or wicked spirits who are available for communication. God must be ruled out, since the New Agers (1) deny that He has an existence independent of the universe, and (2) reject the belief that Christ is the only way to God the Father. That leaves demonic spirits who are only too glad to make contact with humans and give them a genuine "spiritual experience."

The Bible teaches that the earth is populated

with spirit beings called demons who are only too happy to communicate information and become a person's guide. Many people falsely believe that demons communicate only evil ideas, not realizing that these spirits may often give good advice and even mouth sound doctrine. When our Lord was on earth, demons frequently confessed that He was the Christ. Interestingly, when a demon-possessed slave girl followed Paul around the city of Philippi, she kept saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation" (Acts 16:17). Her "spirit of divination," as the Bible calls it, was meticulously correct in its assessment. Yet a few days later, Paul cast the spirit from the girl.

The Doorway of Meditation

In her book *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, Marilyn Ferguson says that a "paradigm shift" is taking place in the West. We are leaving the world of logic and reason and are appealing to the world of imagination and feeling. We are going from the "left brain" to the "right brain."

What is the result of this?

"We are not victims or pawns ... we control," she writes. We now are left in charge of ourselves. The spiritual experiences we have are so awesome, we have the feeling that we are in complete control.

These experiences, she writes, assure us that there is no such thing as sin. "Human nature is neither bad nor good."

"Only religion can carry the load," she says, but she is quick to point out that it is "not the religion of the churches but the spiritual dimension that transcends customs and politics."

How can one have such a spiritual experience? Ferguson says it comes by emptying the mind of all conscious thought by means of meditation. She says that psychedelic drugs speed up the process. Both lead to the emptying of the mind and the immobilization of the will. But this teaching is based on some heavy religious commitments. **First**, there is the pantheistic belief that we must unite the soul with the one unified force of the universe. There is, after all, only one continuous reality and everything is connected to everything else.

Second, there is the assumption that rationality

Cults III

is actually a hindrance to this oneness and mystical unity with God. As long as I am thinking about *something*, I perceive myself to be distinct from the objects of this world. So I must have an experience in which such distinctions disappear, that I might lose my identity like a drop of water in the vast ocean of impersonal energy. To achieve this, *I must destroy the mind*.

Two consequences follow. **First**, the Easterner can truly say that what a man believes is not important. Indeed, it were best if we had no belief - all such specific ideas shut us off from ultimate reality. So you can believe whatever you like, but eventually if you follow the lead of the guru, you will soon get beyond doctrinal beliefs.

This explains why we are told that transcendental meditation can be harmonized with all religions including Christianity. Potential converts are told that they need not discard the past, just "transcend" it.

Second, we must break down the natural resistance we have to an invasion of some foreign power. We must surrender our wills by emptying the mind. The ultimate goal of meditation is the destruction of human rationality.

The mind no longer thinks of anything, but is absorbed with the One Reality.

This technique is known as the mantra used by Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims. This meditation utilizes repetition of a word or phrase to condition the mental state of the participant. Such repetition produces an altered state of consciousness which leads to the mystical oneness with God or Ultimate Reality. What is important is that the word or phrase be stripped of meaning so that it will not lead to a particular thought or association of ideas. The goal is the suppression of all thought.

At this point, the mind has miraculous powers over natural objects and receives special revelations. Yet even so, says Dasgupta, it has not attained its ultimate goal. Now the yogi "steadily proceeds toward that ultimate stage in which his mind will be disintegrated and his self will shine forth in its own light and he himself will be absolutely free in bondless, companionless loneliness of self-illumination."

The Doorway of Drugs

The process we have described can be wearisome. Drugs enable seekers to take a shortcut. Marilyn Ferguson says that the psychedelic experience is a faster route to a new perception of reality. In Annette Hollander's book *How to Help Your Child Have a Spiritual Life*, she gives the account of many people who have had such mystical encounters. Many tell of how they had to reject reason and logical thought. One writes, "I had two very heavy spiritual experiences while on LSD at the ages of 26 and 28. I was having a conversation with something that wasn't very visible, tangible, material.... Lasting influence? Definitely ... it's the window of the house that I'm living in."

The experiences that people report in altered states of consciousness as a result of LSD and other psychedelic drugs are identical to the experiences reported by Hindu gurus in the depths of meditation or yoga. That's why Timothy Leary says drugs have become the sacraments of the New Age.

As Christians, we know that the passive mental states associated with transcendental meditation and drugs open the personality to demonic activity. Even Eastern gurus frequently warn about the dangers of demonic possession and the madness that might accompany such an experience.

There are other routes to a spiritual experience, including music and hypnotism. Think of walking down a hallway that has many doors. You can choose anyone that appeals to you and find that you are entering the same room as your friend who took another door. Conversion can take place in many ways.

The High Cost of Deception

What are the results of prolonged contact with the demonic kingdom? What happens to those who repeatedly experience a "transformation of consciousness"? The initial experiences may appear to be positive, but afterward there are negative repercussions, which include:

1. Dehabilitation. Work production decreases; the ability to concentrate begins to wane. The long-term results of TM, for example, show a marked decrease in productivity by the fifth year.

Cults III

2. *Withdrawal.* The person in contact with demonic powers begins to isolate himself from other persons. Rather than increasing the ability to love and reach out to others, he or she becomes more self-absorbed, seeking higher spiritual experiences. The end result is isolation, a preoccupation with the next spiritual high. Perhaps this is what hell is all about—the eternal isolation and absorption of self, which seems enjoyable for the moment.

3. *Depression.* Those who pursue spiritual experiences discover, just as alcoholics do, that the highs become fewer while the lows become deeper. More stimulation is constantly needed to keep the individual functional.

4. *Destruction.* The final state of all who surrender to demonic control, under the guise of self-sufficiency, is eternal hell prepared for the devil and his angels.

When Adam and Eve chose to be guided by self-enlightenment, they elevated themselves above the Almighty. Sweet feelings, magnified by the sensations of the body and soul, became their guide. But it didn't end there. This act that dethroned God's command in favor of their own understanding was later taken a step further. The attempted destruction of God's Word eventually led to the attempted destruction of the human mind in quest of the "ultimate spiritual experience."

INFILTRATING THE CHURCH

Today the world is seeping into the church in many ways. We could mention the erosion of moral values, the acceptance of divorce as an answer to marital conflict, and the selfish pursuit of money and status. But the world is also making overtures through the lure of the New Age.

Liberal theologians are of course ready to join hands with the channelers and the astrologers of this age, believing that spiritual experiences are of equal value. The Reverend Gene Seely, an ordained United Methodist minister, says he is quite ready to climb out on a limb with Shirley MacLaine - at least most of the way. One cannot watch her growth, he says, without recalling the parable of Christ about the new wine in old wineskins. Only stretchable wineskins can accommodate the ferment of new truth.

The minister says we must allow for the fact that God may be revealing Himself through experiences such as that of the famous actress. "After all," he asks, "How then is the church to deal with such things as reincarnation, trance channeling, out-of-body experiences, clairvoyance, extraterrestrials, telepathy, intelligent energy fields, and nonphysical entities?"

"The Spirit," says Seely, "works where and when He will. There is much we do not know as yet. But some things are becoming clear. We are in the time of the greatest spiritual awakening the world has ever known." Finally, he asks whether indeed it might be that Christ's claims to deity are in fact the pattern for every person. "Could it be that we are not sinful at the core of our being after all, but divine? Are you and I really 'gods in the making,' each of us to be realized when we become one with the Father within?"

So there you have it. An ordained Christian minister saying that, yes, Christ was right about His deity, but He is simply the pattern for us all! Shirley MacLaine is right when she says, "I am God!"

Fortunately, such heresy is not yet found within the believing church. But Satan is not content to have theological liberals in his column. He would like to include some who do indeed know God through Christ. Even if he cannot have them forever, he would like to dazzle them with his power.

"For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect" (Matthew 24:24). Those who think that everything that is miraculous is of God will be grievously misled. Unbelievers will rush headlong into the darkness of Satan's power; even believers will be confused and dangerously close to buying into the New Age agenda.

The devil seeks to build bridges to the church by using various deceptions to lure God's sheep into forbidden pathways. To be effective, he knows that his overtures must meet two requirements. They must appear to be biblical, and they must work. Anything less and the evangelical community will not accept them.

Here are some bridges used to introduce New Age ideas into the mainstream of Christian thought.

Cults III

The Bridge of Psychology

Much of contemporary psychology is built on secular presuppositions; therefore we should not be surprised that both the analysis of man's problems as well as the proposed solutions are tainted with error. Paul Vitz, a professor of psychology at New York University has written, "Psychology as religion exists ... in great strength throughout the United States ... [it] is deeply antichristian ... [yet] it is extensively supported by schools, universities, and social programs financed by taxes collected from Christians."

The premises of secular psychology are: (1) man is a product of blind evolutionary forces and therefore neither "fell into sin" nor must be "redeemed." Then, (2) he has the resources to solve his own problems through education and human effort. And (3) he must come to accept himself just as he is; he must learn to love himself despite his perceived failures.

The basic premise is that of the New Age Movement: *man is his own god and must therefore act accordingly*. Carl Jung in his book *Answers to Job* suggests that God is actually inferior to man and He would like to become man on a permanent basis! Eric Fromm wrote a book whose title was taken directly from the words of Satan - *You Shall Be As Gods*. Thus long before most of us heard of the New Age Movement, secular psychology was already promoting the deity of man.

Take, for example, the question: should I love myself? The popular conception is that both Christianity and psychology answer yes; we all ought to love ourselves. Secular psychology teaches that: (1) we should love ourselves despite our faults and sins; indeed if you are sleeping with numerous lovers and you feel guilty about it, you need not change your behavior, but rather you must change your self-concept so that it will embrace your lifestyle. In other words, you have innate worth and can therefore accept yourself *unconditionally*, regardless. Then (2) it teaches that we do not need redemption, but merely enlightenment as to who we really are. All people have within themselves the resources needed to cope with all the problems of life.

Is this biblical? Kilpatrick correctly observes

that this idea of self-worth "is about as far from the gospel as you can travel. Our Lord's greatest wrath was not directed to obvious sinners like Mary Magdalene but at those who were convinced of their own worth."

No biblical saint who met God ever ended up accepting himself unconditionally. Isaiah, in the presence of God, said, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" (Isaiah 6:5) Job said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees Thee; therefore I retract, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6). Peter, in the presence of Christ, said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Luke 5:8) Paul cried out, "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24)

Did all of these men suffer from a destructive self-image? Hardly. The reason they were able to serve God with fervor is precisely because they understood that their significance, their self-worth, was derived from their relationship with God. They could "feel good" about themselves only because they had been forgiven and changed by the Lord of Glory.

The quest for significance is legitimate; we need a sense of well-being, but that comes only through our relationship with God. God confers this benefit upon us; we don't have to attain it in some other way. When Moses gave God a series of excuses why he should not have to return to Egypt, God did not counsel him to improve his self-image. When Moses asked the question, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11), God did not give him a lecture on self-worth. Indeed, the Lord ignored the question entirely and simply assured Moses that He (the Lord) would be with him (v. 12). Then the Lord continued, "I AM WHO I AM" (v. 14). In other words, the question was not who Moses was, but rather who God is.

But don't we have innate worth? I like what Martin Luther said: "God does not love us because we are valuable; we are valuable because God loves us." And as for loving mankind unconditionally, instead the Scriptures teach, "The face of the Lord is against evildoers, to cut off the memory of them from the earth" (Psalm 34:16). Yes, as believers, we are

Cults III

permanently accepted before God through Christ, but even so, we can still displease the Lord, and when we do we fall under His discipline.

The Bridge of Science of Mind

It's intriguing to think that whatever the mind can believe it can achieve. If my mind can control reality, as the New Age teaches, then I need not be locked into my present circumstances. Through a positive mental attitude and through faith-faith in my own essential godhood-whatever I want, I can have. In his book *The Magic of Believing*, Claude Bristol says, "By a full and powerful imagination, anything can be brought into concrete form." Reality can be reordered by using images. Imagination can influence reality to such an extent that it becomes reality.

Meditation, we are told, is the key to power. Through it we can go into the depths of our inmost self to realize that "I am the power." Such ideas are based on the Eastern notion that the physical universe is an illusion and that reality can be reordered by the mind. Thought is the final reality, and since I am in control of my thoughts, I can basically produce whatever I want.

This New Age concept has infiltrated the church through the belief that we have the authority to receive anything we want from God. Through our faith, we can access God's power so that He is obligated to give us our wishes. Simply visualize what you want, and your imagination will force God to act. Through the power of the mind, based on the promises of Scripture, you can *manipulate God to bring it about*.

Hinduism says that I am God; therefore I have the right to manipulate reality through the power of the mind. Some Christians say that I have the right to manipulate the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ through the faith in my mind and a generous contribution. The difference between the two views is slight. Both affirm that I can control reality. I am ultimately in charge of what happens, all based on the visualization and faith within the mind. Either way, my will is done on earth and perhaps also in heaven.

This is the basis of the doctrine of prosperity that has gained acceptability in the last two decades. The argument goes like this: God wants all of His children to have both wealth and health in this life.

We are children of the King and therefore have the right to be treated as such. The 2,000-year-old teaching of the church that we should be willing to deny ourselves and live in poverty for the sake of the kingdom is simply wrongheaded. Someone has aptly said that if Moses were alive today, it would not be said of him that he chose to "suffer affliction with the people of God" but that he chose to "suffer wealth, success, and popularity with the people of God."

The New Age and Old Church have come together under the banner of faith and visualization. Christian celebrities can now justify their extravagant lifestyles and at the same time appeal for funds, assuring their listeners that giving to a particular organization is the best way to release faith. This act puts God in a bind so that He will have to honor their requests. Hinduism and Christianity have met under a distorted view of God's promises.

Yes, Christ did say that if we agree on earth concerning anything it would be given us. But this must be held in balance with a whole host of other Scripture passages that tell us things like, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Psalm 66:18). James told his readers that they had not received from God because they asked selfishly: "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it on your lusts (pleasures)" (James 4:3). Paul was not delivered from his thorn, but rather was given grace to bear it (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Suffering, Paul taught, is the mark of all who live godly lives.

Christ lived a life of poverty, having nowhere to lay His head. He also taught that the servant was not greater than his master. Here was a King's Kid who took the role of a servant and died in poverty and shame. If we are to follow Him, it is not through visualizing a Mercedes-Benz and expecting God to deliver it to us, nor even expecting God to help us earn the money for one.

If the gospel of health and prosperity were biblical, it is a message that could be preached in every country of the world. Try it in Russia, Rumania, and China, where believers are persecuted and discriminated against. Try it in Haiti and Ethiopia, and you would be laughed out of town.

Living the holy life is no guarantee that we can

Cults III

get whatever we want from God. Through visualization and even our own attempts at faith, we put God under no obligation to grant our requests. Only after we have sought His will and have bowed to His authority do we have a right to expect an answer, and even then it is subject to the Lord's sovereign will.

God is not a slot machine. We do not come to impress Him with our ability to visualize whatever we need and then expect to receive the jackpot. Prayer is above all a confession of humble reliance on the will and purposes of the Almighty.

The Bridge of Inner Healing

Satan was almost right when he said to God, "Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life" (Job 2:4). If the greatest fear of humanity is death, a close second is sickness which can easily rob life of its meaning. We are willing to try anything, no matter how bizarre, in an attempt to get well.

The notion that God wants everyone to be well has been promoted by faith healers for many years. But with the advent of the New Age Movement, the doctrine of healing has taken on some new aspects. Once again, the biblical data is used to fit in with New Age theology and techniques.

There are a number of healing ministries based on the premise of Eastern religions, namely, that man has within himself the power of physical healing: psychoimmunity, acupuncture, hypnosis, and the like.

And if these techniques can be tapped to heal one physically, then we also have the resources to heal our emotional and spiritual needs too. Through visualization and recall, our memories and emotions can be healed.

New Agers also contact spirit guides who lead them to awaken past pains and suffering. Through such help, patients are able to regress, even to the hurts sustained before birth. Thus, through uncovering experiences of rejection and even abuse, healing can be affected.

When these teachings are carried over into the church, they are of course given a biblical slant. Rather than using the guides of the New Agers, Christ is brought in to help with the recall and the emotional healing. Or, if the person is Roman Catholic, Mary performs that role.

Christ taught that the answer to a broken

heart does not arise from within but from without, namely from the forgiveness, acceptance, and joy that comes through being rightly related to the Father. Christ Himself claimed to be a healer of broken hearts. On Calvary, He bore the emotional load of all those He died to redeem. "Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted" (Isaiah 53:4). By what authority can others make that claim? We can be thankful for counselors who help the hurting understand how Christ's provision can be applied. But there are no shortcuts, no techniques that can heal the scars of the past. If we have found a spiritual solution that works for all religions, we may be turning to the great imitator who desires to do all that Christ is able to do.

The Bridge of Spiritual Experience

New Agers think of the Bible as a repository of ancient wisdom, but they do not consider it the authoritative Word of God. If Satan is to make inroads into evangelical Christianity, however, his task must assume a new twist since we hold to the complete authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and practice. So the argument goes like this: yes, the Bible is the authoritative Word of God, but it is not sufficient for guidance in the day-to-day matters of life. We need individual and specific communication with God regarding personal decisions and problems. Therefore God communicates with us directly, bypassing His written Word. Soon visions, dreams, and extrasensory perception become a substitute for the Bible.

We must remember a basic principle: whenever we seek direct communication with Christ, we are in danger of meeting spirits who claim to be Christ - antichrists, if you please. Demons have been known to *appear in whatever form they are expected to*.

Christians are often deceived at this point because the communication they receive may be beneficial and even scriptural. One woman who took guidance from a voice she heard thought it was from God because it would tell her to go to church or to do good to her neighbor. She did not realize that evil spirits frequently make scriptural statements to deceive. The evil spirit said to Christ, "You are the Son of God!" (Mark 3:11) Even though the

Cults III

statement was theologically sound, Christ rebuked the spirit for speaking. We are not to communicate with spirits, even if they should happen to speak the truth.

Think of Satan quoting verses back to Christ-countering the Son of God directly from His own Bible!

Everything that is miraculous is not necessarily from God. Keep in mind that Satan's great desire is to duplicate whatever Christ can do. The evil one will answer as many prayers as he can; he will perform miracles, relay helpful messages, and often appear under the name of someone else. We should not be ignorant of his schemes.

The Bridge of Ecumenism

As already explained previously, the New Age Movement knows that it is impossible to unite the religions of the world on the basis of a theological creed. No attempt is made to hammer out an agreement on the doctrine of God and salvation. But New Age leaders insist that this is not necessary. The conviction is that *although a universal theology is not possible, a universal experience is possible-indeed, the religions of the world must unite on experience alone.*

Please note: the New Agers teach that we can all have the same experience regardless of what we believe. No need to worry about sticky points in theology; all of us can take a different route to spiritual reality. Remember, there are as many ways to reach the divine as there are spiritual exercises in the world. Even experiencing God through Christ is valid, just as long as we don't say that Christ is the only way to the Ultimate One, that is, God.

All of this is consistent with the basic premise that man does not need a redeemer but is capable of redeeming himself. Through enlightenment and the journey within, he is able to perfect himself. The creeds of Christendom are actually barriers to the vast expanse of spiritual experience that lies before the one who is willing to cast aside the intellectual content of Christianity and embark on the fascinating journey of spiritual consciousness.

Evangelicalism has not yet drifted that far from its theological underpinnings. But constantly we're hearing statements like, "Let's just get away from theology and enjoy the Lord." Or, "Let's not study a

creed but experience Christ."

Such anti-intellectualism and disdain for rigorous theological precision can only hasten the eventual acceptance of New Age teaching within the evangelical community. Yes, theologians can be boring; some people have over-intellectualized their faith. And, yes, it is possible to know God without having a good grasp on theology. Yet for all that, it is theological debate and hard study that has kept the church from being blown away by every wind of doctrine. It is safe to say that we cannot recover the spiritual dimension of the church unless we also recover the intellectual dimension - the doctrines that have guided and guarded the church throughout its turbulent history.

We are bombarded with the notion that the great need of Christendom is for unity, regardless of our theological differences. If our doctrinal disagreements were minor, such pleas would be more understandable. But they are not. The differences between Roman Catholicism and Evangelical Protestantism, for example, are vast.

Contrary to what the New Agers say, the church cannot be united on the basis of experience but on the basis of theology, the essential doctrines that undergird the Christian world view.

INFILTRATING THE HOME

A basic axiom is that *we are both attached and motivated by what we imagine.* That attachment can lead to an obsession. The imagination can eventually take over; it becomes an extension of ourselves. The child's imagination becomes the bridge into the kingdom of Satan. The fantasy becomes the reality. A child who enjoys seeing occult movies or playing occult games *will eventually take on the desires of the characters he is watching.* And why not? He is watching what he desires to see.

That's why seeing movies about ghosts, dabbling in occult paraphernalia, and playing games based on occult associations can become a doorway into satanic control.. Satan wants to recruit children to come under his banner.

The entertainment industry is his best method of indoctrination.

By creating characters who have supernatural powers, children are drawn into a distorted occult

Cults III

fantasy world. For example, the cartoon character He-Man is the Master of the Universe; he has more power than Christ according to some of the children who watch the series. He can control a castle with ghosts and squash rebellion by mere force. He is, in effect, omnipotent and virtually omnipresent. He performs one supernatural feat after another. And for him, might makes right.

According to Phil Phillips, a mother and her son were riding in the car listening to a sermon on the radio. The minister started to pray, "Our Lord God, Master of the universe." The little boy in the back-seat corrected him, "Mommy, God isn't the master of the universe; He-Man is." Another boy comforted his mother who was in a near auto accident by assuring her, "Don't worry, Mommy. He-Man would have saved us." Phillips also tells the story of a girl who ran around the house doing everything in the power of Grayskull, a demon-possessed castle in the He-Man series.

As Christians, our imagination must come under the control of the Holy Spirit. Since God judges our thought life, we are told, "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

God's scrutiny of the imagination is confirmed in the verse, "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5).

Interestingly, at the building of the Tower of Babel (where the New Age got its start), the Lord said, "Now nothing will be restrained from them which they have *imagined* to do" (Genesis 11:6, KJV, italics added). Even back then the theory was, "Whatever the mind can believe, the mind can achieve!"

The point is that we should not use our imagination to visualize anything that is contrary to God's standard of decency and purity. Men use their imaginations today to create a host of images that are contrary to God's will. And soon they are controlled by these evil images.

New Age Games

The Chicago Tribune carried a story of a 17-year-old California boy who washed up on a

San Francisco beach, a suicide victim. Then there was the 12-year-old who shot his 16-year-old brother; two teenagers in a suburb of Chicago committed suicide by running the family car in a closed garage. In Texas, a drama student shot his teacher, and in Kansas a 14-year-old shot the school principal and wounded three students.

What do these tragedies have in common? In each case the youths had been avid players of "Dungeons and Dragons," a game that requires no boards or moving pieces, just an active imagination and a sharp mind. In many cases the youths had left behind gruesome drawings and peculiar notes seemingly inspired by the game. The children's parents contend, and thousands of others agree, that this game can lure impressionable young people into violence, the occult, insanity, and death. One father, whose son shot himself through the heart after a "death curse" had been placed on him during the game, said, "You do not casually play this game, just like you do not casually take heroin."

During the game the players take on the identities of medieval warriors who collect treasure and build strength and power as they battle their way through monster-filled mazes. The monsters can inflict punishments ranging from infecting flesh to poisoning to whipping and immolation. Characters can cast "insanity curses" on one another that include sadomasochism, homicidal mania, and suicidal mania.

Dr. Thomas Radecki, a University of Illinois medical psychiatrist, says that the game causes a lot of young people to turn to violence against others and themselves.. He continues, "It causes a desensitization to violence ... in a lot of cases, the kids start to live in this fantasy world. Unfortunately a lot of these kids are not finding their way out of these dungeons." A private detective in Dallas says he has investigated a half-dozen suicides linked to the game. In each case, he said, the youths had collected "Dungeons and Dragons" literature, drawn gruesome fantasy cartoons, dabbled in occult rituals, and withdrawn from their families and friends before killing themselves.

Already in 1985, it was estimated that four million Americans were playing the game "Dungeons and Dragons"; today that figure is much higher.

Cults III

And of course there are other such games on the market. One is called "Skeltor," where the chief character holds an occult symbol in his hand, and the comic book that comes with the game in effect teaches that Satan, not God, is the creator of the world.

Walk through a toy store and you will see occult symbols everywhere. *The Saga of the Crystar Warrior* action figures combine violence and the occult.

If psychologists are right in saying that when one lives in the realm of fantasy for a period of time the lines dividing reality and fantasy become blurred, we have reason to be concerned about the toys and cartoons children are absorbed with. Dr. Joyce Brothers says that war toys remind children that adults often settle disputes with force and violence. Thus studies indicate that children who play with such toys exhibit a greater degree of aggressive behavior such as kicking, biting, punching, and general rule-breaking.

Remember the words of the student absorbed in "Dungeons and Dragons": "The fantasy can be much more appealing than reality." That, as we have learned, is precisely the basic premise of the New Age Movement - reality exists in the mind, not in the material universe. Consequently our God-given gift of imagination can be misused and become a bridge between ourselves and the occult world.

Thousands of Christians are having their children stolen from them by Satan, right in the comfort of their own homes. Though we would fight to the death if an intruder came into our home to physically abduct them, we often allow them to be captured in other equally destructive ways. The devil's "evangelistic" strategy has filtered into rooms via TV and "fun and games."

INFILTRATING THE SCHOOLS

"Twenty-five first-graders lie in motionless silence on the classroom floor," writes Frances Adeney. "The teacher intones soothing phrases to aid relaxation. Within moments, the meditative journey begins. The children imagine the sun. . . they are told to bring the sun down from the sky and into their own body ... until their bodies are ablaze with light."

Then follows instruction on how to become perfect, by filling the mind with knowledge until

their whole body becomes a beam of light. Eventually they contain all of the light in the universe. Now they are at peace and are perfect. They are told that they are intelligent, magnificent, and *contain all the wisdom of the universe within themselves*.

This is the guided imagery that is taking place in a Los Angeles public school classroom. The teacher is Dr. Beverly Galyean who has developed three federally funded programs of confluent education in the Los Angeles public schools. She describes confluent education as a "holistic approach using thinking, sensing, feeling, and intuition."

Here are the premises:

1. We are not individuals but part of the universal consciousness. At base this consciousness is love.
2. Each child contains all the wisdom and love in the universe. This is known as the "higher self." The children are taught to say, "I am a perfect person and a student." They can tap into a universal mind through meditation and contacting *spirit guides*.
3. Each student creates his or her own reality by choosing what to perceive and how to perceive it. The physical world is an illusion; the reality of evil is denied.

First-graders also are introduced to spirit guides, though Dr. Galyean remarks that "we call them imaginary guides." During the year, when a child needs comfort or advice, he is instructed, "Ask your guide."

Galyean sums up her philosophy:

"Once we begin to see that we are all God, that we all have the attributes of God, then I think the whole purpose of human life is to reown the Godlikeness within us; the perfect love, the perfect wisdom, the perfect understanding, the perfect intelligence, and when we do that, we create back to that old, the essential oneness which is consciousness. So my whole view is very much based on that idea."

How can such full-blown occultism be taught in our schools - especially when religion is not to be brought into the classroom? Frances Adeney, herself an educator, says that she attended conferences led by Dr. Galyean. Hundreds of public school teachers

Cults III

participated, responding enthusiastically to these ideas.

Then there is the educational philosophy of Jose Silva that is used by some teachers, often with great success. One of his goals is to have his course in mind control taught to all the children in school.

Space forbids more examples of how Eastern occultism is infiltrating our schools. The bottom line is this: whereas in past eras there were few people who specialized in being mediums, *these forms of occult power are now being taught to whole classrooms of children*. The destructive sorcery of Edgar Cayce is now being practiced by firstgraders who are taught to consult their "guides." Parents should be aware that to take children to school might mean that they are placed in the hands of the enemy.

Needless to say, Christians parents have to stand against the intrusion of Eastern religion into the classrooms. If not, we become an ally with Satan in his plan to rule the world.

THE INFILTRATION OF MUSIC

New Age radio stations are becoming popular around the country. An article in a May 1985 edition of *Newsweek* says that this soothing music is based on a "mystical world-view and a striving toward a relaxing musical mood." The titles of the songs tell the story: "Cosmic Energy" and "Easy Is Right," to name a few. The reason for the tranquil sound is to build a bridge between the conscious and the subconscious and to "excite our spirituality."

This kind of music may not be harmful to Christians who do not use it to enter into a mystical mood of spiritual experience. But with the increase in record sales and the proliferation of New Age radio stations, we can expect such music to further perpetuate the Eastern world view among those looking for an entry point into some form of spirituality.

The demonic nature of hard rock music is less subtle. There is a direct connection between secular hard rock and demonic practices such as witchcraft and sorcery. The lyrics peddle the New Age doctrines of magic, transcendental meditation, and the pantheism of the East. Much of this music is written under the influence of drugs.

Michael Haynes in his book *The God of Rock* sees five major themes that keep repeating themselves in hard rock music: (1) sex, (2) drugs, (3) rebellion, (4) false religion, and (5) Satan. For lack of space, only the last two will be considered here.

Many of the rock groups openly promote the religion of the New Age, not only by their lyrics but by using symbols of Satan and demon worship. As Haynes points out, "It seems that if groups do not have a 'god' of some sort to project, they simply find one. There are so many idols presented in the symbolism on album covers that a fairly exhaustive study of FALSE RELIGIONS in America could be constructed from these alone."

Rock music is intended to break down any resistance that one may have toward immorality and indecency. The minds of millions are thereby conditioned to accept the philosophy of the music. As Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones put it, "We've had their bodies ... now we want their minds."

Many of the lyrics are so obscene that they cannot be legally played over the radio or television, though the law is often flaunted. Many of our teenagers have their bedrooms equipped with a stereo so that rock records can be played loudly and repeatedly. There they learn about demon possession, drugs, and immorality.

What do the lyrics say? Here is a song by Ozzy Osbourne entitled "Diary of a Madman." Notice the references to demon possession:

A sickened mind and spirit
The mirror tells me lies
Could I mistake myself for someone
Who lives behind my eyes?
Will he escape my soul,
Or will he live in me?
Is he tryin' to get out or tryin' to enter me?

Or consider these words which set forth Satan as God. The song is entitled "The Number of the Beast" and is found on an album of the same title.

Woe to you, of earth and sea ...
For the devil sends the beast with wrath;
Cause he knows the time is short.

Cults III

Let him who has understanding
Reckon the number of the beast;
For it is a human number,
It's the number six hundred and sixty-six
Satan's work is done!
666 the number of the beast,
Sacrifice is going on tonight!

In addition to the blatant teaching that Satan is God, some lyrics also promote the New Age notion that we are God. Listen to a statement by John Denver: "Apollo taught me to fly. Oh, how he taught me to live! Some day I'll be so complete I won't even be human. I'll be a god." Apollo is the major deity of the sun, moon, and stars.

Through music, many children today are being stolen; that is, their spiritual values are being taken away and replaced with the god of rock. David Crosby put it clearly: "I figured the only thing to do was to swipe their kids. By saying that, I'm not talking about kidnapping; I'm just talking about changing their value systems, which removes them from their parents' world very effectively."

A BIBLICAL RESPONSE

The imagination has tremendous power for evil. But fortunately, the imagination can also be used constructively. We can focus the mind on biblical realities. Moses, you will recall, was able to leave the luxury of the palace and identify himself with the sorrows of his own people because he "endured as seeing Him who is unseen" (Hebrews 11:27).

Abraham was willing to leave the security of his homeland and go to a strange country because "he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:10). Paul specifically instructs us to "keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1).

The use of the Christian's imagination is one of the most powerful motivations for holy living. To have our minds renewed by the Holy Spirit and the Word is, in fact, the secret to authentic Christian living.

How does the Christian's power of imagination (visualization, if you will) differ from the use made of these powers in the New Age Movement?

Christian "visualization" has several characteristics. **First**, we should not visualize any image of God or Christ. This is to break the second commandment, for the image in the mind can be just as idolatrous as the image of stone. And as noted earlier, this can lead to direct communication with evil spirits. Instead we must meditate on the *promises and character of God*.

Second, we should never try to empty the mind so as to think about nothing in particular. The Christian should always meditate on specific *content* and never try to think of nothing (as in transcendental meditation). Those who meditate *in the law of the Lord* are blessed.

Third, we should use our imaginations to create that which has not yet come to pass—such as an artist or builder might do. We do this not because the imagination has the power to fulfill the reality, but in order to set about doing God's will in an orderly way. An illustration is close at hand. When we set out to write this book, we, as authors, sketched the broad outlines of what we wanted to include and exclude. We visualized what we wanted the final product to look like. This helped us accomplish our goal. Imagining the goal motivated us to achieve it.

Some people have a much more creative imagination than others. They see a need and think of a plan to solve it. Some Christian leaders are great simply because they see more than others through the eyes of faith. That is using the imagination for the glory of God.

Finally, we can enjoy those feats of the imagination (entertainment, for example) that induce us to think thoughts that are consistent with holy living. The lines between the followers of God and the followers of Satan will eventually become clearly drawn. As the spirit of Antichrist gains in power, more and more people who call themselves Christians will not be able to make up their minds about who they belong to.

Satan has infiltrated the home, fully intending to carry away as many children as he can. Christ contrasted Himself with this enemy when He said, "The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

Cults III

Material taken from *Satan's "Evangelistic" Strategy For This New Age*; Erwin W. Lutzer and John F. DeVries; Scripture Press. and *Christianity and the New Age Movement*; Marc J. Estes; Christian Equippers International.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Cosmic consciousness - A spiritual and mystical perception that all in the universe is one. To attain cosmic consciousness is to see the universe as God and God as the universe.

Channeling - Willfully yielding to a spirit through placing one's body into a trance-like state.

Crystals - Believed to generate cosmic energy for divine healings, higher consciousness, and super energizing powers.

Esoteric - Intended for or understood by only a chosen few, an inner group.

Karma -An irrevocable law that everyone gets what he or she deserves.

Mantra - A word or phrase that is chanted repeatedly in an effort to empty the mind and attain "cosmic consciousness."

Metaphysical - The understanding of the supernatural realm.

Microcosms - The repetition of a grand pattern on a smaller scale, and having within ourselves the replication of the universe.

Neo-paganism - A modern, anti-Christian view point.

Pantheism - All that exists is God (pan = all).

Paranormal - Beyond or above normal powers or senses.

Pragmatism - See relativism

Relativism - The situation determines morality, or what is right or wrong.

Seance - A gathering of people seeking communication with a deceased person usually through a channeler.

Self-Actualization - A person's self view of reality as he desires to see it.

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR NEW AGE

List the "Four Spiritual Flaws" of the New Age Movement and write a paragraph (5-8 sentences) explaining each flaw.

Cults III



THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

By Lloyd Baker & Others

THE ISSUE OF REVELATION

INTRODUCTION

Startling things are happening among Christians today. Amazing claims abound that God is doing signs, wonders and miracles. Fantastic encounters with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are common place. Healings of all kinds are reported. It is not unusual to hear that God has corrected spinal injuries, lengthened legs, and removed cancerous tissue in response to faith. Some of the miracles are bizarre; puppies are raised from the dead, gas tanks are supernaturally filled, people are slain (knocked flat) by the Holy Spirit. One man named Marvin Ford claims he has actually been to heaven and back.

The focal point of all this activity is the Charismatic teaching that all Christians need to experience the filling of the Holy Spirit which usually includes speaking in tongues.

It is important to distinguish between the *Charismatics* and *Pentecostals*. The *Pentecostal* movement began around 1900 and until 1960 was contained in denominations like the assembly of God, Foursquare, and United Pentecostal. The people practice separation from worldliness and are very strict. They believe tongues are not the evidence of salvation but of the filling with the Holy Spirit. They believe salvation is by grace, but one can lose one's salvation when one sins.

In 1960 Dennis Bennett, rector at St. Marks Episcopal Church in Van Nuys California, experienced what he believes was the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues. After that the *Charismatic* movement spread in almost all denominations. Some things that are happening in this movement are good. Among the *Pentecostals* the gospel is being preached and souls are saved. But in spite of that good there are serious errors. The *Charismatic* movement also enclues groups and religions, some of which don't even believe that Jesus is God, or that salvation is by grace. These and other flaws prevent this from being a N.T. church movement. We shall examine their teachings in the light of Scripture.

I. IS THE BIBLE STILL BEING WRITTEN?

Someone asked Bill and Gloria Gaither for a theological interpretation of their song, "The King Is Coming." Their secretary replied, "They do not care to discuss the theology of it. In fact, they feel that to dissect the song would be tampering with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit *who inspired the song.*"

Are Christians still receiving by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, revelation from God when writing songs or books, when preaching or teaching? Many Charismatics answer a loud, "Yes!" For example J. Rodman Williams, president of Melodyland School of Theology in Anaheim, California says, "If someone today perhaps has a vision of God, of Christ, it is good to know that it has happened before; if one has a revelation from God, to know that for the early Christians revelation also occurred in the community; if one speaks a 'Thus saith the Lord' and dares to address the fellowship in the first person-even going beyond the words of Scripture-that this was happening long ago. The Spirit as the living God moves through and beyond the records as a model for what happens today."

What is Williams saying? It seems he is claiming that the Bible is not our final source of God's revelation. He is claiming that Christians can add to the Bible. The Bible is only a model for what the Holy Spirit is doing today.

A. What Does Inspiration Mean?

1. 2 Tim. 3:16.

The Greek word for inspiration is *theopneustos* which means "God breathed;" Scripture is the very breath of God. Scripture is God speaking. Exodus 4:12, Jer. 1:7,9; Ezekiel 3:4, 10-11.

2. 2 Peter 1:21

The word "moved" means "carried along" by the Holy Spirit. The writers of Scripture were borne along, carried along under the control and direction of the Holy Spirit. What they wrote in a very real sense was not their words, it was the very word of

Cults III

God.

3. Jude 3.

The article before the word *faith* points to the one and only faith. Notice the words *once delivered*. This refers to something done for all time, with lasting results, never to be repeated again. The *delivered* indicates an act completed in the past with no continuing element. In the Scriptures God has given a revelation that is final and complete. Our Christian faith rests on historical revelations. The Word of God, as delivered, is unchangeable and unalterable. Any new revelation or doctrine is unnecessary and false.

B. Modern Views of Inspiration.

Modern theologians want to allow what they call "continued inspiration" or continued revelation." They say God is still inspiring men to write today as He did in olden times.

1. The Roman Catholic Church.

The R.C. Church has a "primary revelation" and a "secondary revelation." Primary revelation is revealed truth made known by God in Scripture before the death of the last apostle. Secondary revelation includes the practices and rites of the church in apostolic or post apostolic times that are not a part of Scripture. They believe secondary revelation is just as binding as primary revelation. The Council of Trent, held by the R.C. Church in 1546, said, "Truth is contained partly in written books, partly in unwritten traditions." But those unwritten traditions never stop. In 1854 the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception—that Mary the Mother of Jesus was born without sin—was proclaimed. In 1950 the Dogma that Mary was assumed bodily into heaven was proclaimed. Both these pronouncements were outside Scripture but Roman Catholics were admonished to believe them without question.

2. The Cults.

Almost every cult has extrabiblical revelation.

- a. The Mormons base their whole system on the Book of Mormon which says of itself; "Behold, I say unto you that they are made known unto you by the Spirit of God and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me."
- b. Christian Science has the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, which they claim; "is not a human philosophy, but a divine revelation."
- c. Jehovah Witnesses say; "The Watchtower is a magazine without equal on earth, because God is its author."
All of these add to the Word of God.

3. The Charismatics.

It is not hard to see a definite relationship between the concepts above and those being taught by charismatics today. Again quoting from J. Rodman Williams, "For in the Spirit the present fellowship is as much the arena of God's vital presence as anything in the Biblical account. Indeed, in the light of what we may learn from this past witness, and take to heart, we may expect new things to occur in our day and days to come. Many of us had convinced ourselves that prophecy ended with the N.T. until suddenly through the dynamic thrust of the Holy Spirit prophecy comes alive again. Now we wonder how we could have misread the N.T. for so long."

This is a clear claim that current instances of charismatic prophecy are divine revelation equal to Scripture. Although, many charismatics will deny they are trying to add to Scripture their views on prophetic utterance, gifts of prophecy, and revelation really do just that. As they add, however unwittingly, to God's final revelation, they undermine the uniqueness and authority of the Bible. New revelations, dreams, and visions come to be just as binding on the

Cults III

believer's conscious as does the Book of Romans or the rest of the Bible.

II. WHERE DOES FURTHER REVELATION LEAD?

We have already seen that the belief of the Charismatics that God sends new revelation on a continuing basis is a common view held by Roman Catholicism, Christian Science, Mormonism, Jehovah Witnesses, and others. The charismatics have strange bedfellows. Just about everyone, from spiritualist Edgar Cayce to L. Ron Hubbard; founder of Scientology, has claimed revelation of some kind from God.

The question is where do we draw the line if not at the point of Scripture? What happens if everybody is free to say God is giving them an inspired revelation? The uniqueness and central authority of the Scripture will be lost. We will end up with a mystical Christianity that will eventually have no real content or substance.

When it comes to the vital area of revelation the parallels between charismatic claims and the ideas of extremists are definitely there. Extremes usually start with slight deviations. (Teacher Aids -1)

The cry of the early church was *Sola Scriptura*, Scriptures only. Today the cry is "Scripture plus something more." Too many people are going right past the scriptures. They are seeking experiences, dreams, visions and etc. outside the scripture, as a revelation from God.

III. THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE IS CLOSED!

We must realize a vital truth: God's Revelation Is Finished For Now. God's Word is complete. It is settled forever in heaven. From the time of the apostles until the present, true believers have accepted the Bible as complete. The Holy Spirit does work marvelously in the believer, He encompasses us as we preach, teach, write, talk, serve and live. He does lead us into God's truth and directs us in a sovereignly designed plan of life. But to refer to this leading as inspiration or revelation is a misnomer.

We must not undermine the authority of God's revelation in the Bible. We cannot abandon *Sola*

Scriptura without denying the Bible's own claim for itself. If we dare to insist we are receiving revelation from God that matches or exceeds the Scriptures, we travel a perilous path that can only lead to theological chaos and spiritual disaster.

THE ISSUE OF INTERPRETATION

The issue of interpretation is almost as important as the issue of revelation, It is as bad to interpret the Bible wrongly as it is to add to it. We can not just say, "This verse means such and such to me." A verse has to mean something in and of itself apart from any of us. In the business of interpretation we need a solid approach, good hermeneutics. We need to follow 2 Tim, 2:15 in interpreting the Bible.

In interpreting the Bible there are at least 3 errors to avoid!

1. *Don't sacrifice proper interpretation just to make a point.*

A rabbi was trying to convince people that the primary issue in life is concern for human beings. He used the story of the Tower of Babel in Gen. 11 to support his contention. He said the reason God confused their tongues at Babel was because they thought more of material things than they did of human beings. As the tower grew higher it took many hours to carry bricks to the top. If a man fell off they did not mourn for the man but for the bricks that were lost. Because of this lack of concern for human beings God stopped the work.

The Bible does not say any of this. That is not the message of Gen. 11. This is an example of wrong interpretation.

2. *Avoid superficial study.*

Good, accurate Bible study is hard work. For interpretation we need to apply diligence. As Paul says in 1 Tim. 5:17 we are to "labor in the word and doctrine."

Cults III

3. *Avoid spiritualizing and allegorizing.*

This is when we put something into a verse of scripture instead of getting something out. A good example of spiritualizing is the following: A couple came to a marriage counselor for help. After talking with them for some time he asked them, "Why did you ever get married? You are miles apart!" The young man said their pastor had preached a message on the walls of Jericho. The Pastor said the people of God claimed the city of Jericho, marched, around it seven times and the walls fell down. He said if a young man believed God had given him a certain young lady, he could claim her, march around her seven times, and the walls of her heart would fall down. That is what this young man did and they got married. Several other couples were married as a result of that sermon. That is not the way to interpret Scripture. In Luke 24 the Bible says Jesus expounded the Scriptures to two of his disciples. They word expounded is *hermeneuo*. That is hermeneutics (the science of interpretation, especially the branch of theology dealing with the principles of exegesis [literal interpretation]). Jesus interpreted the Scriptures properly.

I. FIVE PRINCIPLES OF SOUND BIBLE INTERPRETATION.

A. The Literal Principle

This means understanding Scripture in its natural, normal sense. We interpret the words of Scripture according to the customary meaning of those words. Once we abandon the literal sense of Bible interpretation we discard all hope of achieving accuracy. Instead we have a free-for-all where only imagination rules. We must interpret literally.

B. The Historical Principle

This means we have to understand the history involved. Who is speaking? To whom is he speaking? Where did it take place? What were the customs and culture like? To

answer these questions we can look in Bible Dictionaries, Bible Handbooks and books on Bible customs. If one understands the historical scene in which the passage was written, often the passage will practically interpret itself.

C. The Grammatical Principle

What does the passage say in terms of words and grammar? Learn to break down the verse into phrases, words, modifiers, and other parts of speech. Sometimes prepositions are very important. It can matter a great deal whether a passage says "into" or "in" or "by" or "with". Grammar may not be a favorite subject with us, but we need it to properly interpret Scripture.

D. The Synthesis Principle

This principle is based on the idea that no part of the Bible contradicts any other part. The Bible has marvelous unity because it has one Author, the Holy Spirit. If we hear an interpretation of one passage that does not square with another passage then one of the passages is being interpreted incorrectly. The Holy Spirit does not disagree with Himself.

E. The Practical Principle

This is applying the Bible to our own lives. 2 Tim, 3:16 says all Scripture is profitable. It will apply to our lives one way or another, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction for instruction. We should apply the Word.

F. One More Needful Thing

We must have the illumination of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 2:12-14. Only the Holy Spirit can show us the truth. Because the believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him the Scriptures can be understood and interpreted properly. We must remember, however, the Holy Spirit illuminates only what we have studied diligently according to proper principles. The Holy Spirit is not some kind of medium who "zaps" us with "new and unique interpretations" that require no study.

Cults III

II. EXAMPLES OF CHARISMATIC MIS-INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

We shall look at some examples of their free-wheeling approach to Biblical Interpretation.

A. The Sin Against The Holy Spirit

Matt. 12:22-31

Charles and Frances Hunter, two well-known Charismatics, in their book, *Why Should I Speak In Tongues?*, imply that any one who questions tongues or other aspects of the charismatic movement may be perilously close to committing the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Are they correct?

Lets check this passage out with some of the 5 principles of Biblical interpretation. First we must look at the literal meaning of the passage. The Pharisees were literally saying Jesus Christ got His power from Satan. The historical principle reveals that the public ministry of Christ had been going on for 2 years. He had performed many miracles that proved He was God. But the Pharisees were saying He was "of the devil." Using the principle of synthesis of Scripture we see in other passages that Christ received the power of the Holy Spirit, Matt. 3:16. It was only after the Holy Spirit came upon Him that He performed miracles. Now notice carefully what Jesus said in Matt. 12:31-32. One may speak a word against Christ and it will be forgiven. But to say that the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ is actually done by Satan puts one in a hopeless state. They can not be saved. What happened in Matt. 12:22-31 is an historical event that occurred while Christ was on earth physically. This is not presently true, so in a primary sense there is no application now. Perhaps there will be in the millennial kingdom when Christ is present on earth again.

Was Jesus saying that if we question the practices of the Charismatic movement we are committing blasphemy against the

Holy Spirit? Neither the context nor the historical setting support this view. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is defined as attributing the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ to Satan. This can not be forgiven. The application to be made today is that if a person continues to reject and scorn the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, there is no way he can become a Christian. The sin against the Holy Spirit can never be used in reference to challenging a charismatic view point. Basically, the sin against the Holy Spirit was an historical event. Secondly it can be applied to anyone who rejects the work of the Holy Spirit in presenting Christ's divine credentials.

B. Is Hebrews 13:8 a Charismatic Proof Test

Hebrews 13:8 is a wonderful promise to believers. The typical Charismatic interpretation of this verse is often used to defend their positions. Charles and Francis Hunter, for example, reason that if Jesus baptized with the evidence of speaking in tongues yesterday, then surely His is doing it today and will continue to do the same thing tomorrow. The Hunters are saying that what happened "yesterday" during the earthly ministry of Jesus and in the apostolic age, is happening now. New revelation is happening now, tongues go on, healings continue, miracles still occur. The Charismatic interpretation of Hebrews 13:8 is practically standard in all their writings.

The question is: *Does the Charismatic interpretation of Heb. 13:8 stand up to inspection according to hermeneutical principles?*

What does the verse mean literally? The literal meaning is that Christ is unchanging-yesterday, today, and forever. In His essence Christ never changes. His nature is always the same. But in historical manifestations Jesus was not always the same. Before the world was created Jesus was the Second Person of the Trinity. During O.T. times Jesus appeared as the Angel of the Lord.

For example see Gen. 16:7-13, Exod. 3:24.

During His earthly ministry Jesus appeared in

Cults III

human form. So Jesus was not the same in form during these periods. Nor were the same things happening. There is no indication of tongues during the O.T. times or during the earthly ministry of Jesus. Obviously tongues were not part of Jesus ministry "yesterday".

As far as "forever" is concerned, none of the gifts are forever. 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 clearly says that the gifts of prophesy, tongues, and knowledge will not endure forever.

So when tested by principles of Biblical interpretation, the charismatic interpretation of Heb. 13:8 does not stand up. They force a meaning into the verse that is not there in order to justify their contention that tongues, healings, and such are happening today as they did in the first century.

C. The Promise of Power In Mark 16:17-18.

Oscar Vouga, a Pentecostal, said in his book, *Our Gospel Message*, "Through faith in the name of Jesus, devils are being cast out today, and many are being delivered from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of God. Signs are following the preaching of the gospel where it is preached in faith, and with the anointing of the Holy Spirit and power." Vouga refers to the signs in Mark 16 but does not deal with all of them.

Charles and Francis Hunter grapple with all of the 5 signs mentioned. They say casting out demons, speaking in new tongues, and laying hands on the sick and the sick recovering are happening today. When it comes to being bitten by snakes and drinking poison but not being hurt they assure their readers they are not interested in handling snakes and drinking poison. They say Paul was bitten by a snake in Acts 28 "by accident" and was not hurt. The Hunters imply that God will protect Christians if they drink poison or are bitten by a snake "IF" it is accidental!

The problem with this interpretation is that the mention of "accidental" is not found in this passage. Christian people have died after being given the wrong medicine, which is the same thing as poison. Christian people have died

from snake bite.

The Hunters also try to spiritualize this passage by saying *serpents* refers to Satan "the biggest snake of all." If *serpents* refer to Satan what do the other 4 signs refer to? Do we also spiritualize them? If so, in what way.

Let's look at these verses using our principles. The text literally says 5 signs will follow those who believe. They are: (1) demons will be cast out, (2) new tongues will be spoken, (3) serpents will bite believers without harm to the believers, (4) believers will drink poison and not be hurt, and (5) hands will be laid on the sick and the sick will recover.

Using the historical principle we ask: "Have all Christians through all times, right up to the present, been able to perform these 5 signs?" Obviously a lot of Christians (charismatic and non-charismatic) are sick. Many are dying of cancer, heart disease and other illness. A lot of believers have died of snakebite and poisoning. Please notice in verse 14 Jesus is speaking directly to the eleven. They were to preach the gospel to every creature. Those that believed would do these 5 signs. This refers to the apostolic age. In the book of Acts, four of these signs are performed by the apostles. (Drinking of poison is not recorded). It is not recorded after the apostolic age that these signs were accomplished. Therefore these signs are not the norm for today.

Notice carefully the Lord did not say "these signs are for them that believe," but will "follow them that believe." In verse 20 this is made even more clear, "...and they went forth and preached everywhere the Lord working with them and confirming the word (not the disciples) with signs following." Why were these signs needed? Because the Jews require a sign.

1 Cor. 1:22. The early church was composed of converted Jews.

But Isaiah had said (Is. 6:9-10) the Jews would

Cults III

hear but not understand, see but not comprehend. Signs at that time, were for the purpose of confirming the Word.

Charismatics infer that if one has enough faith or is "spiritual enough" they can perform these signs. This adds up to a tremendous guilt syndrome and is cruel to Christians who get sick and cannot recover from it. It is all a misinterpretation of Scripture. Either all five signs are valid, or none are. Proper Bible interpretation shows they were given as a unit for use during the apostolic age to confirm the gospel message and its messenger.

D. By His Stripes We Are Healed

From what are we healed? 1 Peter 2:24.

Charismatics often use this text to support their strong emphasis on the gift of healing. The grammatical principle of interpretation will help us here. What is the meaning of "healed" in the context of 1 Pet. 2:24? There is no mention of physical healing in this verse or in the immediately surrounding verses. Verse 24 says Christ died on the cross for our sins. He bore our sins in His own body, not our sickness. This verse says we are to live unto righteousness, not unto good health. This is an important distinction.

Notice the past tense in verse 24. "By whose stripes ye were healed." The past tense points back to the cross where man's sin-sick soul was healed. The verse does not say "By whose stripes ye will be continually healed physically."

The Synthetic principle will also help us here. Then we look at other Scripture we see our souls have been redeemed but not our bodies. See Romans 8:23. This verse tells us we still live in a body affected by the fall. We are still subject to sickness and other infirmities. The Spirit helps us overcome infirmities but there is no guarantee of physical healing of disease.

The phrase "by whose stripes ye are healed" comes from Isaiah 53:5. Was Isaiah talking about physical healing? Study it carefully and

you will see the prophet was talking about spiritual healing that Israel needed so desperately. Look at Isa. 1:4-6. This refers to the spiritual healing of sin, not physical disease. So again to read into this verse physical healing is a misinterpretation of Scripture.

THE ISSUE OF AUTHORITY

Lets give ourselves a theological quiz. In drawing conclusions about the nature of God and what He is doing in our lives, is experience or what the Bible says more important?

The Charismatics, if they were honest, would have to say experience. This is evident in their writings and television programs. On television a lady told how her flat tire was healed. In Florida a woman testified that she had taught her dog to bark in an unknown bark. These examples may seem bizarre but they are not uncommon. The reason for this is that in charismatic circles **NO EXPERIENCE HAS TO STAND THE TEST OF SCRIPTURE**. The Charismatic has no way to judge or stop bizarre testimonies of experiences because **THE EXPERIENCE VALIDATES ITSELF**. Instead of checking experience against the Bible for validity, the charismatic tries to get the Bible to fit the experience or, failing that, he just ignores the Bible. (Teacher Aid -2)

I. WHY THE EMPHASIS ON EXPERIENCE?

It is because the key doctrine of the charismatic is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We will discuss this in detail later. According to the Charismatic after a person becomes a Christian he must seek diligently the baptism of the Holy Spirit. If and when he gets this "baptism" he experiences various phenomena like speaking in tongues, feeling of euphoria, visions, and so forth. This post-salvation experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit opens the floodgates for one experience after another. It seems almost a game to see who can have the most sensational experience. One ex-charismatic said, "You spend the rest of your life trying to find another experience."

Cults III

II. WHERE DID THIS START?

Modern speaking in tongues began on January 1, 1901 in Topeka, Kansas. A woman named Agnes Ozman was seeking to speak in tongues. Charles Parham who was in charge of the service, laid his hands on Agnes and she began to speak in tongues. She said, "I talked in several languages, and it was clearly manifest when a new dialect was spoken. I was the first to speak in tongues."

Then in 1960 Dennis Bennett, rector at St. Marks Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California also claimed to speak in tongues. However this personal, subjective approach to Scripture goes back to the beginning of the Roman Catholic Church. Intuition, experience, and mysticism have always played a big role in Roman Catholic theology. They say the truth is what you think and feel and then claim, the truth is what happens to you.

In contrast to this subjective, personal approach to the Bible is the historic, objective approach which emphasizes God's action toward man as recorded in Scripture. We begin with God's Word and anybody's thoughts, ideas, or experiences are validated or invalidated on the basis of how they compare with that Word. Objective, historic theology is Reformation theology.

The charismatic movement that we have today is based on experience, emotion, feelings and phenomena. Dr. Dale Bruner has written, "Pentecostalism wishes, in brief, to be understood as experiential Christianity, with its experience culminating in the baptism of the believer in the Holy Spirit. It is not doctrine (that is important to them), it is the experience that they wish to stress."

For the most part charismatics are sincere. They really believe in their approach. But like the Jews in Paul's day they have a zeal without knowledge. When they approach the Christian life with the subjective, personal method they are not using their minds, they are not thinking, not understanding. God's revelation makes a man think. God said, "Come now and let us reason together." Isa. 1:18. God's revelation demands the use of reason and understanding. See Rom. 12:1; Eph. 1:18, 3:18, 4:23; Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:10.

III. WHAT IS THE BASIS OF EXPERIENTIAL THEOLOGY?

Subjective, personal, experiential theology is made up of 3 elements, all anti-Christian.

A. Existentialism

This is a philosophical view that says life is meaningless. We should be free to do our own thing just as long as we are willing to take responsibility for our choices.

One of the major concerns of an existentialist is how he feels. He answers to no authority; he is his own authority. What ever grabs him, whatever "turns him on" is truth for him. They say, "If it feels good do it." The experiential theology that we see in the charismatic movement is not the legacy of historic Christianity. It is the legacy of existentialism.

B. Humanism.

This philosophy says man has unlimited potential. Give man enough time and education and he can solve any problem. Humanism urges everyone to be somebody, to make his mark in the world, to have his say. The humanist recognizes no final authority. All truth is relative. There are no absolutes.

C. Paganism.

Paganism goes back thousands of years to the mystery religions of Babel. Historians tell us that people who took part in these pagan practices had experiences of peace, joy, happiness and ecstasy-phenomena in some respects akin to Charismatic experiences.

Experience, in the hands of Satan, can be a dangerous weapon. Christianity is being attacked. We are being victimized by the experiential spirit of the day, the legacy of existentialism, humanism, and paganism. An experience can be psychological, physiological, theological or demonic. The only real test for any experience is, "Does it square with the Word of God?"

Cults III

IV. DID PETER AND PAUL RELY ON EXPERIENCE.

A. Peter

Read carefully 2 Pet. 1:16-18 and Matt. 17:1-4. These Scriptures tell of a fantastic experience Peter had. It was an incredible experience.

Jesus pulled aside His flesh and revealed His glory. The experience left Peter stunned and he muttered something about building 3 tabernacles—one for Jesus, one for Elijah, and one for Moses. Peter got a glimpse of Second Coming glory. But did Peter build his theology on an experience like that?

Read 2 Pet. 1:19-21. Peter said, "We have a more sure Word of Prophecy." Peter was saying the transfiguration experience was wonderful, but when it came to verifying his faith, he had something more trustworthy, the revelation of God spoken by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit. Peter's point was:

ALL EXPERIENCE MUST BE VALIDATED BY THE MORE SURE WORD OF SCRIPTURE.

When we seek the truth about doctrine and the Christian life we do not go to someone's experience. We go to the revealed Word of God. If we make experience our guide we fall into the error advanced by Henry Frost in his book, *Miraculous Healing*. "It may confidently be anticipated, as the present apostasy increases, that Christ will manifest His deity and Lordship in increasing measure through miracle signs. We are not to say therefore that the Word is sufficient."

Henry Frost says the Word of God may not be sufficient for our time. Experience is more important than the Word of God.

B. Paul

Paul had many spiritual gifts. He had all kinds of experiences. On the road to Damascus he saw Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 12 he describes a vision he had in which he was caught up to the third heaven.

But when Paul went to teach and preach did

he make his experience the heart of his message? Acts 17:2-3 states clearly that Paul's appeal was from the Scriptures. Right up to the end of his life Paul reasoned with everyone out of God's Word. Acts 28:23.

V. THE BATTLE RAGES ON FOR THE BIBLE.

The liberals are at the front door denying the inspiration of the Bible. Now we have the Charismatics at the back door interpreting the Bible according to their experience.

The charismatics are somewhat like Phillip in John 14:6-10. Notice what Jesus said in verses 6 and 7, "If you know me you know the Father." But Phillip was not satisfied with the words of Jesus. In verse 9 he asked for a vision, an experience. The request of Phillip must have been heartbreaking for Jesus, verses 9-10. What Phillip said was an insult to the Son of God. It seems many people are doing the same thing today by asking for something more than the Word of God.

One should never ask for an experience first. It is better to know God's Word first and then the experience that flows from that knowing. In Luke 24:32 the two disciples were taught the Word of God by Jesus; then they had the joyful experience.

To build a theology upon experience is to build upon sand. But to build a theology upon God's inspired Word is to build upon a rock.

THE ISSUE OF APOSTOLIC UNIQUENESS.

Is God doing things today the way He did during the apostolic period? Should all Christians be receiving revelations, visions, voices, tongues, the power to heal, and the ability to perform miracles? Many Charismatics affirm that they should. David du Plessis, an outstanding leader in the Charismatic movement said, "The New Testament is not a record of what happened in one generation, but it is a blueprint of what should happen in every generation until Jesus comes." Pentecostals and Charismatics alike believe that God has never changed; but they also believe that soon after it began the early church

Cults III

did change, becoming formally ritualistic. When that happened the church forfeited the power of the Holy Spirit. This power is finally being recovered through the Charismatic movements. What the apostles did in the first century, say Charismatics, Christian believers can do today.

I. WHY AND WHEN HAS GOD USED MIRACLES.

A Study of Scriptures will reveal that miracles occurred in 3 major Periods: the days of Moses and Joshua, the time of Elijah and Elisha, and the time of Christ and the apostles. Each of these periods lasted less than 100 years, but in each period there was a great many miracles. Miracles were the norm. God can work miracles at any time in history he desires, but it seems He chose to limit Himself essentially to these three periods. At least 3 elements in the miracles recorded during these 3 periods help us understand why.

A. Miracles introduced a new era of revelation.

In all 3 of these periods God gave revelations in substantial qualities. For example it was during the life of Moses the law was given, instructions for the tabernacle for sacrifices and for the priesthood. In Joshua's life God was revealing His character and power.

During the life of Elijah and Elisha the nation of Israel had sunk to a very low point. They were called as prophets to reveal the holiness of God and therefore many miracles were performed. During the time of Christ, 31 A.D. to 96 A.D., the entire New Testament was given. And during that time there were many wonders and miracles performed by Christ and the apostles.

B. Miracles authenticated the messengers of revelation.

Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, and Christ and the apostles all had the ability to do signs and wonders in order to convince the people God was with them and was speaking through them. In Exodus 3-13 Moses proved to Pharaoh God had sent him by the miracles he performed. In 1 Kings 17:24 the widow knew Elijah was a man of God by the miracles he did. In John 10:24-25 Jesus said His works

testify of Him. See also Acts 2:22. In Acts 14:3 we learn that miracles witnessed to Paul's ministry. Through miracles God authenticated the messengers of His new revelations.

C. Miracles called the attention of those listening to hear the new revelation.

God used miracles to get the attention of the people to whom the message was directed. When miracles were done by Moses the Jews believed God had sent him. The Egyptians also believed after the tenth miracle of the death angel destroyed the first-born in every Egyptian home.

On Mt. Carmel God showed both believers and unbelievers that Elijah was delivering His message.

In John 20:31 it says miracles were given so unbelievers would become believers. So miracles and wonders were used to confirm believers and make believers out of unbelievers.

During these three times in history miracles were standard fare. When the Law and Prophets and the New Testament were complete, God's revelation was complete.

II. WHY THE APOSTLES WERE UNIQUE.

Scripture make it plain that the N.T. revelation and the apostles were connected. Their miracles proved they were apostles. See 2 Cor. 12:11-12 where Paul proves his apostleship by his miracles. Now if this kind of thing were common to all Christians, it would be a rather foolish way for Paul to prove his apostleship. Even during the apostolic age all Christians could not do miracles and mighty deeds. But if miracles and signs were unique to apostles it would be proof of their power and authority.

One never reads in the N.T. about any specific miracle occurring at random among the Christian believers. Even the granting of the Holy Spirit in Samaria, to Cornelius the Gentile at Caesarea, and in Acts 19 did not occur until the apostles were there!

Cults III

Here are reasons why apostles were unique and we don't have them today.

A. The Church was founded upon the apostles and prophets.

Eph. 2:19-20. They were the foundation of the first church. (1 Cor. 12:28) A building only needs one foundation. After that foundation is laid no other is needed.

B. An apostle had to be an eyewitness to the resurrection.

See Acts 1:21-22. Also 1 Cor. 9:1 and 1 Cor. 15:7-8. No one today could be an apostle since they could not witness the resurrection. But some charismatics claim to have seen Christ. One man claimed Christ had ridden with him in his car. But there is no way to verify these claims.

C. An apostle was chosen personally by Christ.

See Matt. 10:1-4 Paul was chosen by Christ in Acts 9:15. The original eleven plus Paul had a non-transferable commission to teach revelatory doctrine and found the first church. The pastoral epistles speak of bishops and elders and pastors and deacons for today, but never of apostles.

D. Apostles were authenticated by Miraculous signs.

Acts 3:3-11, 5:15-16, 9:36-42, 20:6-12 are samples.

E. Apostles had absolute authority.

See Jude 17. When they spoke there was not any discussion. They were recognized as the revelatory agents of God. They had much more authority than prophets. Prophets had to be judged as to their accuracy and authenticity. (1 Cor. 14:29-33) The apostles were a special breed. They had no successors.

F. Apostles have an eternal and unique place of honor.

The names of the 12 are sealed forever into the wall of the New Jerusalem. Rev. 21:14. Their names are unique. Their ministry is unique. The miracles they did were unique. The age of the Apostles and what they did are past.

Samuel Green says, "In the second century we are, to a great extent, in a changed world. Apostolic authority lives no longer in the Christian community; apostolic miracles have passed." The apostolic age was unique and it ended. History says it, Jesus says it, theology says it, the New Testament says it.

In the early pages of the Book of Acts Jerusalem was filled with miracles. But after the martyrdom of Stephen there was never another recorded miracle to occur in that city. What happened during the apostolic age was not to be the norm for succeeding generations of Christians. The normal thing for every Christian today is to study and obey God's Word, which will make him wise and mature. We are to walk by faith, not by sight.

THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1 CORINTHIANS 12

INTRODUCTION

The charismatic movement places a great deal of emphasis on spiritual gifts. A well known Pentecostal scholar, Donald Gee, said, "We suggest a contribution by the Pentecostal movement to the whole church of the greatest value when we testify to the desirability of having His presence made manifest by means of spiritual gifts". According to Gee the source of the Pentecostal experience is spiritual gifts. The key passages dealing with spiritual gifts are Romans 12, 1 Cor. 12-14, and Ephesians 4. For our study we shall deal only with the 1 Cor. passage. In order to properly understand this passage we need to look at the city of Corinth and the church in that city.

I. THE CITY AND ITS CHURCH.

When Paul entered Corinth he entered one of the best known cities of his world. Corinth was a city of commerce, culture, religion and vice. It was a miniature picture of our civilization today. The church that was in Corinth was tragically like a large part of Christendom today. Instead of being "salt" and "light" as Jesus said in Mat. 5:13-16 - holding in

Cults III

check the

process of decay and dispelling the darkness - that church was overcome by evil. God intended for the church to leave its mark upon the city, but the city left its mark on the church. Corinth was a crossroads of the world both by sea and land. It was situated between two harbors bringing visitors from every part of the world. In addition it was in the path of all north and south military and commercial traffic by land. The result was that it was a city into which wealth flowed. Ten miles outside the city was the site of the Isthmian Games held every 4 years. Overlooking Corinth was the temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and fertility. From this temple 1000 prostitutes came into the city to ply their trade. Long haired male prostitutes (gays) were a common sight on the streets. That's why Paul said what he did in 1 Cor. 11:14. Corinth was a city of prosperity, sports, politics, and immorality when Paul arrived there.

Paul's first contact was with Aquila and Priscilla, tentmakers like Paul. Then two influential men were saved, Justus and Crispus. (See Acts 18) Soon a growing church was in existence, consisting of male and female, Jew and Gentile, slave and master. Paul stayed 2 years preaching, teaching and organizing the church. Then he went to Ephesus. The church in Corinth began to have serious problems so Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to correct those problems. Instead of presenting a witness to the city the church was a shame. Instead of victory there was defeat. They tolerated immorality in the church. There were divisions and conflicts, in which believers were taking each other to court. They were misusing spiritual gifts. The reason for the two epistles to the Corinthians is to serve as a warning to other believers of other ages to "beware Corinthianism".

A. They had spiritual gifts but not spirituality.

1 Cor. 1:7. The Corinthians had all the spiritual gifts. But they did not have spirituality. Spiritual gifts and spirituality are not synonymous! Their lack of spirituality was the result of immaturity. Immaturity is not caused by a lack of learning. The Corinthians were great admirers of education. They had the best of teachers. 1 Cor. 2:12-13. They had all the spiritual gifts, were well taught in the word,

and had the best teachers. Yet they were carnal and babes! 1 Cor. 3:1.

Notice the symptoms of immaturity in this church.

1. Selfishness

They were suing each other because they felt they were being defrauded, (6:7). They were gorging themselves with food at the love feasts while the poor saints went hungry. They were drinking themselves drunk with no thoughts of the effects. They were seeking spiritual gifts for self-satisfaction and self-glory.

2. Division

This church was divided into groups split over personalities (1:12). In 2 Cor. 6:14-17 they were commanded to separate from unrighteousness, darkness, and idols. But there is not a line about separating from fellow believers over personalities.

3. Toleration of evil in the church.

Immorality, drunkenness, criticism, gluttony, and carnality had invaded this church. Yet they believed they had attained a spiritual stature because they possessed spiritual gifts and spoke in tongues. In their own estimation they were spiritually above the other churches. They were full of spiritual pride in spite of their deplorable condition. Paul writes the first epistle to the Corinthians to correct this false spiritual pride. Chapters 12-14 are the ones we shall examine.

II. THE SPIRIT'S CORRECTION.

1 COR 12

A. Laying the Foundation, 12:1-3

These 3 verses are foundational.

1. *First Paul tells them in verse one he does not want them to be ignorant concerning the spirituals.*

Notice the word *gifts* is in italics. That means the translators added it. The word

Cults III

spirituals is *Pneumatika*. It means "Characterized or controlled by the Spirit." Paul is going to give correction in the area of spirituals- that controlled by the Holy Spirit- just like he had given correction concerning the carnalities in Chapters 1 to 11.

Here is the very heart of the problem of the Church at Corinth- their lack of true spirituality evidenced by their preoccupation with the charismatic.

2. *In verse 2 he tells them, "Ye were idolaters, carried away."*

It pictures worshippers out of control, in ecstatic states. The historians of the mystery religious of Greece picture devotees caught up in emotional hysteria, shaking and falling prostrate on the ground and babbling in ecstatic speech. Plato records such scenes. So does Virgil, who lived and wrote just prior to Christ. Now Paul is saying, "that is the way it was when you were idolaters, but it shouldn't be so now!" "Let all things be done decently and in order" (14:40). The Holy Spirit doesn't produce what your idolatrous worship produced.

3. *Verse 3 is vital! What does it mean?*

Paul is not saying that an unsaved person cannot say the words, "Jesus is Lord," In Mat 7:21-23 it is recorded that unsaved people called Jesus "Lord". We could offer a drunk money to say "Jesus is Lord" and he could do so without difficulty. Paul is not talking about the repetition of a phrase. He is talking about the Sovereignty of Christ. The Holy Spirit will always speak of and promote the Lord Jesus Christ. (See John 16:7, 13, 14). In other words any movement which exalts the Holy Spirit is not of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit exalts Christ. The Holy Spirit will never depreciate Christ or his work. Charismatics say, "Now that you have received Christ you have salvation, but you need to receive the Spirit to be a complete Christian." Behind such

statements is the idea that Christ begins the work of salvation, but the Spirit completes it. But this is wrong. See Col. 1:18-19.

So in the first 3 verses we see four important things.

- a. God intends his people be concerned with the total of the spiritual life, not just the spiritual gifts.
- b. God does not want us to be ignorant of the purpose of spiritual gifts. We will see that purpose later.
- c. When the Holy Spirit controls a person he is not carried away or out of control as the pagans were.
- d. The Holy Spirit does not exalt himself but exalts Christ as Lord. He does not depreciate Christ or his work.

B. The Source of Spiritual Gifts 12: 4-11

1. The source of spiritual gifts is the Trinity (4-6).

Although there are different gifts, different administrations, and different operations, still the Trinity works in all. The Holy Spirit gives the gifts, Christ assigns the place of ministry of the gift, and the Father provides the energy.

2. These gifts are given at conversion. (7-11)

This is a truth that is opposite to much that is being taught today in charismatic circles. Notice verse 7, 11, and 28. Every believer ALREADY has his gift or gifts, They are sovereignly given by the Holy Spirit, the moment we were converted. Verses 12-13 tell us that at conversion the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the literal, physical, resurrected body of Christ. At that time we receive our gift or gifts.

C. The Gifts Were Given For The Use of The Body Verses 12-30

In these verses Paul uses the human body to picture the body of Christ, a N.T. church. God alone is the designer and creator and he alone determines what place and function each member will have, (18, 24, 28). The apostle

Cults III

draws a picture of a less admired member seeking to be a more admired member (verses 15-21). For example imagine, if you can, the ear saying, "No one ever looks longingly at me and comments on how beautiful I am like the eye." So the ear fasts and prays and pours out its wax seeking to be an eye. How ridiculous! An ear is an ear. God made it an ear and placed it on the side of the head. If it succeeded in changing into an eye, the body would be handicapped with poor hearing and embarrassed with three eyes. What is Paul point? He applies his illustration in verses 28-30. God has sovereignly given gifts and placed the gifted people as He wills-not as they will, desire or seek.

But someone will say, "What about verse 31 of chapter 12? Does that not say we should covet the best gifts? In this verse, Paul is not giving a command, but making a statement. He is saying, "You are seeking the attention getting gifts, but I am going to show you something better," The word covet in the Greek is *zeloo*. It usually has the sense of self seeking. Paul is telling them they are seeking the showy, attention getting gifts for selfish purposes. He is going to show them a more excellent way in chapter 13.

THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

I. 1 CORINTHIANS 13

INTRODUCTION: It is important to remember that Chapter 13 does not stand alone. It is not just a beautiful description of love. It is the very heart of Paul's teaching about the Spiritual life. It is absolutely vital to the truth of chapters 12 and 14. The three chapters are a unit.

The truly spiritual life is one controlled by the fruit of the Spirit, not the gifts of the Spirit! According to Gal. 5:22-23 the initial and all embracing fruit of the Spirit is love. When God's love controls there will be joy, peace, and all the other fruits of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit, love, is

used to describe the life controlled by the Holy Spirit.

A. The negative side of love. 13:1-3

In 1 Cor 13 the exercise of charismata without the fruit of the Spirit, love, is pictured as worthless! Tongues, prophecy, knowledge, faith, mercy, and even self-sacrifice add up to zero when the life is not producing spiritual fruit. Paul is saying here that it is possible to have spiritual gifts and not spirituality. Nor do spiritual gifts produce spirituality. The Corinthians had all the spiritual gifts but their spiritual level of life was very low, to the point of carnality.

B. The positive side of love. 13:4-8

Paul now describes the quality of life which will be produced when the Christian is controlled by love, the fruit of the Spirit.

1. Love endures long and is patient and kind.

It does not quit. It is not spasmodic. It isn't turned off and on. (v 4)

Love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy. It doesn't envy another's gift. It is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily.

What was happening in Corinth?

See 12:15-16. They were saying, "I want his gift. He speaks in tongues, he works miracles. All I can do is show mercy or exhort. I want what he has." Love envieth not. Love is not proud and haughty. Spiritual gifts were to be used to build up the body, not for the individual's desire. The Corinthians were proud of their gifts. They had arrived and looked with pity and disdain on those who had not received "the baptism" and the initial sign of speaking in tongues. But a Spirit-controlled life has not pride or self seeking.

2. Love does not behave itself unseemly.

It is never indecent or out of control. It does not produce the improper. (Teacher Aid - 3)

C. The heart of 1 Cor 13. Verses 8-12

When Paul's logic is followed in this passage,

Cults III

confusion about the gifts of tongues, knowledge, and prophecy disappears. Tongues was the name of the game at Corinth. They were not using this gift as God intended but were using it as an attractive self-edifying toy.

1. The difference between prophecy, knowledge, and tongues. Verse 8

Notice love never fails. But prophecy shall fail, tongues shall cease, knowledge shall be done away. For a proper interpretation of this verse we will need the principle of Bible interpretation that deals with grammar.

When it says prophecies shall fail and knowledge shall vanish away the verb is transitive in both cases. That means an outside influence is needed to make knowledge vanish and prophecy fail. But when it says tongues shall cease the verb is intransitive, requiring no outside influence for completion. Paul does not link prophecy, tongues, and knowledge together in their cessation. It is often said, "If tongues have ceased then knowledge must also have ceased. We know that knowledge is still here, therefore tongues must still be here." This is not what Paul was saying. Instead of linking tongues, prophecy, and knowledge together, he separates tongues from the others by using transitive and intransitive verbs. In addition even the voice is different. The statement about prophecy and knowledge are both in the passive voice, while the statement about tongues is in the middle voice. So Paul places a distinction between prophecy and knowledge from tongues.

2. When did prophecy and knowledge pass away?

The answer is in verse 9. "For we know (Knowledge) *in part* and we prophecy *in part*." Prophecy and knowledge are again linked together by using the phrase "in part". Now read verse 10. "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." What was in part?

Knowledge and prophecy. So Paul is saying that when the perfection comes knowledge and prophecy shall cease. When will that be? The answer is in verse 12. "For now we see through a glass darkly our prophecy is in part but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known."

The day when partial knowledge and prophecy ceases is the day when the body stands face to face with Christ, who possesses perfect knowledge. Until then knowledge and prophecy continue in part, to be used by those to whom granted. We shall know all when we meet Christ.

3. What about tongues?

Please notice that Paul said no more about tongues in this chapter after verse 8. When did tongues cease? We find the answer in Chapter 14:21-22, Notice in verse 22 tongues are for a sign. A sign to whom? To the Christian confirming the "baptism"? No "Not to them that believe." *Tongues are not a sign to Christians.* "But to them that believe not". The reason for tongues, which are unknown languages, was a sign to those in Israel who did not believe. The reason for the sign gift of tongues is no longer here, and God does not give his gifts to be toys.

4. Tongues were a sign that God was giving His approval to this new institution, the Church.

Hysteria, confusion, mysterious speech and unseemly, selfish behavior were all present in this charismatic church at Corinth. None of these are present when the fruit of the Spirit controls. Self-edification and self-glory gives way to the good of all in the body of Christ and attention is drawn to the Lordship of Christ, not the attainments of the believer.

II. 1 CORINTHIANS 14

A. They were to seek the fruit of the Spirit, which is love. v 1.

Cults III

Paul urges them to seek love and desire spirituals. As in 12:1 the word gifts is not in the Greek. Paul is saying, seek the spiritual, the fruit of the Spirit.

B. The difference between prophecy and tongues, vvs. 2 - 25.

In these verses Paul shows that prophecy is more important than tongues. Please remember that tongues in this chapter is not ecstatic utterance, but languages that the Holy Spirit gave to the speaker in a supernatural way.

1. Tongues is not understood while prophecy is. v. 2-3

The one who speaks in tongues is really speaking to God, not to man, because men do not understand, except through an interpreter. God understands the mysteries spoken by the spirit of the speaker. But he that prophesieth (interprets the divine will and purpose in inspired preaching and teaching) is understood by all.

2. Tongues edified few, prophecy many. v. 3, 4

The one who teaches and preaches edifies, exhorts and comforts the whole church. But he who speaks in a language not known to him edifies only himself.

3. Prophecy is a greater gift than tongues. v. 5-6.

Paul says he preferred they would preach and teach because that was greater in effect on the church. Tongues did not profit like revelation, knowledge, preaching and doctrine did.

4. Tongues gives no certain sound, vvs. 7-11

Paul uses pictures here for the Corinthians; musical instruments so out of tune they cannot be recognized, v 7; an army bugler so incompetent that the army has no idea what the commander wants. Then he applies the illustrations in verse 9. If they speak words that the listeners cannot understand they are speaking into the air.

Example: Suppose your pastor got up and

the Holy Spirit gave him the ability to speak Swedish without ever studying it. That would be the gift of tongues. But if you did not understand Swedish your pastor would be speaking in the air as far as you are concerned. It would profit you nothing. But when he preaches in your language you are edified, This is exactly what Paul says in verses 10-11.

5. The edifying of the church is our first priority v. 12-13.

Do that which will edify the church. Tongues will not do that unless someone interprets.

6. Praying intelligently is better than in tongues, v. 14-17.

"For if I pray in an (unknown) tongue, my spirit (by the Holy Spirit within me) prays, but my mind is unproductive (bears no fruit and helps nobody)

Then what am I to do? I will pray with my spirit (by the Holy Spirit that is within me); but I will also pray (intelligently) with my mind and understanding; I will sing with my spirit (by the Spirit that is within me); but I will sing (intelligently) with my mind and understanding also.

Otherwise, if you bless and render thanks with (your) spirit (thoroughly aroused by the Holy Spirit), how can any one in the position of an outsider or he who is not gifted with (interpreting of unknown) tongues, say the Amen to your thanks giving, since he does not know what you are saying?

To be sure, you may give thanks well (nobly), but the bystander is not edified (it does him no good)". (Amplified Bible)

7. Although Paul spoke in tongues he would rather prophecy. v. 18-20

Paul says he would rather say 5 words that people could understand in order to instruct, than 10,000 words in a strange language.

Cults III

Ten thousand was the highest number the Greeks had. So it would be like saying, a million today. In other words Paul is putting preaching and teaching at the top of the list of desirables, and tongues, even in the day when they were still in operation, at the bottom of the list. The reason is obvious. Preaching edifies and encourages and blesses. Tongues only brought attention to the speaker. The Corinthians were like children, seeking that which brought attention to themselves.

8. The purpose for tongues. v. 21-22

We have already looked at these verses.

9. Prophecy does so much more good than tongues. v. 23-25.

What will tongues do for the unbelieving person who did not understand Isaiah's prophecy? Not a thing. In fact they will think the speaker mad, But through preaching that unbeliever will be convicted, repent and believe. What a difference!

B. What the order of their service should be.

vvs. 26-40.

1. The top priority is the edification of the church, v 26.
2. Tongues are to be used by only 2 or 3 and then only if there is an interpreter. 27-28.
3. Prophets are to speak by 2 or 3, 29-33.

Notice in verse 33. If things get out of control it is not the Spirit that is doing it, for where the Spirit works there is self control, v 33. 13:5

4. Women in the church, v. 34-35
5. Obedience to the Word, v. 36-40

The spiritual person is one who obeys the Word of God. The Holy Spirit never works contrary to the Word of God. God does things decently and in order.

Question: Isn't there a difference between the tongues spoken in Acts and in Corinthians? Not according to Scripture. Only one word is used, *glossolalia*, signifying a language used by inhabitants

of the world. All the major non-Biblical Greek lexicons use the word in relation to known language. Only some theologians, presupposing that the Corinthians were speaking ecstatically, make such a difference. Neither language nor the Biblical usage supports the idea. The early church spoke languages that were recognized by others.

FOUR TRUTHS STAND OUT IN THIS CHAPTER.

1. Biblical tongues was the supernatural ability to speak in known languages which were not understood by the speaker. It was not babbling or estatic speech.
2. Tongues were a special sign to unbelieving Israel.
3. Biblical tongues are no longer spoken. The purpose has been fulfilled and the phenomena has ceased.
4. The Corinthians were using tongues to get attention to themselves and not growing spiritually as they should.

THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS - TONGUES -

I. WHY HAVE TONGUES CEASED?

First Corinthians 13:8 clearly says tongues will cease. We have already seen that the verb 'cease' is in the middle voice which means they will cease of themselves, The question is when? Without doubt tongues ceased in the apostolic age and when they stopped, they stopped forever. Here are six reasons why tongues have ceased.

A. Tongues were temporary sign gifts.

Along with miracles, healing and the interpretation of tongues, the gift of tongues had a unique purpose--to give the apostles credentials, to let the people know that these men spoke the truth of God. But once the Word of God was written the sign gifts were no longer needed and they ceased.

The last recorded miracle in the N.T. occurred

Cults III

around A.D. 58 with the healing of Publius' father in Acts 28:7-10. From A.D. 58 to A.D. 96 when John finished the book of Revelation, no miracle is recorded. Ephesians and Romans both deal with spiritual gifts but no mention is made either of miracles or tongues. By the end of the first century the early N.T. church was committed to the Word of God and the use of sign gifts had ceased to serve any purpose. The death of the apostles would also end the use of sign gifts since they were specifically tied to them. Heb 2:3-4.

B. The gift of tongues was inferior to prophecy (inspired preaching). We considered this previously.

C. Speaking in tongues was rendered useless when the New Testament was completed. Theoretically, the person speaking in tongues was receiving a revelation from God. But direct revelation from God ceased when the N.T. was complete. The gift of tongues was an agency to authenticate the writers of revelation. When they died, the marks of authentication were no longer needed.

D. Tongues are mentioned only in the earliest books of the N.T.

1 Corinthians is the only epistle where tongues are even mentioned. And even then Paul was writing to correct the misuse of tongues, Paul wrote at least 12 other epistles and never mentioned tongues. Peter never mentioned tongues. Neither did John, nor James nor Jude. Tongues appeared briefly in the early days of the church as the Word of God grew and the church was being established. But once this occurred tongues were gone. THEY STOPPED.

E. History records that tongues did cease.

In 1 Cor 13:8 the verb cease is *pauo*. It means tongues were to cease and that they would never start up again, Cleon Rogers, scholar, missionary wrote: "It is significant that the gift of tongues is nowhere alluded to, hinted at, or even found in any writings of the Post-Apostolic fathers." Clement of Rome, Justin

Martyr, Origen, and Augustine - great scholars of the ancient church - considered tongues a remote practice, something that happened in the very early days of Christianity.

II. WHAT KIND OF TONGUES ARE BEING SPOKEN TODAY?

Despite all the arguments from Scripture to refute the claims that tongues have started up again Charismatics reply by saying, "Well, how do you explain my experience? I speak in tongues and it makes me feel good. How do you explain this?"

There are several explanations for the "tongues" that we hear today.

A. Tongues may be Satanic or demonic.

Some critics say all tongue speaking is "the work of the devil." We are not ready to say that. But in some cases Satan is behind what happens. Why? Because Satan is behind every false religion in the world. Today ecstatic speech is found among Muslims, Eskimos, Tibetan monks, and people in pagan Africa. Pagans, heretics, and worshippers of the occult are known for ecstatic babblings in their worship services. The Charismatic experience may not fall in this category, yet it is something for every Charismatic to think about.

B. Tongues are a learned behaviour.

Tongues speaking is not a supernatural experience. It is not a miracle. A person just learns how to do it. This is by far the most common explanation for the tongues that are occurring in the Charismatic movement today.

John Kildahl and Paul Qualben, psychologist and psychiatrist respectively, were commissioned by the American Lutheran Church and the National Institute of Mental Health to do a long range study on tongues. After all their study and authoring a book, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues*, they came to the firm conviction that it was nothing more than learned behaviour.

In the Charismatic movement the teaching of how to speak in tongues goes on continuously. One wonders why a person has to be taught to

Cults III

receive a gift of the Holy Spirit. Kildahl and Qualben reported finding potential for great disillusionment in the practice of tongues.

People soon realized that what they were doing was learned behaviour. There wasn't anything supernatural. Soon they found themselves facing the same problems and hang-ups they always had.

C. Tongues can be physiological.

Some of the strange cases of tongues can be explained physiologically. The tongues speaker goes into what is called motor auto-matism. This is described as a radical inward detachment from one's conscious surroundings. It means that one's voluntary muscles are no longer under conscious control. An example of this is young teen-age girls at a rock concert. In the excitement, the fervor, and the noise they literally give up control of their vocal cords and their muscles. They fall to the floor or ground and start flopping. You may have witnessed this on T.V.

Given the right set of conditions, particularly where there is a great deal of fervor and emotion involved as happens in Charismatic meetings, a person can easily slip into a state where he or she is no longer in control and tongues can easily result.

It is interesting to note that the founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, taught his followers to speak in tongues in the following manner: "Rise upon your feet, speak or make some sound and continue to make sounds of some kind and the lord will make a tongue or language of it." The instructions of Smith sound much like what comes from Charismatic books today that offer instructions on how to teach someone to speak in tongues. Tongues can and do exist today in counterfeit form and equally apart from the Holy Spirit as it did in Corinth.

III. WHY ARE TONGUES SO POPULAR?

People from every religious group continue to speak in tongues despite all the explanations for how tongues occur. However, the tongues that people speak today are not Biblical tongues. Those who speak in tongues are not practicing the gift described in Scripture. Why do many people pursue this practice with such fervor and try to convince others to do so also?

A. One reason is spiritual hunger.

People hear that tongues is the way to have a wonderful spiritual experience. They fear that if they have not spoken in tongues they have been missing something. They are hungry for "something more".

B. Another reason is spiritual involvement.

Many people have been coming to church for years, but they have not gotten really involved. Because tongue speakers are recognized as spiritual or holy they try it.

C. Yet another reason is that the Charismatic movement is a reaction to the cold, academic, mechanized society in which we live.

The tongues speaker feels he is directly in touch with the supernatural. Here is something he can really touch. It is real to him, not dry and academic.

D. The need for acceptance and security is yet another reason.

Kildahl and Qualben, in their report, concluded "that people who were submissive, suggestible, and dependent on a leader were those who fell into tongues." These people have need to be the "in group." They want to be among those who "have it." They cringe from the thought of being among the "have nots". It makes them feel that they are something, they belong to something, they have something others do not have.

E. But the key reason why tongues have exploded on the scene today is the cold, lifeless, dead Christianity found in many churches.

The person who joins the Charismatics is looking for action, excitement, warmth, and love. He wants to believe that

Cults III

God is working in his life right now and right here. Dead orthodoxy can never satisfy. This is why we need to pray that our church will be a place where people feel love and warmth and the excitement of serving Jesus.

THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- MIRACLES AND HEALING -

Introduction: Spiritual gifts are divided into 3 categories. In Ephesians 4 there is the category of gifted men; apostles prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers. These were God's gift to the church, Secondly, in Romans 12:6-8 we see the permanent edifying gifts such as prophecy, ministering, teaching; mercy, giving, ruling and so forth. Thirdly, there are the temporary sign gifts in 1 Cor. 12, These were certain enablements given to certain believers for the purpose of authenticating or confirming God's Word before the Scriptures were penned. Their purpose was not to edify although they sometimes did. **The four temporary gifts were gifts of miracles, healing, tongues and interpretation of tongues.** These four sign gifts had a unique purpose - to give the apostles credentials to let the people know that these men all spoke the truth of God.

I. WHAT WAS THE BIBLICAL GIFT OF MIRACLES?

The gift of miracles and the gift of healing were both special signs given for the single purpose of confirming God's revelation. Often the two overlapped.

The great miracle worker was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Basically Jesus did 3 kinds of miracles:

1. Healings, which included raising the dead.
2. Casting out demons.
3. Miracles of nature, such as creating loaves and fish, walking on water, stilling the sea and etc.

These miracle signs were to confirm His claim to be God.

When the work of Christ was finished the apostles were given the task of writing and

preaching His claims. To authenticate their work God gave them the ability to do miracles of two types; 1. healing, and 2. casting out demons. There is no evidence they ever did a miracle of nature. The seventy that were sent out in Luke 10 had these gifts also. So not just everyone had these gifts. They were given only to the apostles or someone specially sent by Christ.

The Greek word for miracles is *dunamis* which means literally "power". So miracles was really the gift of power. All through His life Jesus encountered Satan and defeated him by His *dunamis* or power. See Luke 9:1, Matt. 10:1. So the gift of miracles or the gift of power as it could be called, clearly included the ability to cast out demons. This is exactly what the apostles did, Acts 13:10 19:12, and what Phillip did, Acts 8:6-7.

So the gift of miracles was limited to the apostles and prophets of the first century only. This is not to say that God is not working miracles today. He does. What we are saying is that God does not give the gift of working miracles today.

The Bible tells us how we are to deal with demons, evil spirits and Satan today. Notice the following: Eph 4:27, "Do not give place to the devil." "Put on the whole armour of God," Eph. 6:11-18. "Submit to God and resist the devil", James 4:7. "Be vigilant", 1 Pet. 5:7-8.

Use the Word of God, Matt. 4:4,7,10. These verses give us personal instruction on how to triumph over Satan.

II. AN OBJECTIVE LOOK AT HEALERS AND HEALING.

There are many today who claim to have the gift of healing. But strangely enough those people who claim to have this gift never seem to get out of their tents, tabernacles, or T.V. studios. They always seem to have to exercise their gift in a controlled environment. There are multiplied thousands of hospitals world-wide where millions are suffering. Why don't those who claim to have the gift of healing empty those hospitals? Why could not those who claim to have this gift get up and go to the great pockets of disease in the world and heal people of cancer, yaws and countless other ailments? It is not happening! Why? Because those who claim

Cults III

the gift of healing don't really have it! That was a temporary gift for authenticating the Scriptures. Once that authenticity was established the gift of healing ceased.

Historically the Roman Catholic Church has led the way in claiming the power to heal. They have claimed to be able to heal people with the bones of John the Baptist, relics of the cross, and even vials of Mary's breast milk. Lourdes, a catholic shrine in France, has supposedly been the site of countless miraculous healings. (Teacher Aid - 4)

Certainly God does heal. He heals in answer to prayer, James 5:16. But there is a vast difference between the healing done by God and those who claim the gift of healing.

III. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT HEALING?

A. Characteristics in Jesus' healing ministry

1. Jesus healed with a touch or a word. Matt. 8:6-8, 13.
2. Jesus healed instantly. Matt. 8:13- "In the same hour." Mark 5:29- "Straightway".

The ten lepers were healed instantly, Luke 17:14. See also Luke 5:13; John 5:9; 9:1-7.

3. Jesus healed totally. Luke 4:38-39; 9:11. Never one time did Jesus heal anyone who was not completely and totally made well.
4. Jesus healed everybody. Luke 4:40.

Jesus did not leave long lines of disappointed people.

5. Jesus healed organic diseases.

He did not go up and down the land healing functional diseases like low back pain, palpitation of the heart or headaches. He healed organic diseases, crippled legs, withered hands, blind eyes, palsy and etc.

6. Jesus raised the dead. Luke 7:11-16; Mark 5:35-43.

It is interesting to note that those who claim to have the gift of healing never spend time in cemeteries or funeral processions. The reason is obvious.

Jesus used healing as an authenticating gift, to prove His claims to be the Son of God.

B. Characteristics of the apostles' healings.

1. The apostles healed with a touch or word. Acts 9:32-35; 28:8.
2. The apostles healed instantly. Acts 3:2-8
3. The apostles healed totally. Acts 3:8
4. The apostles healed everyone. Acts 5:12-16; Acts 28:9.
5. The apostles healed organic disease.

They did not heal functional, symptomatic, or psychosomatic problems. All the above healings were of organic diseases.

6. The apostles raised the dead. Acts 9:36-42; 20:9-12

Despite all the claims made on television and in other media, no one has yet done these six things in the way that Jesus and the apostles did them.

Here is another key point. According to Scripture those who possessed the sign gifts exercised them strictly on the basis of volition, that is, they used their gifts at will.

Charismatics do not heal at will. They know they cannot. They know they do not have the gift of healing. That's why they say, "It is not my doing, it is the Lord's."

IV. THE GIFT OF HEALING IS GONE - THE LORD CONTINUES TO HEAL.

The gift of healing is one of the 4 sign gifts that were given to confirm God's men and message. Once the Word of God was complete these gifts ceased. The apostles did not always use their gift. In Phil. 2:25-27 Paul did not heal Epaphroditus. The purpose of the gift of healing was not to make Christians healthy but to confirm the gospel.

In 2 Tim. 4:20 Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus. Why didn't Paul heal him? That was not the purpose of healing.

It is simply not true that "God wants every Christian to be well." God has not excluded sin from His permissive will for the believer so why should He exclude suffering.

Cults III

A. Why are Christians Sick?

There are several possibilities.

1. *God allows them to be. Exodus 4:11.*

God "made" the deaf, the dumb and the blind. While we cannot explain this by human logic, that same logic forces us to see that it is truth.

2. *Sickness comes from Satan. Luke 13:11-13 See Job 1.*

3. *Sickness could be chastening for sin.*

In Numbers 12 we see Miriam getting leprosy because of disobedience to the Lord. And then we see her being healed because of her repentance. In Deuteronomy 28:20-22 God warned the Israelites that He would smite them with pestilence if they sinned. In 2 Kings 5 we find Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, getting leprosy because of his greed.

In Psalm 119:67 David wrote, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Thy word."

Someone could protest that all the above references are from the Old Testament - the age of the law. But James 5:15 clearly indicates that sin can cause sickness.

4. *The sickness could be for God's glory. John 9:3 and 2 Corinthians 12:9.*

B. Has God Promised To Heal?

Although we can be sure that Charismatic writers who claim that "God wants everybody well" are in error, we can be equally positive that God has promised us that He does heal. The Christian has a right to look to heaven for relief during any illness. There are at least three reasons for this:

1. *God will heal because of His person.*

In Exodus 15:26 God told the Israelites, "I, the Lord, am your healer." The words for Lord here are *Yahweh Ropecca*, which means "the Lord that heals thee." And so the Christian has a right to look to God in every illness.

2. *The Lord heals because of His promise.*

God said in Jeremiah 33:3-6, that He would tell Israel great and mighty things if they only called on Him. He promised to heal their cities and people.

God has promised that whatever is asked in His name and in faith shall be done (Matt. 21:22; John 14:13-14; 16:24). The promise of God is that if what we ask in prayer is according to His will, it will be done (1 John 5:14). If it is His will, God will heal. Paul recognized this principle and that is why he wrote in regard to his own illness in 2 Corinthians 12:8: "Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me." Paul's tone is that of a man who is asking for God's will to be done. When the answer came back "No," he accepted it (see Paul's recognition of God's grace in verses 9-10).

3. *God will heal because of His pattern.*

God's pattern was established through Jesus. If you want to know how God feels about disease, look at Jesus. Jesus went everywhere healing. He could have confirmed His claim to be God in other ways, but He chose the compassionate means of alleviating pain and suffering in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "He Himself took our infirmities, and carried away our diseases" (Matt. 8:17).

THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUALITY

INTRODUCTION: Every true Christian desires to be spiritual. One of the greatest attractions of the Charismatic movement is that it promises believers they can be genuinely spiritual in an attractive dynamic way. But while the Charismatics offer one way to be spiritual the Scriptures teach something else.

Cults III

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SPIRITUAL?

For the charismatic, the way to spirituality is through an ecstatic experience usually speaking in tongues. Some charismatics call this experience the "divine zap." Many charismatics say that unless you have been "zapped" (baptism of the Spirit and speaking in tongues) you cannot be spiritual. Melvin Hodges in his book, *Spiritual Gifts* says "We must not lose sight of the fact that in the New Testament the baptism in the Spirit is considered an essential and primary requisite for a fully developed spiritual life and ministry."

Are the charismatics correct? Is there a gap between Christians? Are there 2 levels - the zapped and the unzapped? Are those who do not speak in tongues doomed to be second class Christians? What saith the Scripture?

A. The Natural, Spiritual and Carnal Man.

In Rom. 8:6-9 Paul points out the difference between the natural (unsaved) man and the spiritual man. To be spiritual simply means to possess the Holy Spirit. The natural man does not possess the Holy Spirit therefore is at enmity against God and not subject to the law of God. The moment we are converted the Holy Spirit takes up His residence in our bodies and we are no longer a natural man but a spiritual one positionally. See 1 Cor. 2:14-15.

But while we are spiritual positionally we are not always so practically. We don't always act spiritual. Paul calls a person who has the Holy Spirit but does not act spiritual a carnal believer. 1 Cor. 3:1-2. The word carnal in Rom. 8 refers to an unsaved person, but in 1 Cor. 3:1-2 it clearly means a believer who is controlled by self. All believers are spiritual in the sense that the Holy Spirit lives in them, but all believers do not always act spiritual. Sometimes we act fleshly, in a very carnal way. The Corinthian believers were not acting like spiritual people. They were not receiving the Word of God and there was unholiness in their lives. They were carnal Christians.

B. True Spirituality.

True Spirituality is when the Holy Spirit who lives in us has full control of our lives. It is simply receiving the living Word daily from God and then living out that Word in a moment by moment walk in the Spirit. See Gal. 5:16. The word "walk" is a very important word in the New Testament. To walk speaks of moment by moment conduct. Walking is a picture of taking one step at a time. That is how spirituality functions, one step one moment at a time. Spirituality is not a permanent state that you enter into the moment you get zapped by some kind of spiritual experience. Spirituality is an absolute that is either true or not true of the Christian at any given moment.

A basic mark of true spirituality is the deep awareness of sin, See Luke 5:8, 1 Tim. 1:15, Isaiah 6:5. The ultimate objective of the spiritual person is to be like Christ. See Gal. 2:20, Phil. 1:21, Eph. 4:13. True spirituality results in righteousness and holiness, it is the fruit of the Spirit, not the works of the flesh. Gal. 5:19-23. True spirituality is not some kind of escape from the realities and struggles and difficulties of the Christian life. The right road to true spirituality is the one marked "Be filled with the Holy Spirit."

II. BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. EPH. 5:18

The Holy Spirit is to the Christian as fuel is to a car.

The Christian cannot walk worthy or wisely without the Holy Spirit. The Christian has the Holy Spirit the moment he is born again. For the Christian not to be filled with the Holy Spirit is like owning Shell Oil Co. and having no gas in your car.

A. What Being Filled Is Not.

Before looking at what being filled is, let's see what it is not. Paul says, "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess." All people like to be happy. Unfortunately in all cultures one way people try to find happiness is in a bottle. There

Cults III

are millions of chronic alcoholics. Why did Paul warn the believers in Ephesus about this? Because it was easy to get drunk in that day also. Paul makes it clear there is no place for drunkenness in the life of the believer. To be drunk with wine leads to excess, dissipation, degeneration, wastefulness, uncontrolled action.

B. What Being Filled Is.

It is important we understand what the word filled means. When we think of "filling" we usually picture a container into which something is poured until it is full. But that is not what Paul had in mind. Paul was not thinking so much of filling "up" as he was "through." Being permeated by the Holy Spirit. We can see this by looking at other instances of the word filled.

In John 16:6 Jesus said sorrow had "filled" the hearts of the disciples. Sorrow dominated and controlled them, it permeated their being.

In Luke 5:26 it says the people were "filled" with fear. Fear took over their lives at that moment. Fear controlled them and no other emotion could be shared at that moment.

In Luke 6:11 the Pharisees were filled with madness. They were consumed with anger and wrath. Their entire being was under the control of anger.

So the word "filled" in Scripture means to be totally captive to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. See Acts 4:31.

This filling with the Holy Spirit is also called being baptized in the Spirit in Acts 1:5. Here Jesus said the disciples would be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. That prophecy was fulfilled in Acts 2:4 where it is called "filled with the Holy Ghost."

At conversion every believing sinner is baptized into the literal, supernatural, resurrected body of Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 12:13, Rom. 6:3-4. At this baptism the Holy Spirit is the one doing the baptizing, the believing sinner is the one

being baptized, and Christ is the one into whom we are baptized.

But in Acts 1:5 and 2:4 Christ is the one doing the baptizing, the believer is the one baptized, and the Holy Spirit is the one we are baptized into. So the Scriptures refer to being filled with the Holy Spirit also as being baptized into the Holy Spirit. Because the word "baptized" has been misused so much we prefer the word filled.

C. What Happens When One Is Filled With The Spirit?

In Eph. 5:19- 6:6 we have a full description of the results of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

1. *Speaking.* v. 19

Look at every instance of being filled with the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts and you will find those filled speaking, the Word of God. Acts 4:31; 9:17,20.

2. *Singing.* v. 19

A spirit filled person will be making melody in their heart to the Lord. Even in the midst of trials and problems they will rejoice, Acts 5:41.

3. *Supplicating.* v. 20

A Spirit filled person will give thanks and praise to the Lord. 1 Thess. 5:18.

4. *Submitting.* v. 21

Spirit filled Christians are subject to one another, respect one another's authority. Spirit filled wives submit to their husbands, Eph. 5:22-33. Spirit filled husbands love their wives as Christ loved the church, Eph. 5:22-33. Spirit filled children obey their parents and Spirit filled parents bring their children up in the nurture of the Lord, Eph. 6:1-4. Spirit filled employees obey their employer and Spirit filled employers treat their employees fairly and justly, Eph. 6:5-6.

There are manifestations of the Spirit filled life. Notice in Col. 3:16-22 that the same manifestations are the result of letting the

Cults III

Word of Christ dwell in you. So a Spirit filled Christian is one who is letting the Word of Christ dwell in him richly. A Spirit filled Christian is a Christ-conscious Christian. He is totally under the control of the Holy Spirit and the Word of Christ.

Someone says, "How can I know that I am filled with the Holy Spirit?" Are you speaking the Word of God, witnessing? Are you singing and making melody in your heart? Are you giving thanks to God? Are you in subjection to your spiritual authority? Are there right relations in your life? Are you getting along with your spouse, children, neighbors, and each other? Do you confess known sin in your life? These things are the result of being Spirit filled.

D. We Are Commanded To Be Filled.

Eph. 5:18 is not a suggestion. Paul commands us to be continuously filled or being kept filled. Paul is not giving an option but a command. Being filled with the Spirit is a daily challenge. You can be filled today, but tomorrow is another story. That is why the concept of some ecstatic experience is inadequate. As the Israelites gathered manna daily, the Christian must rely on the Holy Spirit to be kept filled daily.

E. How To Be Filled With the Holy Spirit.

1. *Confess any sin the Holy Spirit reveals to you, 1 John 1:9.*
2. *Realize that you died with Christ and reckon that to be so, Rom. 6:6.*
3. *Yield yourself to God, the Holy Spirit, Rom. 6:11.*
4. *Claim the fullness of the Holy Spirit, Luke 11:9-13.*

True spirituality is not the result of some ecstatic experience. It is the believer being under the control of the Holy Spirit, of letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, of being permeated by the Holy Spirit.

SUMMARY OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

In our study of Charismatics we have looked at several key issues:

1. The Issue of Revelation.

Charismatics claim that God is giving them new revelation as they prophecy under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But the Bible teaches that God's revelation is complete in the Scriptures.

2. The Issue of Interpretation.

The Charismatics get strange meanings out of Scriptures with their "this-is-what-it-means-to-me" approach. We looked at 5 principles of Biblical interpretation that make it possible to arrive at the correct meaning of Scripture.

3. The Issue of Authority.

Charismatics place more authority in their experiences than in the inspired Word of God. But the Bible teaches that every experience must be judged by the Bible.

4. The Issue of Apostolic Uniqueness.

Charismatics insist that the miraculous manifestations of the first century should be the normal thing for Christians today. The Bible says God raised up the apostles for a specific purpose and gave them powers He does not give today.

5. The Issue of Spiritual Gifts.

Charismatics are seeking gifts today that God says have ceased. The Bible very plainly says the sign gifts of miracles, healing, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues have passed away. God gave them for a specific purpose and that purpose has been accomplished, so the gifts stopped. The Charismatics insist these gifts are still in existence today.

6. The Issue of Spirituality.

The Charismatics say true spirituality comes through the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. The Bible teaches that a believer is spiritual when he is filled with the

Cults III

Holy Spirit and under the control of the Spirit.

So the Charismatics make some very serious mistakes that lead them into error. Yet there is much good in the movement, There are many saved people in the movement that are serious in their search for and service to the Lord. Let's look at some lessons we can learn from them.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT.

1. *Dead orthodoxy can never replace a warm and vital relationship with God.*

Many non-charismatic churches are dead. They are steeped in tradition and orthodoxy. The people in these churches have no meaningful Spiritual experience with the Lord. Charismatics have stepped in to fill this void. In our churches we need to diligently pray for and work toward having a warm, active, alive, spiritual experience for those who attend. We need the power of God's Spirit in our services.

2. *Leadership must never forget to lead.*

In Charismatic churches one almost always finds a strong leader or leaders. To lead means to feed, guide and sustain the flock. Lack of leadership fosters breeding grounds for someone who will lead in one way or another. Many non-charismatic pastors are alarmed by the affect the charismatic movement is having in their own churches. But they really have no one to blame but themselves. They have failed to exert exemplary leadership among their people.

3. *Knowledge cannot replace brotherly love.*

Scripture teaches us to fulfill the law of Christ by showing brotherly love. One of the strengths of the Charismatic Movement is its sociological power and attractiveness. The Jesus Movement of the 1960's played a great part in promoting the Charismatic Movement. It was not enough for the Jesus people to go to church and sit like "a bump on a log" while they listened to singing

and preaching. They wanted to share the burdens and problems and joys of others. They cried when a brother cried, rejoiced when a sister rejoiced, and warmly welcomed those who got saved. The Charismatics are saying, "We just want to be people with people. We want to love one another, tell our problems to one another, and pray for one another."

In our churches we need to practice the art of really loving each other, 1 Pet. 4:8.

4. *Emotions must be led by truth, but at the same time truth must not suppress emotions.*

While their treatment of Scripture leaves something to be desired, Charismatics are known for their emotion, warmth, love, excitement and enthusiasm. This should be a reminder to us that the church was never meant to be a mental mausoleum.

The Book of Hosea tells us God got angry. Jesus got angry. David danced with joy. The Bible runs the gamut of emotion. Perhaps it is time to let some of our emotion show.

5. *Human effort will never replace the Holy Spirit.*

The charismatics major on the Holy Spirit. While this can and does lead to an imbalance, the Charismatic Movement has shown us we need more than programs and machinery and organization in our churches. We need the mighty power of the Holy Spirit.

6. *All Christians need to be aggressive in the proclamation of the Gospel.*

Charismatics are going out to make disciples.

I was told recently that on a plane from USA to Manila Charismatics were going up and down the aisles laying hands on people and praying with them. While the Lord does not want us to be foolish in our actions we do have the responsibility of being soul winners. See Acts 5:42. Every single

Cults III

believer should be a witness for Christ.

7. *People need to participate in worship.*

Christianity is not just a spectator religion. We should get involved. In many churches the Christian just comes to church, sits and listens and then goes home. We need to provide outlets of service so our people can get involved in our churches.

It is impressive to see what Charismatics have done by getting their people involved in Bible studies, seminars, conferences, business men's groups and so forth.

There is plenty of commitment on the part of the Charismatic. But in so many non-charismatic churches we find apathy and lack of real commitment. We need more involvement and commitment.

A FINAL WORD

While the Charismatic Movement has many positive points, it has a central flaw running squarely through its center. That flaw is that their experiences count more than the Word of God. But the Word of God is what really matters.

We can understand the thrill of having a "high voltage" experience, but the Word of God must be our "voltage regulator."

Charismatics always seem to be seeking for "something more." They will find their satisfaction in regular, careful study of the Word of God. This is the food for the Christian, not experiences.

STUDY QUESTIONS

LIST THE 6 "ISSUES" TAKEN UP IN THIS MATERIAL, AND WRITE A PARAGRAPH EXPLAINING EACH ONE IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS BLOCK:

1. **Read all the material** for this block.
2. **Look up and read all the verses** in the material as you read through the material.
3. **Fill in the answers** to your **STUDY QUESTIONS** ahead of time so you will be better prepared for the EXAM during the final hour.
4. **T-H-I-N-K** as you read this material. **It will be a blessing to you.
It will also change your life.**

a Good Tract on Tongues

The Origin Of Modern Day Tongues

In 1900 Charles F. Parham opened the Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas. Under his teaching and ministry, Miss Agnes Ozman was influenced to speak in tongues. Within a short time a dozen more students had this experience. In 1906 the Azusa Street Assembly was founded in Los Angeles with a heavy emphasis on 'seeking one's Pentecost. The Pentecostal movement became a powerful religious force in America, during the first half of the 20th century. A number of denominations were formed and have flourished including the Assemblies of God, Foursquare Gospel Churches, Church of God in Christ, United Pentecostal and many other smaller groups. These groups have received a steady stream of converts from the main line denominations.

The Spread Of Modern Day Tongues

The last half of the 20th century has produced something new for our times. Especially in the last 10 to 15 years we have seen the tongues movement move into the main line denominations. For at least that many years we have been hearing about Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists and Roman Catholics speaking in tongues. These tongues groups are now staying in these denominations and through classes, prayer groups and home studies they now seem to be making converts. The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship with chapters in hundreds of cities is working on an interdenominational level to make converts for the tongues movement. Their television programs, publications and meetings are paying off in great numbers of people being influenced to accept their teaching. The Deeper Life Magazine which features the ministry of Morris Cerullo, openly urges Baptists, Catholics and others to stay in their own denomination and spread the tongues experience throughout their churches. The April, 1971 issue of Deeper Life features Pat Boone ministering with Morris Cerullo, and Boone's picture occurs at least five times in this edition. Of course these are only a few examples of the many "faces" of the tongues movement. The FGMBF also works to keep their tongues converts in their old churches to spread the tongues teaching. Oral Roberts, one of the leading Pentecostals of our day, has now joined the United

TONGUES

Glossolalia & Charismatic Renewal In The Light Of The Bible

By E. L. Bynum



"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." I John 4:1.

The modern day "Tongues Movement" is spreading throughout Christendom with amazing speed. It is creating more excitement than any other religious movement of the 20th century. Thousands of people in almost every denomination say they have spoken in "tongues". At the moment it seems to be the most effective ecumenical approach on the church member level. Since Pentecostals, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodists, and Roman Catholics are claiming to have spoken in tongues, the time has come for this movement to be examined in the light of the Bible.

**"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, It is because there is no light in them."
Isaiah 8:20.**

a Good Tract on Tongues

Methodist Church.

Roman Catholics And Tongues

One of the amazing things about the modern day tongues movement is its rapid spread through the Roman Catholic Church. A few months ago, 12,000 Roman Catholics from all over the world assembled on the campus of Notre Dame University in the interest of the tongues movement. Multiplied thousands of Roman Catholics claim to have received the baptism and to have spoken in tongues, including many priests and nuns. Some of these have testified that they are now better and more devout Catholics since they have had this experience. There is no indication that these people are going to leave the Catholic Church as a result of this experience.

The Ecumenical Movement And Tongues

"The reason I refer to the charismatic movement as a form of ecumenism is that major doctrinal differences are often overlooked by those in the movement as long as a person has seemingly experienced the gifts of the Spirit - particularly the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues." Theodore Epp. "Pentecostalism is doing more than anything else to bring Catholics and Protestants together." Present Truth, Nov. 20, 1972. The Catholic Digest quotes Catholic Bishop Alexander Zaleski as saying: "Perhaps our most prudent way to judge the validity of the claims of the Pentecostal movement (in the Catholic Church) is to observe the effects on those who participate in the prayer meetings..... They are attracted to the reading of the Scriptures and to a deeper understanding of their faith. They seem to grow in their attachment to certain established devotional patterns such as **DEVOTION TO THE REAL PRESENCE AND THE ROSARY.**" (Emphasis ours)

"An Episcopal priest and an Assembly of God pastor will lead a three-day Charismatic Clinic at St. John's Episcopal church..." From Ketchikan, Alaska, Daily News. According to Blu-Print, the 1972 World Tongues Convention sponsored by the Pentecostal Full Gospel! Business Men's Fellowship, met in San Francisco. One of the speakers was Father Joseph Fulton, pastor of Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

in Seattle, Washington, who is an active spokesman for the Catholic Pentecostal movement.

Note the words of a Roman Catholic Clergyman of Camillien Monastery, Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada: "I believe I'm saved as much as you are. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. I was baptized. I'm sincere and I'm dedicated to Christ. So what if I remain a Catholic? Nothing changes! To me, there is no difference between Catholic and Protestant. What counts is that one believes in Jesus Christ as his Saviour. When one meets those who have had the Pentecostal experience, whether Catholic or from another Christian Church, we unite together, we are one, for there is no difference. It often happens that I go on Sunday evenings to pray in a French Pentecostal Church. I first fulfil my obligations as Christian Roman Catholic by worshipping the Lord in my own Church in the morning Then I go to pray with other Christians. I don't wear my robes but I do wear my cross and also my ring." From The Gospel Witness, May 3, 1973. The writer of the above article tells of attending a Pentecostal meeting at this Catholic Monastery, "The friendly atmosphere sparked by Camillien Gaeten Giroux and his helpers was quite contagious and newcomers were quickly put at ease. Lively chatter and heavy cigarette smoke dispelled any thought of formality."

Last August, the Sixth International Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church took place in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Over 11,500 participated. The national advisor for the Catholic Charismatic movement, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph McKinney, told the group, "We need Peter We must love the leadership of the Church even though it were a scoundrel who leads the Church This has happened.. It is not the will of Jesus Christ that the charismatic renewal movement result in factionalism, division or alienation from the Catholic Church. We must be one with the Catholic Church so He will be able to renew the Catholic Church - From The Gospel Witness, May 3, 1973.

The Gospel Witness also quotes modernist Dr. Henry Pitney Van Dusen of Union Theological Seminary as saying, "The presence of the charismatic (Pentecostal) movement among us is said to make a new era in the development of Christianity. The new

a Good Tract on Tongues

Pentecost will appear to future historians as a 'true reformation' (compared to that of the 16th century) from which will spring a third force in the Christian world (Protestant - Catholic - Pentecostal)."

"A 16 page paper entitled, 'Can the Pentecostal Movement Renew the Church?' was released in February by the World Council of Churches. Written by Father Emmanuel Sullivan, a Franciscan Friar of the Atonement, it says the ecumenical movement should look at the whole Pentecostal movement, 'as one of the significant signs of a way forward on the journey to rediscovering ... full visible unity in Christ.': - From The Gospel Witness May 3, 1973.

A Powerful Argument Against Tongues

The above examples of the influence of the modern day tongue movements in the various denominations is one of the most powerful arguments against the unscriptural tongues movement, If Catholics and members of modernistic denominations were really receiving a scriptural Holy Spirit experience from God, **THEY WOULD BE COMING OUT OF THESE UNSCRIPTURAL ORGANIZATIONS** just as the Bible teaches in 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18. If these people were really receiving the Holy Spirit, they would be led to obey the Word of God.

Definition Of Words

If we are to properly understand the Bible teaching on tongues, as well as the speech of the tongues movement, we must understand the meaning of certain words.

"**CHARISMA**" is found 17 times in the Greek New Testament. It is translated "gift" 15 times, and "free gift" 2 times. With one exception, it is found only in the epistles of Paul. He uses it in Rom. 6:23, "... the GIFT of God is eternal life..." He also used it 5 times in I Cor. 12, where he speaks of the "GIFTS" of the Spirit, including the gift of tongues. We are hearing much today about the "Charismatic" revival or renewal. They usually emphasize tongues and healing, and ignore the other gifts mentioned in the New Testament.

"**GLOSSA**" is found 50 times in the New Testament and is translated "tongues" all 50 times.

Sixteen times it refers to the tongue as an organ of the body. One time it refers to the tongues "like as of fire" on the day of Pentecost. In the other 33 places it refers to languages as in Revelation 10:11..... before many peoples, and nations, and tongues...' The glossalalia movement claims to have the power to speak in tongues as on the day of Pentecost.

"**UNKNOWN**" tongues are not to be found in the Bible at all. Not one time is "unknown tongues" to be found. "Unknown" is printed in italics in 1 Cor. 14, and this means that it was not in the Greek manuscripts at all, but was added by the translators. (in this instance they do not clarify but confuse the subject). Every tongue spoken in the New Testament was a known language to some race or people. There are no instances of a heavenly language, unknown language or gibberish spoken in the N.T.

I. Three Examples Of Tongues In The Bible

To listen to the talk of the tongues movement people, you would think there would be many instances of speaking in tongues in the Bible. However, we have only 3 examples of God giving people power to speak in a tongue (language) that they did not already know.

1. Jerusalem On The Day Of Pentecost. Acts 2

The day of Pentecost was an annual feast day of the Jews that came every year 50 days after the Passover. The Holy Spirit came to empower the Church for her mission of world evangelism. There has never been another Pentecost like the one in Acts 2, and we are not taught to look for one. On the day of Pentecost, the prophecy of John the Baptist was fulfilled, "He (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost..." Luke 3:16. Peter said in Acts 2:16-21, that the events of that day were a fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32.

Devout Jews from many nations were gathered in Jerusalem. These people had lived in the various nations and had learned the native language of these nations, The preaching and teaching that they heard on the day of Pentecost was done by Galileans, yet "every man heard them speak in his own language." Acts 2:6-8.

a Good Tract on Tongues

Sixteen nations and tongues (languages) are mentioned in verses 9-11, and these all heard the messages by the Galileans in their own language.

No one but Galileans received this gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost. Everybody did not speak in tongues. In fact it seems almost certain that only these Galilean Apostles of Christ received this ability. There is no record that any of the other people sought the gift of tongues. **In fact the Bible does not give us even one example of anybody ever seeking the gift of tongues at any place or any time!!**

Tongues served two purposes on the day of Pentecost. (1) They were for a sign to the Jews (who seek after a sign). 1 Cor. 1:22. (2) They served to communicate with and to evangelize the foreign born Jews who were at Jerusalem for the feast. What better way could be found to get the attention of these Jews and to evangelize them before they returned to their various countries, Every tongue that was spoken and heard on the day of Pentecost was a known language to some of them there. There was no "unknown tongue." Those who spoke in tongues did not all speak at the same time, or no one would have understood what they said.

There is no record that the Jerusalem Church ever had another service where the gift of tongues was exercised. Much is said about this Church and her services, but nothing more about tongues.

2. Three Years Later At The House Of Cornelius - Acts 10:34-48

Cornelius was an unsaved Italian gentile who was a centurion of the Roman army. Peter was sent to tell him how to be saved. Acts 11:14. When he preached the gospel to them, they believed and were saved. (That is, Cornelius and others of his household). At that very moment they received the "gift of the Holy Ghost", and began to speak "with tongues, and magnify God." Acts 10:45, 46. They did not pray for, ask for, or even long for, the gift of tongues. Most likely they had never heard of tongues as a gift.

This event represents the giving of the Spirit to the gentiles as He was given to the Jews at Pentecost. More than anything else, these tongues were a "sign" to the 7 Jews present that God was concerned about the gentiles as well as the Jews. Acts 10:45, 46; and

11:12. They went back to the Jerusalem Church and testified to the Jews what God had done among the gentiles. Acts 11. However, they did not call this event a gentile Pentecost, and those who do so today are in error. No doubt but what a number of different languages were represented here, as there were at Pentecost.

3. Twenty Two Years Later At Ephesus Acts 19:1-7

Twelve men in the city of Ephesus claimed to be disciples and to have received the baptism of John the Baptist, Paul asked them, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since (when) ye believed?" v. 2 These were sincere but ignorant of John's preaching and all that followed, This is proven by their answer, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost " Had they known John's preaching and John's baptism, they would have known about the Holy Spirit and Jesus, for John preached both. See John 1:26-34.

When Paul preached, these people believed and were saved. At that very time Paul "laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied," They did not seek to speak in tongues, but rather it was a sign to the Jews as were the other two instances.

4. Why Are Tongues Not Mentioned Elsewhere?

Other than the abuse of tongues at Corinth (which we will deal with later), there is not one other single instance of the gift of tongues in the whole Bible. At the time that 1 Corinthians was written in 57 A.D., there were only 4 New Testament books written. They were Matthew, Mark, and 1 & 2 Thessalonians. ONLY two books of the New Testament mentions the gift of tongues and these are Acts and 1 Corinthians.

Acts was written in 65 A.D. and only mentions tongues these three times. Romans, 2 Corinthians and Galatians were written in 60 A.D. and there is no mention of the gift of tongues. Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians were written 64 A.D. and there is no mention of tongues. I & 2 Timothy and Titus were written at an unknown date, but there is no mention of tongues. Philemon was written in 64 A.D., Hebrews in 70 A.D., James in 62 A.D., I Peter in 60 A.D.,

a Good Tract on Tongues

2 Peter in 66 A.D. and there is no mention of tongues in them. 1, 2 & 3 John were written in 90 A.D., Jude in 66 A.D. and Revelation in 96 A.D. and none of these mention the gift of tongues.

It seems incredible if tongues were to continue, that all of these inspired books could be written with no mention of the gift of tongues. Many of Paul's experiences in missionary travel are given in Acts and his Epistles, but none of these accounts mention tongues, except the ones we have already listed.

II. The Importance Of Tongues

The gift of tongues was only meant to be temporary, for it is only listed in the two early lists found in 1 Cor. 12:8-11 & 28-30. In the two other lists which were published several years later, tongues are not mentioned at all. See Eph. 4:8-12 and Rom. 12:4-8, Neither are tongues listed as being the "fruit of the Spirit", in Gal. 5:22, 23.

Even in I Cor. 12 where tongues are included, they are at the bottom of both lists, which shows us their importance in the plan of God!

III. The Ceasing Of Tongues

"Charity (love) never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." I Cor. 13:8-10. A few words of explanation are in order for certain words found in the above Scripture.

"**PROPHECIES**" refers to office of the prophet who received a direct revelation of the future from the Lord. "Fail" does not mean that some prophecies given by Divine inspiration would not come to pass, but rather that there would be no need of prophecies when the Word of God was complete. John wrote the last prophecies in 96 A.D on the isle of Patmos. Now there is no need for prophecies and prophets for John finished that work.

"**TONGUES ... SHALL CEASE.**" Tongues here means the gift of tongues. Tongues (languages) have to be learned today, they are not received as a gift. if they could be received as a gift, it would save the missionaries a lot of study on the foreign field.

God said that "tongues ... shall cease", and they have. Why? Because they are no longer needed, since we now have the complete Word of God!

"**KNOWLEDGE ... SHALL VANISH AWAY.**" "Knowledge" here means revelatory knowledge necessary for completing the Word of God. After the last book of the Bible was finished this "knowledge" vanished away, because there was no more need.

This interpretation is confirmed in verse 9, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." At the time that Paul wrote this only small parts of the New Testament had been written by "prophecy" and by "knowledge", so there was need for these gifts to be continued until it was completed.

"**But when that which is PERFECT is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.**" v. 10. "**Perfect**" does not here refer to Christ, as some would have you to believe. "This adjective (used as a noun) is in the neuter gender. Therefore, it is a reference to the finished (perfect) or completed Word of God. If it referred to Christ, it would be in the masculine gender." - (William G Bellshaw, Th.M. When the New Testament was completed, prophecy, tongues and knowledge were no longer needed. This interpretation of V. 10 is also confirmed by Merrill F. Unger and Roy L. Laurin in his commentary on I Corinthians.

IV. The Regulation Of Tongues

We have just established that tongues have ceased, according to the Bible. However, we must remember that tongues HAD NOT ceased when Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth. Tongues were still permitted, but this church was abusing the use of tongues. Remember, that this church was one that had to be often corrected. They had turned the Lord's Supper into a drunken banquet. In fact Paul; had to correct something that was wrong in this church in every chapter of I Corinthians.

In 1 Cor. 14, Paul gives some very strict rules concerning the use of tongues. The modern day tongue movement violates almost every one of these rules. We repeat, TONGUES have CEASED! However, if they were in effect today, then these rules would apply. The very fact that the tongues people

a Good Tract on Tongues

today ignore these rules, make a powerful argument against modern day tongues! Now let us notice a few of those regulations. (Remember that "unknown" is in italics and not in the Greek manuscripts).

1. Paul sought to show them that prophecy was much more edifying than tongues. v. 1-6.

2. He also taught them that an uncertain sound from the trumpet or a tongue that was not understood, would only result in confusion. v. 7-17.

3. Five words that can be understood are better than ten thousand words that could not be understood. v. 19.

4. Tongues were for a sign (to the Jews 1 Cor, 1:22), to the unbeliever and not for the enjoyment of the believer. v. 22.

5. Gibberish flowing from the mouth only confused the unlearned and turned them from the truth. v. 23.

6. No more than three people were to speak in tongues at the same service. Even then, only one could speak at a time. v. 27. The modern day tongues movement ignores this time and time again!

7. If there was no one present who could interpret every word to every person in the audience, then they could not speak in tongues! v. 28.

8. There was to be no confusion in the service, for "God is not the author of confusion..." v. 33. Confusion best describes many modern day meetings when they speak in tongues.

9. Women were not to speak in the churches, either in tongues or their regular language. v. 34, 35. It is a well known fact that the tongues movement today sanctions women talking in tongues and preaching. Whatever they are doing in this respect, you may be sure that it is not of God!

10, "All things (were to) be done decently and in order." v. 40. This writer has been present in services where people who spoke in tongues uncovered their nakedness while under this power!

If tongues were in effect today, then the above regulations would have to govern their use.

V. Conclusion

If tongues today are unscriptural. why is there so much emphasis on this subject? There are several possible sources for tongues. (1) Divine. We have already ruled this out. (2) Satanic. (3) Psychological. (4) Fakery. We believe that every tongues experience today is one of the last three listed.

Where Tongues Flourish Today?

1. Where the Bible is not taught and /or understood.
2. Where people are seeking experiences, visions and feelings, rather than the truth of the Bible.
3. Among people who have been exposed to the cold, dead preaching of modernistic churches.
4. Where orthodoxy has become cold and dead.
5. Among the lost who are seeking a religious experience.

To seek after an experience that is contrary to the teaching of God's Word, is one of the most dangerous things a person can do. Why? Because they are wide open for demonic invasion and delusion..... In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

1 Timothy 4:1. Satan is an imitator.

See 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20. Satan is ready to help people imitate the tongues of the Bible, since there are so many who are seeking this experience'.

There is no need for anyone to seek the "baptism of the Spirit today." Every born again believer already has the Holy Spirit! See 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; Rom. 8:9. Yes, we need to "be filled with the Spirit", but this is not done by seeking, tarrying or begging, but by simply yielding and surrendering to the Lord!

for teachers only-Teacher's Aid

Teacher Aid - 1

Examples: 1. Joseph Dellow told how a Charismatic brother tried to influence him at a critical point in life: "When I was a new Christian, I met a man I'll call Bill. He was given to visions and claimed he received direct revelations from God. One night he called me at midnight because he had a message from the Lord he had to share with me. He lived an hour's drive from my house but wanted to come and deliver the message in person. When he arrived he was visibly shaken. At the time I had just decided to go to seminary. Bill was very upset about this. He had a message from the Lord warning me not to go to seminary. He had been reading Isaiah and the Lord gave him a special revelation that said, If you go to seminary your wife will be eaten by lions and you will lose your eternal salvation! It was rather frightening, but I didn't buy it, The last I heard of Bill he was in jail because the Lord told him to disobey a zoning law."

2. A letter written by a charismatic to a friend also illustrates this. "The greatest experience in love I ever had was at the foot of the cross as the blood of Jesus Christ poured over me. He filled me with His Spirit. He brought me across the veil into the city of Jerusalem into the Holy of Holies. There I beheld myself in Him, and He in me. I received the baptism as by fire and from this His love dwells in me. I do not feel the need for study of the Scriptures for I know Jesus as He has revealed Himself to me within; and as He dwells in me, there is the Word. I go to Scripture and scripture is vital and necessary-but neither central nor crucial, for I have Him-rather He has me. Scriptures are a secondary source."

Teacher Aid - 2

EXAMPLES OF EXPERIENCES

A. Dudley Danielson.

This man is a photographer. He says God woke him up at 3:30 a.m. one morning and told him to take a picture of the sunrise. He says, "on one negative is the perfect shape of a figure, arms raised in blessing... I believe God gave me an image of Himself to share." Mr. Danielson offered 8x10 copies for \$10 each.

Apparently it never occurred to this man that the Bible says, "No man has seen God at any time" John 1:18, or John 4:24, "God is Spirit", or "no man can see me and live" Exodus 33:20. What the Bible says does not matter. Experience is all important.

B. Dr. Eby's Trip to Heaven

On April 11, 1977 a charismatic radio station carried the testimony of Dr. Richard Eby. Dr. Eby claims to have fallen off a balcony, struck his head and supposedly died. He claims to have gone to heaven and come back again. He claims to have experienced "paradise." His weak eyes needed no glasses, he could see for hundreds of miles, he could move anywhere at will, his body was visible, yet transparent. He said the aroma of heaven was sweet because of the sacrifices. Dr. Eby said that the human brain has 12 cranial nerves and these represent the 12 tribes of Israel. The number one nerve in God's cranium is the sense of smell and that the whole purpose of sacrifices is to send a sweet aroma up to heaven to satisfy God's main cranial nerve. As Dr. Eby was speaking, the talk show host kept saying, "Wonderful, wonderful, this is meaty."

It did not seem to bother either of these men that there are no bodies in heaven until after the rapture according to the Bible. Even then it will not be a transparent body. Christ Himself did not have a transparent body. Dr Eby showed his lack of Scriptural knowledge on the sacrifices.

The major feature of O.T. sacrifices was the death of the animal and shedding of blood, not the sweet aroma. Heb. 9:22.

There are actually 12 pairs of cranial nerves in the human brain (total 24) so the Doctor's spiritualizing is nothing more than foolish adulteration of God's Word.

for teachers only-Teacher's Aid

Teacher Aid - 3

George E. Gardiner from whose book, *The Corinthian Catastrophe*, these note on spiritual gifts were taken says, "For over twenty years I was associated with Charismatic churches. I saw women 'slain under the power' sprawled on the floor while the altar workers tugged at their skirts or covered them with 'altar clothes' and coats to minimize the indecent exposure! It is inconceivable that the HOLY Spirit would be party to indecent exposure. Love does not behave itself improperly."

Being out of control, speaking ecstatically, confusion, and improper behavior were what happened to these folks while they were still pagans. God is not the author of confusion or of indecent behavior. When these things are present they are not of the HOLY SPIRIT.

Teacher Aid - 4

Dr. William Nolen, M.D. and not a Christian, wrote a book entitled. "*Healing, a Doctor in Search of a Miracle.*" He was especially concerned with Kathryn Kuhlman, a woman evangelist in America, who claimed God healed through her ministry.

Miss Kuhlman sent Dr. Nolen a list of 8 cancer victims who had been healed in her meetings, Only one of the 8 offered cooperation to Dr. Nolen. After examining all the man's records Dr. Nolen reported it was impossible to tell whether the man's cancer was cured by Miss Kuhlman or medicine and treatment the man had taken.

In other instance Miss Kuhlman sent the Doctor the names of 82 people who were healed. Twenty three of these responded to and were interviewed by Dr. Nolen. His conclusion at the end of the entire investigation was that not one of the so called healings was legitimate. This only bears out the fact that God does not give the gift of healing today. (Kathern Kuhlman later died of cancer; unable to heal herself.)

**This material is
copyrighted and
used by
permission.**

Cults III

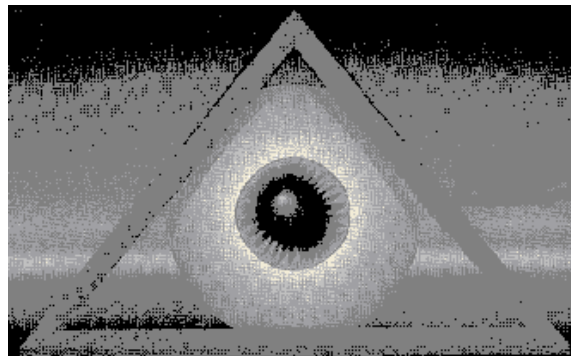
TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT	1
INTRODUCTION - The Four Spiritual Flaws	1
HISTORY OF THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT	4
PANTHEISM: THE FIRST SPIRITUAL FLAW	8
REINCARNATION: THE SECOND SPIRITUAL FLAW	11
MORAL RELATIVISM: THE THIRD SPIRITUAL FLAW	13
ESOTERICISM: THE FOURTH SPIRITUAL FLAW	15
INFILTRATING THE CHURCH	18
INFILTRATING THE HOME	22
INFILTRATING THE SCHOOL	24
INFILTRATING MUSIC	25
A BIBLICAL RESPONSE	26
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	27
STUDY QUESTIONS	27
THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT	28
THE ISSUE OF REVELATION	28
I. Five Principles Of Sound Bible Interpretation.	31
II. Examples of Charismatic Mis-Interpretation of Scripture.	32
THE ISSUE OF AUTHORITY	34
THE ISSUE OF APOSTOLIC UNIQUENESS	36
THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS	38
1 Corinthians 12	38
THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS	41
I. 1 Corinthians 13	41
II. 1 Corinthians 14	42
THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS - TONGUES	44
THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS - MIRACLES AND HEALING	47
THE ISSUE OF SPIRITUALITY	49
SUMMARY OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT	52
LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT.	53
Study Questions	54

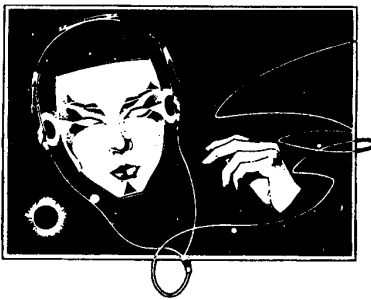
REQUIREMENTS on page 54

Cults III

the New Age and Charismatic Movements
and WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES



This material is
copyrighted and
used by
permission.



B.A.M.A. Bible Institutes, Inc..
(Baptist Asian Missions Association, Inc.)
133 Isarog Street, LaLoma, Quezon City 1114 R.P.