

kingdom of Heaven will discover, to their utter dismay, that they will be eternally separated from God. Jesus came to save sinners (Mark 2:17)! The Bible says: "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). All men need a Saviour! Jesus Christ's humiliation and death on the cross of Calvary is all in vain if man can save himself (Galatians 2:21)

FOR ME OR AGAINST ME: The Bible informs us that no man can be neutral towards Jesus Christ. No man can say: "I don't know if I am ready to trust Christ as my Lord and Saviour". Jesus said: "He that is not with me is against me..." (Matthew 12:30). To refuse to trust Christ, or delay to trust Christ is to R E J E C T Christ. It is the same as saying: "...We will not have this man to reign over us." (Luke 19:14) Men reject Jesus Christ because they love darkness and hate light. They refuse to come to the light (Jesus Christ); "lest their deeds should be reproved" (John 3:20)! A man is either in the kingdom of darkness or he is in the kingdom of light. A Christian has been delivered out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:13). Light and darkness are mutually exclusive. Light expels the darkness. There is no gray! No middle ground! To refuse the kingdom of light is to remain in the kingdom of darkness.

NARROW WAY OR BROAD WAY: The way that leads to destruction is broad and many go down that pathway (Matthew 7:13,14) Satan doesn't care if you destroy your life and go to hell because of drugs, alcohol, immorality, the occult, materialism, or even religion. He offers you many choices! But Jesus Christ offers the narrow way! When a person repents of his sin and trusts Christ as Lord and Saviour of his life, Jesus becomes his shepherd. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they F O L L O W M E ! A Christian yields his will to the Saviour's will. A Christian has been bought with a price -- the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18,19). He no longer is boss of his own life (1 Corinthians 6:19,20), but joyfully offers his obedience to the Lord who bled and died for him. Those who truly understand the Saviour's love manifested at Calvary, respond with grateful obedience. Jesus said those who love Him will obey Him (John 14:15)

TODAY NOT LATER: God confronts each of us to make a decision N O W! "...behold NOW is the accepted time; behold NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). We are not guaranteed an opportunity tomorrow (Prov. 27:1). We are not granted an opportunity after death -- "...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27) We are warned that rejection N O W will result in hardness of heart (Heb. 3:7-13 Proverbs 29:1)9

GOD'S SIMPLE PLAN OF SALVATION (1) Admit you are a sinner justly deserving of God's wrath and judgment (Romans/ Chapters 1-3:20) (2) Believe that Jesus Christ bore your judgment on the cross of Calvary (Romans/ Chapters 4-8). (3) In prayer, repent of your sins and acknowledge to God that you are fully trusting only Christ for your salvation! (John 1:12 John 3:16 Acts 16:31, 4:12, Romans 10:9,10,13) (4) Based on 1 John 5:13, praise God that you are a Christian and your sins are forgiven; and that you K N O W you H A V E eternal life.

THE CORNERSTONE

BIBLICAL ANSWERS TO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

NEW AGE



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America is very much in need of men like the children of Issachar. In 1 Chronicles 12:32 we are told that the men of Issachar "...had an understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do...". Those who are discerning of the present times in America know that Satan has orchestrated a two prong master plan whereby he is presently bringing much destruction to our country.

The first prong is "Humanism". Humanism is the belief that man by reason, without reference to God or the supernatural, can satisfactorily explain and solve all of man's questions and problems. Science is man's savior and ultimately will meet all of man's needs. This destructive heresy is being propagated among the masses through the schools and universities of our land. Dan Vander Lugt and Kurt De Haan have summarized how humanism has paved the way for new age beliefs: "Humanism can be defined as the philosophy of life that assumes that God and the spirit world are myths, that the physical, material universe is all there is, and that mankind and the entire universe are the chance product of evolution. According to this view, mankind is merely a complicated machine, life is ultimately purposeless, and terms like right and wrong become relative. The insufficiency of this and other atheistic ideologies has been an important factor in the rise of New Age thinking. Although secular humanism and atheistic communism have been powerful forces in the 20th century, they have also helped to create a spiritual vacuum. By teaching that mankind is the product of chance evolution, they have convinced several generations to think of themselves as hopeless wanderers on a fearful voyage through an immense and indifferent universe."

The second prong which may prove to be far more destructive is the "New Age" religion. The New Agers fill the void created by the religious humanists. The New Agers acknowledge that there is more to reality and truth than can be discovered by reason. They encourage their followers to contact the spirit world and through meditation to enter into the eternal oneness of the universe. Through religious mystical experiences all men can discover the divinity that lies within themselves. As each person comes to enlightenment there will be an increasing global unity of all religions and faiths that will bring peace to the world. The great potential of New Agers to have international influence can be attributed to the fact that its primary means of propagation is through the media and movie stars. The high priestess who has popularized New Age beliefs in America is Shirley Maclaine. Her book "Out on a Limb" introduced millions to the world of mystical experiences. Entertainers like Helen Reddy, Marsha Mason, Lisa Bonet, Tina Turner and musician Paul Horn all promote New Age doctrines. Many others could be listed. Marilyn McGuire, Executive Director of the New Age Publishing and Retailing Alliance reports that there are some 2,500 occult bookstores in the U.S. and over 3,000 publishers of occult books and journals. New Age books are estimated to be \$1 billion a year industry. Furthermore, new age teaching and beliefs are being taught through myriads of seminars that touch all areas of our lives -- health, psychology, business industry, government, science etc. Even the yoga exercises that are taught to cope with stress are an entrance into the world of the New Age religion. The purpose of this booklet is to give you some of the basic beliefs of the New Ager as compared to the teaching of the Bible.

goes to hell because he has rejected salvation through Christ will receive no second chance of salvation after death (Luke 16:19-31).

MEDITATION: One of the greatest ploys of Satan is to take a truth of Scripture and distort it, twist it, or pervert it so that a man is led away from the truth about God rather than led into the truth about God (Gal. 1:6-9). This is especially true in the new ager's view of mediation. The Bible teaches that a person will be successful in all that he does if he meditates on God's Word day and night (Joshua 1:8; Psalms 1). Meditation on God's Word then is the key to victory in the Christian life and discovering the abundant life through Christ (John 10:10). What then is the danger of new age meditation? The key difference is the object of the meditation. The Christian meditates on something -- the Bible (God's Word); the new ager meditates on nothing. The goal of the new ager is to discover his inner self. The goal of the Christian is to know God through His Word.

We are warned in the Scriptures not to put our minds in neutral, but at all times and at every moment to "bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). We are instructed to not let our mind think about just anything we so choose, but rather thoughts that meet certain requirements: "...whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK ON THESE THINGS" (Phil. 4:8). We are further warned that in no way should we seek knowledge or information through mediums (Deut. 18:9-12). This is perhaps the most dangerous of new age meditation techniques that puts the new ager in touch with the realm and power of demonic spirits. Douglas Groothuis explains the danger in this area: "In New Age spirituality, inward meditation replaces prayer. The goal is really monolog -- discovery of the Deep Self or Higher Self -- not dialog, the interpersonal communication between conscious, interested beings. The New Age interest in channeling may stem from a spiritual dissatisfaction with the impersonal nature of their world view. New Agers may talk about God, but they can't talk to God -- or if they do, there's no one there to listen, let alone answer. Meditation and other "psychotechnologies" may offer powerful experiences -- just as getting shocked is quite personal! -- without an experience of a personal God. Yet channeling (mediumship) offers personal contact with some very personable beings."

HOW TO BE SURE YOU ARE SAVED!

FAITH OR WORKS: Man is made right with God, not by what he does for God, but by what God has done for him. Man cannot save himself by good works or religion. "...By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..." (Romans 3:20) Nicodemus was a religious man, but he wasn't a saved man (John 4)! A man can be in Church every Sunday, be sincere, live a good moral life and still spend eternity in hell! Note the warning in Matthew 7:22-23. "Many will say to me in that day (judgment day), Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out demons? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Those who are trusting in their own goodness to enter the

than "an enlightened master" -- he didn't even know who he was! If he knew he was not uniquely God incarnate, but said he was, he was a flaming fraud, and in no sense was he an "enlightened master." Worse yet, he would have been a deceiver, leading a multitude astray. If he thought he was uniquely God incarnate and was -- as the record indicates -- let us throw off this nonsense of placing him in the pantheistic pantheon. Let us worship and serve Him instead". Every new ager should be challenged to read through the Gospels himself and come face to face with the claims of Jesus Christ. Confronted with the uncensored Word of God, maybe some will "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing... have life in his name (Jn. 20:31).

SALVATION: For the new ager sin is the state of being ignorant of one's perfection. Jesus Christ is not the Saviour who through the cross made atonement for man's sin. The new ager believes that Jesus Christ revealed the way to higher consciousness. There is no need to be saved or forgiven, you only need to be instructed so that you come to realize your divinity within. According to the Bible, man is a sinner who has rebelled against his creator (Isaiah 53:6) and he continually falls short of God's holiness and righteousness (Romans 3:23). The wages of man's sin is death (Romans 6:23) -- not just physical death (separation of the soul from the body), but also spiritual death (separation of the soul from God). If a man dies without having received Jesus Christ as his personal savior, his soul will be eternally separated from God in hell (Hebrews 9:27; Matthew 7:21-23; 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9). Furthermore, the Bible reveals that it is not the teachings of Christ that brings salvation, neither is it obtained by following the example of Christ. Salvation is through the atoning blood of the crucified Christ (1 Peter 1:18,19). Man's sins need to be forgiven! According to Hebrews 9:22 "...without the shedding of blood there is no remission" of sins. Jesus Christ is the sacrificial lamb who through His death, burial and resurrection has made it possible for man to be reconciled to God (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 15:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:15-21).

Jesus Christ instructed his followers that every person needs to be "born again" in order to be saved (John 3). According to John 1:12 a man becomes a child of God when he receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour. The Bible repeatedly affirms that salvation is through "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 4:12,16:31; Romans 10:9,10,13; John 3:16).

JUDGMENT: Evil and sin are illusory to a new ager and no personal God of judgment exists. He believes that men are purified through an endless series of reincarnations, attaining ever higher levels of consciousness. Life just goes on and on with no day of reckoning -- no culmination of history. The Bible records a totally different picture. All of history is moving towards completion at the return of Jesus Christ (Revelation 19-21). All men will face a day of judgment (John 5:25-29). "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). Please note that men only die once and afterwards the certainty of judgment follows. All men will either go to heaven or hell depending upon their acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ (John 3:36; 1 John 5:12; Matt. 7:21-23). The deeds of all men will be judged to determine degrees of rewards in heaven or degrees of condemnation in hell (Romans 2:5-8; Rev. 20:11-15; 1 Cor. 3:12-17). A man who dies and

SOURCE OF TRUTH AND REVELATION: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;" (1 Timothy 4:1). Sharon Gless who plays "Cagney" in the T.V. series "Cagney and Lacey" won an "Emmy" for her role in 1987. In her acceptance speech she accredited her success to "Lazaris" -- her spirit guide. Linda Evans of the series "Dynasty" and Jocyce Dewitt of the series "Three's Company" are led by the spirit guide "Mafu". God warns of the severe consequences of those who seek guidance through mediums and that His people should not even learn their ways: "When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. {10} There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, that useth divination, an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, {11} Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. {12} For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee" (Deuteronomy 18:9-12)

Truth for a born-again Christian is found in the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16). Jesus in John 17:17 affirmed that the source of truth for every person is to be found in God's Word. The Bible is to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105). The teaching, doctrine and beliefs of any person are to be tested by the absolute truth of Scripture (Acts 17:11). God's revelation to man in the Scriptures is final and complete: God says that His inspired scripture includes answers to every question any man might have about life: "All scripture given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, THOROUGHLY FURNISHED UNTO ALL GOOD WORKS" (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Every time a new ager consults a spirit guide for guidance he is plainly declaring by his actions his rejection of God's Word as the final authority over his life. Those who rebel towards the Scriptures being the final authority in their life and seek other sources of truth are warned of severe consequences in the last chapter of the Bible. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18). Seeking guidance from spirit guides rather than the Bible exposes the new ager to the realm and power of Satan's control (John 8:44; 2 Thess. 2:8-12)!

PERSON OF GOD: The new age god is a impersonal force or energy in the universe. God is all and all is God. The new age teaching is nothing more than the pantheism of the Eastern religions adapted to American culture. Many "new agers" dress the pantheistic belief in scriptural terms of the Bible to lead those who are already religious into new age beliefs. For example: Psalms 46:10a says "Be still, and know that I am God". For a new age guru this verse means that every person through inner meditation can discover the divine within himself and enter into the oneness of the universe. But this verse is talking about the creature (man) being still before his creator (God) to discover that He (God) is far above His creation in majestic, power, and glory. Man doesn't discover he is god through

mediation, he discovers the transcendence of God. New agers conveniently leave out the rest of the verse. God says: "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm 46:10b). This tactic of scripture twisting is not a new approach. Satan used Scripture when trying to lead the Son of God into temptation (Matthew 4:6). Satan transforms himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). Jesus warned of wolves (false religious teachers) who will come in sheep's clothing (using the Bible) to deceitfully lead the gullible and undiscerning into false cults (Matthew 7:15).

The God of the Bible is not a force or some eternal cosmic energy. He is a person! We are told to pray to our FATHER in heaven (Matt. 6:9). The Holy Spirit is not referred to as an "IT", but as an "HE" (John 14:16). Christians are instructed that by their sin they can "GRIEVE" the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30). You can only grieve a person. Salvation is not an impersonal oneness with the universe, but coming to have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ (John 17:1-3; 14:6). Every born again Christian is able to have daily, moment by moment personal fellowship with the God who created the universe (1 John 1:3). Believers are instructed to come boldly into His PRESENCE (Hebrews 4:16).

MORAL VALUES: The reason new age teaching appeals to so many is because you can hold to any morality you desire. "Create your own reality" is an often repeated slogan in new age circles. There is no absolute objective moral law for the new ager. Rather, we all have different ways to realize our divine potential. Since "all is one" (monism), we can't divide up life into categories of right and wrong or good and evil. A supposed new age spirit guide named Ramtha teaches that God -- of which we are all a part -- is neither good or bad. He doesn't judge, no man is declared to be a sinner, and therefore no man needs to be forgiven. He says: "every vile and wretched thing you do broadens your understanding... If you want to do any one thing regardless of what it is, it would not be wise to go against that feeling; for there is an experience awaiting you and a grand adventure that will make your life sweeter". In her best seller "Dancing in the Light", Shirley Maclaine reports what her spirit guide "higher self" told her: "Until mankind realizes that there is in truth, no good and there is in truth, no evil, there will be no peace". God warns of false religious teachers who will encourage loose and sinful living (2 Peter 2:1-22). Biblical morality is anchored in the moral character and will of a personal God, who gave us the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20), not the ten suggestions. Right and wrong are absolute truths which never change, because the character of God that they are based upon never changes (Heb. 13:8). God declares that the moral truths revealed in the Bible last for eternity (Matt. 5:17-20). Many will embrace new age teaching because it demands no change of their life, but many will reject the teachings of Christianity because it demands repentance of sin and a change of life (Acts 2:38f; Matt. 3:7-12). People don't reject the teachings of the Bible because of an intellectual problem, they reject it because of moral problems. "And this is the condemnation, that light (Jesus Christ) is come into the world, and men loved darkness (sinful deeds), rather than light (holy living like Christ), because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:19,20).

John Ankerberg and John Weldon in their booklet "The Facts on The New Age Movement" have aptly summarized why new age teaching is so attractive: "...some who are fanatically committed to the NAM [new age movement] and are also familiar with Christian teachings are openly antagonistic to Christianity because they realize that the Christian faith is a formidable barrier to New Age views ("all is one", spiritual evolution, salvation by personal merit, etc.) and to New Age goals (occult enlightenment, globalism, etc.) This is why Rajneesh, for example says that 'the greatest deception is the deception of devotion to God' He recognizes that belief in the Christian God is harmful to his own interests. These individuals have labeled Christianity an 'enemy' of mankind and in the tradition of those like the founder of the Theosophical Society, Helena P. Blavatsky, have attacked and ridiculed it. They do so, because like the Marxist of today, they recognize the Christian faith for the genuine threat that it is.

JESUS CHRIST: The new ager will give lip affirmation that Jesus is the Christ. What they really mean is that Jesus was just a man who came to the point of enlightenment to discover the "christ consciousness" -- the impersonal divine essence within himself. Jesus is the Christ to the extent that he realized his divine potential; but so can every individual! The new ager rejects the notion that Jesus Christ is the unique Son of God. The Bible instructs believers to test false teaching: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. {2} Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: {3} And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 John 4:1-3). Jesus did not claim to be an enlightened individual who discovered the "christ consciousness" within; He claimed to be uniquely "THE CHRIST" -- the one and only Christ prophesied hundreds of times in the Old Testament (Matt. 16:13-19).

Jesus Christ claimed to have power that no other man possessed. He claimed that He could forgive sins (Matt. 9:6)! Only God can forgive sins. Jesus Christ claimed to be God (John 10:30-35). He demonstrated his uniqueness as the Son of God by His miracle working power (John 3:2; 14:11,12). He was not a mere man like other men, He was God (Mark 4:41). He never made general claims about the divinity of all people, but singled himself out as the incarnation of God (John 1:1-14; 8:58; Mark 2:10) Jesus Christ refuted the teaching of the new ager that every man can discover God within himself. He claimed that no man come to know or fellowship with God unless they come through Him (John 14:6). He is the only mediator between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5). He is the only door to salvation (John 10:9). His name is the only name by which men can be saved (Acts 4:12).

Douglas Groothuis in his book "Confronting The New Age" has stated very well the issue of believing in Jesus Christ as the unique Son of God: "If Jesus thought he was uniquely God incarnate but he wasn't, he was far less