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NEW AGE CULT/ MOVEMENT.

1. "THE CHRIST IS NOW HERE"

(OHP of advertisement)

On 25 April 1982, newspapers throughout the world displayed full page advertisements boldly stating:

The world has had enough.... of hunger, injustice, and war. There is an answer to our call for help, a world teacher for all humanity. THE CHRIST IS NOW HERE. His presence in the world guarantees there will be no Third World War." The advertisement ends with a call for peace: "Without sharing there can be no justice; without justice there can be no peace; without peace there can be no future."

As one looks at this advertisement, as well as the teachings and theology of those who placed the advertisement, one notes so many of the themes and beliefs of the New Age movement being expressed - a movement which is blatantly anti-Christian and hostile to the Christian belief of Jesus Christ's deity and his atoning work on the cross.

2. WHO AND WHAT IS THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT?

(OHP of pyramid and rainbow)

The New Age movement has been described as the penetration of Eastern and occultic mysticism into Western culture. The movement is known by various names including the "Age of Aquarius", "Aquarian Conspiracy", "Human Potential Movement", "Holistic Movement", "Humanistic Psychology", and many others.

It is a worldwide network consisting of thousands of co-operating organisations including those teaching mind control, holistic health, esoteric philosophy; scientific workers; political workers; and organisations dedicated to peace and world goodwill. It also includes many consumer, environmental, and nutritional organisations as well as religious cults of every shade and description. All these organisations are part of their goal of a "New World Order" - known as "The Plan".

The movement is based upon a structure of initiates, adepts and masters. Initiation becomes a prerequisite for being accepted into the new society and for the holding any position of leadership.

The movement's thinking is extremely syncretistic, being described as 'Hinduism in Western dress.' Its roots are deep into the cult of Theosophy, founded by Helena Blavatsky, with its stress on "illumination" or enlightenment through one's own mind. These thoughts were later taken up by Alice Bailey and more recently David Spangler. Its Eastern roots are Hinduistic with a smattering

of Buddhism. The New Age cult is a revival of ancient occultism holding historical ties to Sumerian, Indian, Egyptian, Chaldean, Babylonian, and Persian religious practices. Now one can understand why the RAINBOW and the PYRAMID have been adopted as the symbols representative of the movement.

- The words "New Age" refer to the "Aquarian Age", which occultists believe to be dawning, bringing with it an era of enlightenment and peace. Marilyn Ferguson, in her book The Aquarian Conspiracy, notes that the "Age of Aquarius" occupies a centre seat in the arena of New Age thinking. New Age teaching when, coupled with the emphases of cults such as Christian Science, New Thought, Theosophy, the Unity School of Christianity, Rosicrucianism, the Science of Mind, and Religious Science, becomes a formidable vehicle for attacking Christian beliefs and lifestyle.

3. THE LORD MAITREYA

The New Age Movement is awaiting the coming of **the Christ, the Lord Maitreya**. Who is he? Let us again turn to the advertisement:

"At the centre of this "Spiritual Hierarchy" stands the World Teacher, Lord Maitreya, known by Christians as the Christ. And as Christians await the Second Coming, so the Jews await the Messiah, the Buddhists the fifth Buddha, the Moslims the Imam Mahdi, and the Hindus await Krishna. These are all names for one individual. His presence in the world guarantees there will be no third World War."

The Lord Maitreya is seen as a world teacher for all humanity. He is a modern man concerned with modern problems - political, social, and economic. He has extraordinary spiritual power, his location is known to only a few of his disciples, and he plans to build a new world.

What does Maitreya mean? Maitreya is the fifth reincarnation of Buddha whose followers are planning for the installation of the New World "Messiah" together with a new world government and a new world religion.

4. HOW DOES THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT ATTRACT ITS FOLLOWERS?

The attraction of the movement is not its religious basis or its teachings but their programmes which offer something for everybody. It is through these programmes that their teachings are presented.

(OHP of businessmen in a seminar)

* Business seminars and business efficiency programmes, based on the "Human Potential Movement", are presented for

men to realise their full potential in the business world. The Silva Mind Control is one organisation presenting such programmes.

(OHP of a crystal ball)

* The offer is for people to learn to contact others in the spirit world by means of seances. The signs of the Zodiac and the influence of these signs over our lives and situations are stressed. People then live thinking that life's factors are out of their control and they become dependent on the signs for good omens before actions or decisions are taken. Much emphasis is laid on the occult as the answer to the deeper issues of life.

(OHP of children lying on floor centering)

* At school, children are being taught to 'centre' their thoughts and imagine themselves as perfect human beings, full of light, drifting lazily along. (Light plays an important part in their thinking and belief, illuminating the mind of the initiated.)

(OHP of nature conservation)

* The New Age movement is deeply committed to nature conservation with "Back to Mother Earth" camps and seminars being arranged. Issues relating to population growth, food resources, material resources, pollution etc are addressed in depth. They are closely allied to the "Greenpeace" movement.

(OHP of psychologist and his couch)

* Para-psychology is studied in depth and an emphasis is laid on telepathic messages and prophecies, ESP etc.

(OHP of doctor doing an examination)

* With the modern emphasis on healthy bodies and minds, "alternate" methods of healing are presented. This forms part of their emphasis on "holistic medication" emphasising the need for a healthy body, mind, and spirit. The New Age movement also emphasises healthy living and dieting, making use of a philosophy called "Natural Hygiene." Many good books on a healthy lifestyle and eating habits are used to include sections on the need for yoga, meditation, etc.

(OHP of projector and screen)

* Science fiction films, games and books are used to present their ideas e.g. the "Star Wars" trilogy of films and games such as "Dungeons and Dragons."

As one can see, in themselves, many of these programmes are commendable and good. It is through these programmes, however, that their teaching and influence is presented in a subtle way.

5. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE EMPHASES OF THE MOVEMENT?

a. New Age teaching is based on a monistic ("all is One") and pantheistic ("all is God") world view. It is therefore anti-theistic and anti-Christian.

(OHP God and His creation)

It is the belief of the New Age movement that God is an impersonal dynamic energy and by faith you can tap into this mighty energy and accomplish fantastic things. Time and again reference is made to God as a "Force." All is God and God is all so you and I, nature, matter, and all forms of animate and inanimate objects are part of God.

The New Age teaches the inherent divinity of man stemming from their belief in the divinity of all things. Man is separated from God only is his own consciousness - there is no such thing as sin. He is the victim of false teaching about his identity that blinds him to his essential unity with God. By undergoing various "spiritual disciplines" man can become a co-creator with the universe. All this happens through the forces operating in man's mind. They also believe that they have "evolved" by such practices.

(OHP of religious leaders linked arm to arm)

b. The ideological base of the New Age agenda is unity of all religions. This movement wishes to unite all religions - Eastern, animistic and godless - with Christianity. Syncretism with other religions is encouraged as they believe that all religions contain the same truth at root level. All religious teachers and leaders are included in their vast pantheon of gods. Jesus Christ is demoted to the equal of other gods and teachers.

They openly set forth plans for a new mandatory world religion in which evil, Lucifer, is deified. All those opposing this world religion, and the Maitreya, will be persecuted and "cleansed" (purged) for their beliefs. This includes faithful Jews, Christians and Moslems.

(OHP of new born baby)

c. The New Age movement is dependent on the ancient Hindu doctrines of reincarnation and karma. With the stress on reincarnation, New Age is teaching a cyclic rebirth operating according to the law of karma (what you sow you reap in identical proportions). Justice is satisfied in that no matter how long it takes and how many successful reincarnations are necessary, a person keeps on paying for his misdeeds until his "bad karma has been balanced by good karma." This teaching is assisting mankind to avoid the fact of accountability for our life and actions before God on Judgment Day. We become our own saviours!

(OHP of man separated from God by sin)

d. The New Age Movement completely ignores man's greatest problem - sin - as well as rejecting God's provision through the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. People rid themselves of their own bad karma. Salvation is therefore not necessary. There is no distinction between the Creator and the creation, nor between the Creator and his sinful people. There is therefore no need for God, Jesus Christ, nor the Holy Spirit as revealed in scripture. Salvation is therefore through man's own development of his mind - no different to Gnosticism of old.

(OHP of occultic practice)

e. The New Age Movement relies heavily upon meditation, visualisation, and the occult. These are the means to salvation, which is described as reaching ones own essential godhood.

→ To achieve this salvation, the New Age movement advocates various methods of altering the consciousness - Yoga, meditation, visualisation, chanting, ecstatic dancing and the use of the occult. These enable man to consciously experience his supposed union with God, an experience defined as ("enlightenment")

In spite of man's potential, there are waiting in the unseen world various beings wanting to assist men and women in their goal of realising their essential godhood. Use is made of guides, channelers (a new word for a medium), astrology, fortune-telling, TM (Transcendental Meditation), yoga, Tarot cards and other practices of the occult.

The meditation practiced is not meditation upon God or Christ, nor a submission to His will. Biblical meditation is very different from Eastern forms of meditation upon which the New Age movement relies. Positive thinking does not produce 'good' nor are we to empty our minds but to 'fill them with whatever is lovely, true, and kind.' (Phil 4:8)

(OHP of Jesus Christ and religious leaders)

f. Doctrinally the New Age movement believes in the continuing revelation from God according to the age and dispensation - in the days of Moses it was the Pentateuch; in the days of Jesus, the Gospel; in the days of Mohammed, the Qur'an; in this day, the Bayan. Their writers put Christ among our peers, declaring that the same Christ-spirit dwelt in "Hercules, Hermes, Rama, Mithra... Krishna, and Buddha. All were sons of men who became sons of God for having revealed their innate divinity." We are certainly not dealing, here, with 'the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us.'

(OHP of person doing wrong)

g. As a result of the pantheistic world view, there is a breakdown in distinctions between right and wrong, between good and evil, rendering moral and ethical distinctions either impossible or meaningless. The New Age movement rejects moral absolutes based on scripture, claiming that they are to be subjectively determined. There are no moral and ethical absolutes with blatant sinfulness being described as "errors". (Hitler's policy of genocide of the Jews is described by them as 'an error'). Situation ethics is the order of the day.

(OHP of court scene with magistrate)

h. Truth is not something relative - it is seen as something perceived and acted upon by every individual. Truth is not relative as seen in their statement, "that's your truth, this is mine."

(OHP of heading - "All Nations Constitution")

i. The New Age Movement is desirous of a one world government, a planetary police force/military arm for security where only those who subscribe to a monistic and pantheistic world view will be allowed to control this police force. They intend to introduce a "Universal Credit Card", the dissolution of individual nations to be replaced by a bio-regional parliament and a "Planetary guidance System."

There is an emphasis on a world economic system, to be set up by the "Hierarchy" in which cash money is abolished and replaced by a computer barter system.

j. While professing to support equality amongst all, the movement calls for the triumph of Aryanism and the domination of Caucasians over other "root races", such a race being brought into existence by the development of "Higher Consciousness." (Note the similarities with Gnosticism of old and Hitler's ideology.)

k. A disconcerting fact emerging is the tendency for the New Agers to see themselves as a "new species", superior to all others, a Master Race. They have "evolved" from homo sapiens into homo noeticus, a new species, by employing mind expansion techniques, spiritual disciplines and consciousness evolution. Some on earth have reached relative perfection stating, "Some of us are more divine than others." From those who have achieved perfection or "Christ Consciousness", ONE would serve as the "Director of the Kingdom of God on Earth."

l. Another key doctrine is that all things are "interconnected" or "interdependent." This is known as the Doctrine of Wholeness, also called the Doctrine of At-One-Ment, which is probably a perversion of the Christian

doctrine of atonement through Jesus Christ..

6. LET US LOOK AT THEIR THEOLOGY:

a. GOD

In New Age Theology, the triune God of the Bible is not described in personal terms. God is seen as an impersonal energy field who is not seen as separate from His creation. God is all and all is God - you and I are therefore part of God. It is our task to awaken the god who sleeps within us.

b. JESUS CHRIST

The New Age Movement disputes the uniqueness of the person and work of Jesus Christ. They accept that Jesus Christ was a real person but deny his deity, his claim to be the 'ONLY way to the Father', his sacrificial death on the cross, and his resurrection. He is seen as another god on the level of Krishna, Buddha, Mohammed, Zoroaster etc.

The world is waiting for more revealers of the truth (avatars) such as Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Zoroaster, Moses, Krishna, and ultimately one designated as the Lord Maitreya. The Lord Jesus Christ is relegated to the role of a demi-god or "one of the many equally good ways."

They distinguish between Jesus and the Christ. Jesus was not always the Christ, having won his Christ status by a strenuous life. Just as Christ became incarnate in Jesus, so that Christ can become incarnate within every one of us.

c. SIN AND SALVATION.

The New Age movement teaches that man is born into this world both good and divine in nature. Salvation therefore depends on man recognising the fact that he needs to be freed from the limitations of this existence - by means of centering, meditation, yoga etc.

The movement denies the biblical doctrine of sin and substitutes reincarnation as the means of atonement, evading the significance of the cross as the means of salvation.

The New Age Movement sees the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ as being worthless and meaningless as sacrifice is a notion totally unknown to God. 'It arises solely from fear.'

Judgment, heaven and hell are all denied. New Age teaching substitutes the Buddhist concept of Nirvana for heaven. Hell is seen as the bad karma or punishment for errors committed in our past lives which will be corrected through reincarnation in our lives to come for "what you sow, you must reap."

d. THE DEMONIC

The New Age movement denies any belief in the spiritual world, Satan, or of a battle between the powers of evil and God. Man is seen as his own satan just as he is his own salvation.

New Agers employ the tools of the occult - tarot cards, Ouija boards, mediums (channelers as they are called), astrology, fortune tellers, and practice astral projection.

The consequence of this teaching is summed up in these words "Just as they do not need Christ to die for their sins, they do not need to accept his resurrection from the dead to seal the Covenant of divine redemption. Reincarnation in the New Age Cult is a means of circumventing the cross and replacing our resurrection, not with an immortal or glorified body, as the Apostle Paul teaches us in 1 Corinthians 15, but with an endless procession of corruptible bodies in which we must attempt to work out our final salvation by the law of karma." (Walter Martin: The New Age Cult 1989) (p 94).

7. RECOGNITION TRAITS OF THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT.

The same author has identified certain traits which enable one to immediately recognise New Age thinking.

a. The group is openly committed to furthering the New Age (i.e. Age of Aquarius).

b. The group openly espouses distinctively New Age beliefs such as monism ("all is one"), pantheism ("all is God"), gnosticism (salvation or spiritual healing come through special experiences of enlightenment), karma and reincarnation, spiritual evolution, ascended masters (equal with Christ), etc.

c. The group openly advocates New Age/occult practices such as channeling/mediumship, astrology, psychic healing, numerology, magic, various methods for inducing altered states of consciousness (e.g. meditation, chanting, sensory deprivation, hypnosis, etc.) and the use of crystals or pyramids for psychic reasons.

4. The group uses uniquely New Age terminology such as "create your own reality," "Higher Self," "self realisation," "cosmic consciousness," "universal energy," etc.

8. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE WHEN DEALING WITH NEW AGERS?

a. In dealing with the New Age Movement, define your terminology. When such people are talking of God, Jesus Christ, salvation, reincarnation, ask them to explain what they mean. Try to arrive at a dictionary definition rather than a subjective judgment. Realise that all the above terms have a completely different meaning for the Christian

as for the New Ager.

b. Concentrate your witness on the person and work of Jesus Christ in your life. Use the opportunity to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, not as one of the many messengers sent for a specific period in time for a specific set of needs, but rather as the Lord of the ages, the way to God, the embodiment of truth, and the incarnation of life itself.

c. Reveal the inconsistency of the New Age world view of pantheism and monism and the dangers of involvement in the occult.

d. Above all let us realise that we are in reality dealing with spiritual warfare against the forces of darkness, and we are told by God to put on the whole armour of God so that we will be able to withstand the forces of Satan. Eph 6:10f

e. There are some who would see in the New Age movement the antichrist and all the players in the scenario of the 'Last Days' as described in scripture.

Let us not be blinded to this possibility as this is a real possibility as one delves into the movement. Let us, however, also not twist everything to fit that picture as then we are being as unfaithful to scripture as those who are part of the New Age movement. Let us pray that God's Spirit will give us wisdom and understanding in dealing with this issue.

Useful books dealing with the subject:

The New Age Cult: Walter Martin (1989) - Highly Recommended.

The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow : C Cumbey 1986.

Unmasking the New Age: D Groothuis.

The Seduction of Christianity: Dave Hunt.

COMMENTS ON VIDEO "SEWING THE SEEDS OF LOVE"
by "Tears For Fears."

1. The video begins by showing the symbols of the New Age Movement being linked to the ~~egg~~ by showing the door opening with the Egyptian symbol for the Sun god on the door, then the Pyramid, with Eastern writing on it, and with the 'all seeing eye' at the top. At one scene you even see the pyramid with the logo around, as seen on the heading of the articles in the Christianity Today Magazine.
2. This then leads to the scene of people in a state of levitation, floating around. This all comes from centering and meditation.
3. Then moves onto their stress on ecology by showing the greenery and the plants. This is to be contrasted with the barrenness later where the seeds are being sewn. What looks like birds drinking is to show the rape of earth's resources as seen in the oil wells sucking oil from the earth.
4. Then moves into the area of mastering your mind by raising the issue of pain. Are told to, "open your mind, think about it, dream about it." The issue of pain and healing is alluded to.
5. Then goes on to encouraging people to read "there are many books to read" - and from the book arises the modern symbols of the zodiac - stressing the emphasis on the occult.
6. One then sees a man lying on the couch, meditating, having read and from him arise the various symbols of his thoughts.
7. The camera then moves back to see a man digging with a small trowel in a barren land to plant whilst the words are sung, "Sewing the seeds of love." Others are also planting and then we are told to
"Eat all your words, swallow your pride, open your eyes, sewing the seeds of love."
8. In the last refrain, the words, "Sewing the seeds of love", has the harmony, "Everything is possible." Again man's potential is being stressed as the seed germinates to become a sunflower and the world passes by.
9. There follows an attack on our modern age and democracy by saying "there is egg on your face and mud on your shoes." The closing words are, "Sewing the seeds of love, an end to need, and the politics of greed."

THE WORLD HAS HAD *enough...* OF HUNGER, INJUSTICE, WAR
ANSWER TO OUR CALL FOR HELP, AS WORLD TEACHER FOR ALL HUMAN

THE CHRIST IS NOW HERE.

HOW WILL WE RECOGNIZE HIM?

Look for a modern man concerned with modern problems—political, economic, and social. Since July, 1977, the Christ has been emerging as a spokesman for a group or community in a well-known modern country. He is not a religious leader, but an educator in the broadest sense of the word—
pointing the way out of our present crisis.

We will recognize Him by His extraordinary spiritual potency, the universality of His viewpoint, and His love for all humanity. He comes not to judge, but to aid and inspire.

WHO IS THE CHRIST?

Throughout history, humanity's evolution has been guided by a group of enlightened men, the Masters of Wisdom. They have remained largely in the remote desert and mountain places of earth, working mainly through their disciples who live openly in the world.

This message of the Christ's reappearance has been given primarily by such a disciple trained for his task for over 20 years.

At the center of this "Spiritual Hierarchy" stands the World Teacher, *Lord Maitreya*, known by Christians as the *Christ*. And as Christians await the Second Coming, so the Jews await the *Messiah*, the Buddhists the fifth *Buddha*, the Moslems the *Imam Mahdi*, and the Hindus await *Krishna*. These are all names for one individual.

His presence in the world guarantees there will be no third World War.

WHAT IS HE SAYING?

"My task will be to show you how to live together peacefully as brothers. This is simpler than you imagine, My friends, for it requires only the acceptance of sharing."

"How can you be content with the modes within which you now live: when millions starve and die in squalor; when the rich parade their wealth before the poor; when each man is his neighbor's enemy; when no man trusts his brother?"

"Allow me to show you the way forward into a simpler life where no man lacks; where no two days are alike; where the Joy of Brotherhood manifests through all men."

"Take your brother's need as the measure for your action and solve the problems of the world."

WHEN WILL WE SEE HIM?

He has not as yet declared His true status, and His location is known to only a very few disciples. One of these has announced that soon the Christ will acknowledge His identity and within the next two months will speak to humanity through a worldwide television and radio broadcast. His message will be heard inwardly, telepathically, by all people in their own language.

From that time, with His help, we will build a new world.

WITHOUT SHARING THERE CAN BE NO JUSTICE;
WITHOUT JUSTICE THERE CAN BE NO PEACE;
WITHOUT PEACE THERE CAN BE NO FUTURE.