

# MODERN CHRISTIANITY

## THE DANGERS AND DECEIT OF THE END-TIME NEW AGE CHURCH

BY PAUL M HANSSSEN



THE WAY TO ZION  
BIBLE TRAINING ACADEMY

THEY SHALL ASK THE WAY TO ZION (JEREMIAH 50:5)

---

During this seminar, we will examine the pages of scripture to see the prophetic word concerning the dangers and deceit of the New Age Church and the End-Time Revival. The powers of hell are being unleashed on earth like never before. No generation, not even in the days of Noah, has witnessed or will witness what is happening and what is about to happen on earth. Why?

*Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. (Revelation 12:12)*

We are living in the time of “*he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*” This time and season will be marked by the deepest and greatest deception that humanity has ever faced. One of the tools used is the spread of New Age philosophies throughout the world. New Age may appear as “new”, fresh, and satisfying. But it is anything but new. It is built on the age-old lie that caused mankind to fall in the first place. The lie worked then, and unfortunately, it is working again now - “Do this and you will be like gods.” (Genesis 3:5)

First, what is the New Age? New Age spirituality isn't a single religion but an eclectic movement that pulls ideas from many sources. It combines

philosophies and beliefs from different traditions, including **Eastern mysticism, Hinduism, Judaism, and occultism**. Its goal is to foster personal “spiritual” growth, self-discovery, a vision of world harmony, and a transformed global consciousness. This movement often features practices like meditation, yoga, and astrology. The ideas behind these and other New Age practices and teachings have infiltrated the church. Bible teachers frequently blend certain scriptures with New Age concepts, leading to confusion and spiritual darkness.

New Age philosophies run parallel to biblical truth and are often mixed, but they are on opposite sides and should not be combined.



*Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together. (Deuteronomy 22:9-11*

- **Two kinds of seed** - The seed is Word, teaching, doctrine. Don't mix various seed, concepts, religions, philosophies - Don't defile Truth!
- **Two kinds of animals** - The animals were workers. Don't mix the work of those who plow in prayer, worship, and ministry with outside styles and methods from the world. The ox was represented in the Temple (12 oxen held up the sea/laver), whereas the ass was not represented in the temple of God at all.
- **Two kinds of yarn** - The yarn has to do with what we clothe ourselves in. Don't mix the garments of modesty that honor God with worldly, carnal, fleshly attire. It's impossible to profess godliness and attempt to mix it with carnality and the fashions of the world. God warned the priesthood

not to wear a mixture of wool and linen whilst in the service of the LORD in the inner court. (Ezekiel 44:17, 23)

God required His servants to discern the difference between clean and unclean (Leviticus 10:10).

Mixture - Isaiah 1:22, Daniel 2:41-43.

God hates “mixture.” Yet, today, the modern church is filled with a mixture. Everything about God is pure, but the devil’s mandate is to mix Truth and error to create a watered-down, muddy, and deadly cocktail of deception.

*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (2 Corinthians 6:14-16)*

- **FELLOWSHIP**-righteousness with unrighteousness (participation, intercourse)
- **COMMUNION** - light with darkness (partnership, communication)
- **CONCORD** - Christ with Belial (harmony, agreement, be of like mind)
- **PART** - A believer with an infidel (to share and partake with)
- **AGREEMENT** - the temple of God with idols (in company with, to vote for)

These verses embody the warning to not mix impurity, darkness, evil-worthlessness (the meaning of Belial), and idolatry with that which is pure, divine, and holy. Why is humankind so hell-bent on seeking truth, life, and satisfaction outside of Him who is Truth, life, and satisfaction? It’s impossible!

Those who are not rooted in the Word of God and in what pleases Him are easily misled by mixtures of New Age philosophies, many of which are soaked in mystic Judaism and the occult. New Age philosophies are misleading because they seem correct, often feel right, and frequently yield the desired effects:

peace, harmony, sensations of bliss, and ecstasy. But the end result is death. (Proverbs 14:12 - way that seemeth right).

## **i. THE NEW AGE vs. TRUTH**

### **1. A Higher Power vs The Only Eternal Power**

The new age teaching acknowledges a “higher power,” also referred to as an energy, source, or spirit. Due to new age deception, Christians have been sucked into demeaning references to the Eternal Father God, referring to Him as “father,” daddy, spirit, or source. However, everywhere the Eternal Father is referenced in Scripture, He is called “The” Father, “The” Living Father, God “the” Father, Everlasting Father, our Father, and My Father. The word “the” is a grammatical word called a determiner; more specifically, it is the definite article used to refer to a specific person, place, or thing. Removing “the” is to remove the personal reference or identity of the one being referred to. In other words, He, the Father, is a source, power, and spirit, but under the New Age influence, His identity as the only one God and the Eternal Father is removed.

By removing this seemingly insignificant word, a subtle attempt has been made by new age demonic powers to open portals that contaminate the truth, ultimately corrupting people’s minds.

Furthermore, God, the Father, should never be reduced to human dimensions or called “daddy.” Likewise, God should not be called “spirit” without clarifying which spirit is being referred to. By humanizing God and His Son, we diminish God’s authenticity, honor, and power, while opening the human spirit to all kinds of wicked, anti-Christ spirits, sources of energy and power, that are contrary to God and His Divine nature.

The New Age teaching acknowledges a “higher power,” however, He is not identified. The power referenced is an “it” rather than a personal “He.”

*I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:5-6)*

God is to be revered, feared, honored, and acknowledged as the only, Supreme, Eternal King, Lord, and God of all!

2. New Age teaches that humans are divine.

Today, the church is filled with the teaching of man's potential to divinity; to be the "I am," to be god-like, and even to be gods. This lie was introduced to humanity in the Garden of Eden.

*For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:5)*

**The promise of "godlikeness" was based on partaking of knowledge.** This filthy lie still works in humanity today. Knowledge has power, power to enlighten, but also power to corrupt. Many seek knowledge because it produces in them a sense of godlikeness, superiority, and an elevation over others. The new age is flooded with knowledge that emphasizes humanity's potential to be gods, to be creators, to be "I Am anything I say I can be." This doctrine is laced with the lie presented from the beginning of time.

THE FALSEHOOD OF SEEKING SELF-IDENTITY - the divine self.

The New Age teaching of seeking self-identity is based on the philosophy that God is present in all; therefore, humanity is also considered a part of God and, for all practical purposes, is regarded as a manifestation of God. The push for people to discover "self-identity" is driven by man's need to *be somebody*, ultimately not fulfilling God's divine purpose. False teachings regarding *Christian identity* in the church include the modern "*identity gospel*" that suggests finding contentment in being "**true to yourself**" rather than "**surrendering to God's Truth!**"

*Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, Or desire his delicacies; For as he thinks in his heart, so is he [in behavior—one who manipulates]. He says to you, "Eat and drink," Yet his heart is not with you [but it is begrudging the cost]. The morsel which you have eaten you will vomit up, And you will waste your compliments. (Proverbs 23:6-8 AMP)*

The words, “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,” are some of the most misquoted and abused portions of scripture that New Age demons have defiled. Think positive, think like God and become God, think creative thoughts and create, think whatever you want, and that’s what you will be; that’s what you will have.

These verses have nothing to do with the power of positive thinking.

**Gill’s Commentary** puts it this way: “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he,.... He is not the man his mouth speaks or declares him to be, but what his heart thinks; which is discovered by his looks and actions, and by which he is to be judged of, and not by his words; eat and drink, saith he to thee, but his heart is not with thee; he bids you eat and drink, but he does not desire you should, at least but very sparingly; it is only a mere compliment, not a hearty welcome. No, dear one, positive thoughts do not identify you. You can think and confess all manner of positive desires, hoping to create or recreate yourself and your circumstances. This is not godly and is based on heresy.

Jesus taught that those who follow Him are to “lose their life,” not attempt to find it. (*Matthew 10:39*). The identity gospel claims that discovering one’s identity is the path to **self-fulfillment**. Many people testify to experiencing deep peace and satisfaction upon finding their identity and self-discovery. What they don’t realize is that a false peace has taken hold of them - it’s a peace that won’t last because it’s not based on eternal truth. The principle of seeking “self-identity” does not appear in the Bible. However, the doctrine of self-denial and losing one’s life was a central theme in Jesus’ teachings. The identity gospel may look, sound, and feel right, but it is born in hell.

*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Proverbs 14:12)*

God is divine - you are not God. God is sovereign - you are His subject! This new age teaching is subtle and deceitful, removing you from the truth that “you are not your own”; you are bought with a price and are owned by a Master through whom alone eternal redemption and fulfillment are attained. I have said a thousand times, and I will no doubt say it a thousand more times, **“you cannot know who you are until you know who He is.”** Stop trying to know your own

identity, but rather seek to know Him, His Truth, His presence, and glory. In knowing Him, you will discover who you are! The New Age teaching removes knowing the Lord Jesus and His life from the equation, much like the Serpent's lie, which bypassed the Tree of Life and led Eve to consume knowledge apart from Him. The promise: you will be like God.

### 3. New Age teaches global unity and tolerance.

Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matthew 10:34) The new age philosophy teaches a false unity built on compromise, tolerance of sin, and rejection of the sword of truth that separates and divides.

Global religious unity is being pushed in many areas of society today. It looks pleasant and calming; however, it is not genuine unity because Truth is absent. There is a difference between loving the lost, the sinner, and those who disagree with your stand, versus accepting and compromising your stand and faith. Jesus fellowshiped with anyone who welcomed Him. However, He did not cower under the religious ideology, sin, and rebellion that surrounded Him. He loved the sinner, but He condemned the sin. The new age teaches to love and accept people as they are, and in doing so, acknowledge their sin and rebellion against God as acceptable.

### 4. The False Counterfeit New Age Revival

The Bible warns that a false or "counterfeit" revival will play a key role in end-time deception. This revival will create an illusion of a genuine move of God, but will, in fact, lead people away from God and the Truth. Unlike a true revival rooted in biblical repentance, the outpouring of God's divine presence and glory, a lifestyle change, the living Gospel presented, and the embracing of Truth, this deception will be marked by superficial emotionalism, false signs and wonders, and teachings that appeal to worldly desires and political agendas, all presented in the Name of Jesus. Yet, the reality is that this "move" of revival is far from presenting the Jesus sent from the Father.

*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or*

*another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.  
(2 Corinthians 11:3-4)*

A “revival” that centers on a man or religious leader, a religion or specific theology, an event, politics, political figures, popular gatherings, or a particular group of people is not a true revival. This is a revival of the serpent's lies, introduced in a religious package. It presents *another Jesus, another spirit, and another gospel* that is counterfeit to the real. Make sure you remember these three elements of a false religious revival:

- Another Jesus - a different way, a broad way, a way of tolerance
- Another spirit - a different inspiration that impacts and influences
- Another gospel - a different doctrine, emphasis, and teaching

Some of the signs of a false end-time revival include:

a. Emotionalism over repentance:

A counterfeit revival emphasizes emotional experiences, impressive light shows, technologically created atmospheres, and charismatic music that can evoke feelings and stir the emotions without leading people to an encounter with God that results in genuine repentance for sin or lasting change. I am not suggesting that some of these modern antics cannot or should not be used in the gatherings of God’s people. What I am suggesting, however, is that we cannot, and should not, lean on created atmospheres as the means to reach people’s hearts. It is the anointing that breaks the yokes, not a light show or moving music. (Isaiah 10:27)

b. False signs and wonders:

The illusion of revival will showcase displays of power, signs, and miracles that seem supernatural; in many cases, these are indeed supernatural, but not from God. False prophets and those endowed with the power of antichrist spirits will use these deceptive wonders to mislead many people, including—if possible—the elect.

c. A different spirit and a false gospel:

The Apostle Paul warned of false teachers who would come with a different spirit and preach a different gospel, one that is not centered on the biblical

Jesus. Some counterfeit movements promote "end-time restorationism," the belief that supernatural powers and "super-apostles" will be restored in a final, climactic event. This gospel focuses on individuals with charisma who possess the ability to attract crowds through means that are outside and apart from the anointing of God's Spirit.

d. Worldly focus and a Mixture of Spiritual and Carnal:

False revivals often blend worldly elements, such as religious syncretism (the blending of belief systems), prosperity theology, and a political focus, all mixed with so-called spiritual practices rooted in church activities. This reduces God to a means of personal gain rather than the focus of worship and bowing to the Sovereignty of God.

e. Lack of biblical foundation:

The deceptive power of a false revival lies in its subtle twisting of biblical truth. The best defense against this deception is a profound understanding of God's Word, which enables believers to distinguish and discern between falsehood and truth, thereby avoiding being misled. Unfortunately, one of the significant signs of the end times is the growing lack of love for the truth among people, resulting in a profound lack of understanding of Scripture. This is one of the devil's primary tactics: keeping God's people ignorant.

*Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. (2 Corinthians 2:11)*

*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)*

f. Hype without holiness:

In a counterfeit revival, holiness and genuine transformation are replaced by hype and compromise. Instead of focusing on Christ's sacrifice, the emphasis is placed on feelings and the outward display of emotions. An atmosphere is created, causing tears, trembling, falling to the ground, and all manner of physical manifestations. All of the above can be a manifestation of the move of

God, absolutely. However, the new age end-time demonic power sweeping the church world has mastered the skill of imitating the breath of God through men's devices, technology, and effects.

*Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. (Acts 17:29)*

Here, we are warned not to think of the Godhead as an image or idol graven by the *art of man's device*. The word *art* in Greek is *techne* (tekh'-ney). The English word "technology" comes from this word. In Greek, it means skill, trade, cunning, expertise, and technical knowledge.

The word "*device*" is derived from the Greek word *enthumēsis*, which means thoughts, imagination, inspiration, and to ponder.

The *art of man's device* essentially involves his imagination and thoughts becoming expressed as technological and clever tools, shaping people's minds through words of knowledge. Technology is being exploited and inhabited by demonic powers to spread a wave of deceitful, condemning heresies, and knowledge that is gradually destroying God's people. Technology, and in particular AI, will be the tools and weapons at the forefront of deceiving and leading astray in these days. Most of the world's population already struggles to distinguish between what is real and what is fabricated.

As knowledge increases, so shall the power and deceit, trickery, and poison of the influence of the dragon/serpent increase, just like in the beginning – (partake of this knowledge, it will make you wise and like God).

**BEWARE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHICH YOU PARTAKE!**

## **ii. APOSTASY**

The Bible describes an end-time church that will face increased persecution. Still, it will also grow in lawlessness, widespread apostasy or departure from faith, and false teachings, leading to a general decline in devotion to God.

*And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. (Matthew 24:10-13)*

The apostate church will be characterized by:

1. Falling away from the true faith

Falling away is APOSTASY, meaning to change sides. To be an apostate has to do with diverting and departing from the truth you once knew, embraced, fought for, and loved to embrace an inferior vision and cheaper version of the way that costs everything.

Part of the falling away is due to people's indifference and lack of love for the Truth. Many seek knowledge, but not Truth. All Truth is knowledge, but not all knowledge is Truth.

*For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. (2 Timothy 3:6-8)*

Paul mentions the "knowledge of the truth" four times in his epistles. Multitudes are drawn to knowledge because knowledge is power. However, few seek the knowledge of the Truth, which is not always convenient, does not always condone one's lifestyle or choices, and sometimes cuts, hurts, and exposes. Nevertheless, the knowledge of the Truth makes one free, free from oneself first and foremost.

Jannes and Jambres were two ancient Egyptian sorcerers who opposed Moses and Aaron by replicating their miracles in Pharaoh's court during the Exodus events. However, they are not explicitly named in the Old Testament. Other Jewish writings identify these two names as magicians who had the power to duplicate the works of God. However, the rod of Aaron, the rod of Truth, the rod of the high priest, swallowed up their falsehoods (Exodus 7:9-12).

The book of Jasher, along with other ancient writings, states that Jannes and Jambres were in fact the sons of Balaam, the false prophet and soothsayer.

Love for the Truth will swallow up the knowledge of falsehood that leads astray.

*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11)*

Without Truth, we cannot have true faith.

## 2. Betrayal and hate for one another

The betrayal and hatred for one another have nothing to do with relationships between believers and non-believers, but rather between believers and believers. If the devil can get the church to fight each other, he has managed to change the focus of the war.

## 3. False prophets leading astray

False prophets have filled the pulpits of the modern church. A false prophet carries a false anointing, speaking Truth mixed with error. They appear inspired and Spirit-driven; their lies are cloaked in the guise of sound doctrine, and their teaching is hyper-focused on specific aspects of doctrine while totally dismissing and circumventing other portions of truth. This creates an unbalanced, blinding religion.

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (2 Peter 2:1)*

## 4. Lawlessness

Lawlessness is the removal of boundaries, restraining walls, and structure. We see lawlessness in society, but more shockingly, we see lawlessness in the church. Boundaries are moved, landmarks are pushed back, the way of holiness is defiled, and it is fashionable for God's people to do as they please rather than please God, who commands us to do.

5. People's genuine love and passion for God grow cold.

Church services these days are limited to one and a half hours, with sermons lasting no more than 20-30 minutes. Prayer services are timed, fervent prayer is discouraged, and worship is often reduced to mere entertainment. The fire of the Holy Ghost has been quenched in the church, corresponding to people's lack of passion for God. The Word of God warns us that the end-time church will be lukewarm (Rev. 3:16). Lukewarmness is the result of a little bit of hot and a little bit of cold. We are not expecting this to happen - it has already happened!

6. He that Endures to the End shall be Saved.

Endurance is the essential trait that end-times overcomers need to grasp. To endure means to remain, stay under, bear (trials), have strength, persevere, abide, accept patiently, suffer, and wait. Only those who endure will experience being redeemed from this world into the mighty eternal presence of God. Enduring is overcoming.

*He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. (Revelation 21:7)*

iii. **DEVOTION TO DECEITFUL SPIRITS**

*Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, influenced by the hypocrisy of liars, whose consciences are seared with a hot iron. (1 Timothy 4:1 - ESV)*

This is where the primary danger lies today; people **ignorantly devoting themselves to deceiving spirits and doctrines of devils** because they have been influenced by hypocrites, liars, and deceivers who speak in the Name of God but not under the anointing, authority, or power of God.

Imagine, devoting oneself to deceitful spirits and doctrines (teachings) of demons! Have you done that?

***To devote oneself means to give all or a large part of one's time or resources to a person, activity, or cause.***

To what, and to whom, are you devoted: to a church, a doctrine, a belief system, a person, a philosophy, or a particular narrative or argument? None of the above is devotion to God and His Truth. The end times will be marked by believers who have devoted themselves to falsehood, yet they declare with absolute confidence that they have discovered the Truth. Like never before, this is the season when God's people must understand what they believe, their vision, and who they serve!

*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (Ephesians 4:14-15)*

Many are easily led astray because they don't have a concise, Spirit-birthed vision and purpose.

*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3)*

### 1. Sound Doctrine Rejected

*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:3-4)*

### 2. Lovers of Self

*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers*

*of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:1-4)*

### 3. Lack of True Faith

*And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:7-8)*

### 4. The Two Evils

*Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:11-13)*

## **iv. JUDAISM IN THE CHURCH**

The Apostle Paul warned against adopting Judaism in the church, not as a blanket condemnation of Jewish people or traditions, but as a rebuke of the legalistic doctrine that salvation required obedience to the Mosaic Law or aspects of the law. This issue, centered on whether Gentile converts needed to be circumcised and observe Jewish customs, was a significant source of conflict in the early church.

As in the early times, the end-time church is now facing the same conflict. Many churches and church leaders have adopted Jewish customs as a significant part of their belief system. Circumcision, observing feasts, the rigid keeping of the Sabbath, Jewish prayer shawls worn to draw one closer to God, as well as adhering to other Jewish clothing customs and paraphernalia, are now being introduced to the church as things that please God and draw us closer to Him and enhance the New Testament believer's experience and encounters with God. However, it is doing nothing but bringing people into legalistic bondage.

(The following information on this page is excerpts drawn from various resources.)

### Modern-day relevance of Paul's warning:

Paul's arguments against legalism continue to resonate in contemporary Christianity, warning against any system that adds human effort to God's grace for salvation. Modern interpretations of "adopting Judaism" in the church might refer to several issues:

- **Adding rules for righteousness:** Any practice or tradition that elevates human-made rules to the level of biblical commands, suggesting they are necessary for holiness or favor with God, is a form of modern legalism and spiritual bondage.
- **Observing Jewish practices for salvation:** Some modern movements may advocate for Christians to observe Old Testament Jewish rituals like the Sabbath or dietary laws. While believers are free to explore these traditions, Paul's warning reminds the church that they are not necessary for salvation and can become a spiritual trap if viewed as requirements.
- **Pride and self-righteousness:** Legalism often leads to pride, where people measure their spiritual worth by how well they follow the rules and judge those who don't. Paul's warning encourages believers to focus on a heart transformed by faith, rather than external performance.
- **Distorting the Gospel:** Ultimately, Paul's core message is to preserve the "truth of the Gospel". He warns that adding to the simple gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ is a serious distortion. In Galatians 1:9, he famously says, "If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed".

*O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Galatians 3:1-5)*

If the Apostle Paul were alive today, he would have some harsh words to share with the church. There is a spirit of Judaism infiltrating the church, a spirit that

diverts the focus from the walk of faith and obedience to God's Word, and places emphasis on carnal, outward, physical Judaistic practices that have no place in a Spirit-filled New Testament church.

*Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:4-8)*

Paul warns the Galatians about the church drifting away from the grace of Christ toward another gospel. This other gospel is a distorted version of the truth, a mixture of truth and error, which renders it the most deceptive form of knowledge.

Jewish traditions, the Hebrew alphabet, and the meanings of Hebrew words are frequently used to create doctrine and patterns of belief. This is Kabbalism in practice.

The Kabbalah, which has the Zohar as its foundational text, was created in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries and is based upon mysticism and the ancient Jewish tradition of mystical interpretation of the Torah, first transmitted orally but also through using esoteric (intended only for a few to understand) methods, including ciphers - a secret or disguised way of writing; a code. The Word of God is not revealed through code; instead, it is revealed by the Spirit.

Today, many base their beliefs and doctrines on codes discovered in the Hebrew scriptures, including the Torah (the Law), the Zohar (a Mystical commentary on the Torah), and the Talmud (Rabbinic teachings and interpretations), among others. Prophetic voices in the church reference the words of Rabbis, men who do not believe in the Son of God but teach a mystical interpretation of God's Word.

I implore all teachers and prophetic voices to remain firmly grounded in the Word of God and its teachings. Do not branch out into Hebrew words, letters, interpretations, and codes. This is demonic and will lead to death.

## v. THE OCCULT IN THE CHURCH

The Greek word in the Bible related to witchcraft and the occult is [pharmakeia](#) (φαρμακεία), which literally means the "use of drugs, medicine, or spells" but is translated as "sorcery" or "witchcraft" in biblical contexts. While the modern word "pharmacy" is derived from this root, the biblical usage carries a negative connotation, referring to magical or occult practices involving drugs and poisons rather than the neutral medical use of medicine.

The “gifts of the Spirit” are often misused by spirits of witchcraft. These gifts are genuine because of their divine source. The gifts of the Spirit originate from and flow through the Spirit of God. But when they come from another source, they become deceptive, dark, destructive, divisive, and deadly.

*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. (1 Corinthians 12:7-11)*

The gifts of the Spirit are diverse and uniquely different, but the source is the same: the same Spirit, the same source.

The occult has to do with being involved with, or relating to, supernatural, mystical, or magical powers or phenomena: also, the range of ordinary knowledge or experience, and that which is mysterious.

*O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? (Galatians 3:1)*

There is nothing so foolish as allowing oneself to become bewitched. Take note, the fruit of being bewitched is to divert from obeying the Truth. To be bewitched means to fascinate by false representations, to *show* or *make known* one's thoughts, to lighten, and to show. To be bewitched is to be overcome by the spirit of witchcraft, divination, sorcery, and familiar spirits. (Deu. 18:9-14, Ephesians 5:27).

*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings... (Galatians 5:19-21)*

Witchcraft is the sixth work of the flesh! The flesh is the vehicle upon which the spirit of witchcraft enters the church; the greater the manifestation of the flesh, the greater the works of witchcraft will be manifest.

- **Witchcraft** - an oracle (a place at which divine advice or prophecy is sought).
- **Divination** - Acts 16:16, Ezk 13:4-8 - the practice of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown by supernatural means, to prophesy falsely.

Witchcraft and divination go hand in hand. The spirit of Python is associated with divination. The Hebrew word for divination is Kaw-sam. This word means ORACLE.

ORACLE means **a place** at which divine advice or prophecy was sought and **a response/message** given from the oracle.

An oracle is the place from which *a word* is sought, or in other words, it is a source. But it also means the words, or the response that comes from the place that is sought. God's most Holy Place in the tabernacle and temple was called **The Holy Oracle**. *Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle. (Psalm 28:2)* Witchcraft and divination are a false Holy Place, a false oracle.

Divination = In Greek - Πύθων / Puthōn (*poo'-thone*) - From Πυθώ Puthō (the name of the region where Delphi, the seat of the famous *oracle*, was located); a *Python*, that is, (by analogy with the supposed *diviner* there) *inspiration* (*soothsaying*): - divination

Delphi was a place in Greece where the Temple of Apollo was located. Apollo was the god of music, literature, prophecy, healing, justice, light (a sun god), and medicine (drugs). Consider the current generation and the church's current highlights, noting the connection between the Temple of Apollo and the end-time church.

The temple of Apollo had a priestess who sat on a tripod, draped in purple, giving prophetic words to seekers. She would inhale gases, transporting her into trances and hallucinations, which she then passed on to the people as prophetic guidance. This demonic spirit has entered the church through the false prophets who have filled the church.

Divination, in this context, is derived from the Greek word Poo'-thone, or python. Divination involves speaking oracles under inspiration. It is the opposite of true prophetic utterances. Prophecy is speaking under the guidance of the Spirit of God. Divination, on the other hand, is speaking errors, often mixed with truth, under the influence of the pythonic, divining, and familiar spirits.

This study will demonstrate that this spirit is prevalent in the church today, much like it was in the church of Pergamos during the era of the seven churches in Asia Minor. The Lord rebuked the Church of Pergamos as having the Seat of Satan in their midst (*Rev. 2:12-13*). The seat of Satan is his throne from which he rules. His throne is found embedded within churches in the modern era.

The natural python is neither poisonous nor venomous. They carry no sting and can seem harmless and unthreatening. However, if particular species of Python are fed enough and grow large enough, they can indeed be deadly to a human. The strength of a python is incredible. They have strong, curved teeth designed to grab their prey and hold on, coiling their long bodies around their victim and gradually cutting off their ability to breathe. The bite itself does not kill. It is the initial "grab" that leads to the kill. The python then wraps itself around the prey, gradually restricting its breath until the victim suffocates. The church has been bitten, and the python is coiling around the very existence and fabric of God's people. With every exhale, the crushing continues, and the movement of God's Spirit becomes more and more restricted. We are approaching, or perhaps have already arrived at, a place where the church is void of God's presence but filled with "customer satisfaction".

The picture of the natural python vividly illustrates this destructive spirit. The goal of this lesson is to awaken God's people and foster an awareness of this deadly force operating within the church today. May we see ourselves on the watchtower, alert, awake, and conscious of the dark forces that have, and continue to, infiltrate the church, causing spiritual death in these final days. Do not be deceived. The greatest weapon and tool of the devil in these last hours is deception itself.

- **Sorcery** - Acts 8:9 - the use of magic, delusion
- **Soothsaying** - Jos 13:22 - divination, to determine, foretell the future.
- **Familiar spirits** - Lev. 19:31 - The word *familiar* is from the Latin *familiaris*, meaning a "household servant," and is intended to express the idea that sorcerers had spirits as their servants ready to obey their commands. Those attempting to contact the dead, even to this day, usually have some spirit guide who communicates with them. These are familiar spirits.
- **Necromancer** - Lev. 19:31, 20:6, Deu 18:11 - To pursue in search for something, inquire, seek out through *worship*.
- **Wizards** - Lev. 19:31, Lev. 20:6 - A knowing one - A wizard has knowledge and insight from sources outside of the Spirit of God. Many modern-day prophets are wizards who work their "magic" by witchcraft and divination.

All of the above are interconnected. Their meanings overlap and are intertwined, indicating that the same spirit and inspiration motivate these practices. These spiritual powers are often called "the gifts of the Spirit." While they are indeed spiritual powers, they do not come from the Spirit of God. Their source is deceptive, dark, and misleading. Be cautious of secret prophecies and personal interpretations of dreams, visions, and prophetic words. Test every spirit, whether it is from God or not.

*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: (1 John 4:1-2)*

What is the foundation for trying, testing, and proving every spirit? The basis for testing the spirits is to determine if what is presented honors Jesus Christ, His

authority, Kingship, Lordship, sovereignty, and that He came from God, in the flesh, to manifest His Father.

Jude gives us a powerful warning that speaks into the church world today:

### **CAIN, BALAAM, KORAH**

*Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying (rebellion) of Core. (Jude 1:11)*

- **The way of Cain** - 1 John 3:12 - murder fueled by jealousy / false words, and actions against another to prove you are right and they are wrong.
- **Error of Balaam** - Rev. 2:14 - falsely inspired prophetic words for self-gain, profit, or promotion.
- **Rebellion of Korah** - Numbers 16 - rebelled against Moses' authority. Resistance to God ordained leadership.

The church suffers because of the Cain, Balaam, and Korah spirit that fuels rebellion and witchcraft - falsehood. Witchcraft is not mentioned in Jude; however, the spiritual roots of the occult and witchcraft are found in the spirit of Cain, Balaam, and Korah.

The spiritual roots of occult practices:

#### 1. Rebellion, gain, and control

- According to 1 Samuel 15:23 in the Bible, the sin of rebellion is equated with the sin of divination and witchcraft.
- Practitioners seek power, control, and knowledge on their own terms, bypassing God's authority. This rebellious desire is seen as aligning with Satan's original temptation to Eve: "you can be like God".
- The desire to know and control the future is at the heart of witchcraft and sorcery, driven by the desire for self-realization and power apart from God.

#### 2. Demonic power & Deceit

- The Bible explicitly describes divination as being fueled by demonic spirits. In Acts 16:16–18, a slave girl with a "spirit of divination" was able to tell fortunes until the Apostle Paul cast the demon out of her.
- In the New Testament, sorcery is often linked to the Greek word *pharmakeia*, which referred to the use of drugs for magical and ceremonial purposes in pagan religions. This practice was seen as an avenue for demonic influence. The use of certain drugs is an open portal and door into the world of demonic powers and inspiration.
- Spirits involved in witchcraft and divination are described as evil and deceitful. Satan himself is said to appear as an "angel of light" to obscure the demonic nature of these practices.

The modern church is full of witchcraft fueled by rebellion against God, His Word, His authority, and sovereignty. This is the driving spirit behind witchcraft, divination, sorcery, and familiar spirits. At the end of the day, it's all rebellion!

Falsely inspired prophetic words and teachings are choking the church of its fire, life, and breath of the Spirit of God. A false inspiration has filled the pulpits as self-proclaimed prophets, who are indeed inspired, but not by God, speak words that sound right, look right, and sound right, but are infused with death and deceit.

We have never lived in a day like today. The days of Lot and Noah were Sunday School compared to the deceit of demonic spirits roaming the earth today. Demons have infiltrated every aspect of society. However, the worst part is that this has also happened in the church. Activities, programs, music, worship, teaching, and more have been tainted with the powers of Satan, signs, lying wonders, and deceit.

*Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)*

Stand on the watchtower, be alert, try the spirits, pray, and above all STAND FIRM!

*When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence. (Deuteronomy 22:8)*

Every spiritual house needs a “battlement” (watchtower, place of defense, a lookout, and safety wall). Prepare your house!

## **The Influence of Ancient Paganism and the New Age Movement on Protestant Churches - by John Daniel**

### **Introduction**

The New Age movement is a misnomer. The principles, practices, and philosophies it promotes are far from new, tracing their roots back to ancient pagan and occult traditions. Despite this contradiction, the New Age movement has subtly permeated the cultural fabric over the decades, with its influence silently infiltrating the Protestant Church. This silent infiltration presents a significant challenge as these ancient pagan practices stand in stark contrast to biblical Christianity.

### **Ancient Practices Cloaked in Modernity**

A key way the New Age movement and its pagan origins have infiltrated Protestant churches is through the repackaging of ancient practices. One of the most pervasive examples is guided meditation. Derived from Eastern religious traditions, guided meditation and similar practices like energy manipulation often sneak into the church under the banner of "Christian mindfulness" or "prayerful yoga."

While these practices may initially seem benign or even beneficial, they have roots in pagan spirituality. They distract from the central focus of Christian practice: communion with God through prayer and contemplation of His Word. Rather than focusing on achieving an altered state of consciousness or manipulating 'spiritual energies,' Christians are called to meditate on God's law day and night (Psalm 1:2) and to be transformed by the renewal of their mind (Romans 12:2).

### **The Mirage of Pluralism and Universalism**

Ancient pagan religions were characteristically pluralistic, recognizing and worshiping multiple deities. This concept has been revived in the New Age movement's emphasis on relativism and pluralism—that all spiritual paths are equally valid and lead to the same ultimate reality. Unfortunately, this perspective has subtly crept into some Protestant churches, leading to a soft universalism that undermines the uniqueness of the Christian faith.

However, the Christian message stands in stark contrast to this belief. Christ declares, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). The dilution of this exclusive claim presents a significant risk to the church's commitment to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and the declaration of Christ as the only Savior.

### **Prosperity Gospel and Its Echoes of Ancient Cults**

The prosperity gospel, emphasizing health, wealth, and personal success, has parallels in ancient prosperity cults where blessings were sought from deities for material prosperity.

This prosperity-focused message, influenced by New Age thinking, is a far cry from the self-denying, cross-bearing call of Christ in Matthew 16:24. The Apostle Paul emphasizes that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6), a far cry from the materialistic focus of the prosperity gospel.

### **Word of Faith Movement and New Thought Philosophy**

The Word of Faith movement, which exists within some Protestant circles, has alarming parallels with New Age thought and ancient magical practices. The teaching that positive thoughts or declarations can alter reality reflects the New Age law of attraction and the use of incantations (a series of words said as a magic spell or charm) in pagan religions.

However, this belief system is not biblically sound. It shifts the source of blessings from God's sovereign grace to the supposed creative power of human words and thoughts. Such a belief undermines the biblical portrayal of God as the one who **"works all things according to the counsel of his will" (Ephesians 1:11)**.

### **Syncretism and The Danger of Compromise**

The New Age movement's subtle influence can lead to syncretism, a blending of Christian faith with elements of other religions. This blending is not a new phenomenon. The Israelites, despite their covenant relationship with Yahweh, repeatedly fell into syncretism, adopting the practices of the pagan cultures around them (Judges 2:12). Today, the New Age movement facilitates a similar trend, challenging the exclusivity and sufficiency of Christ.

The Apostle Paul warns about the dangers of spiritual compromise in his letters. In 2 Corinthians 6:14-16, he writes, "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?"

### **Emergence of the Self**

The focus on self-empowerment, self-realization, and self-divination is another key aspect of the New Age movement that has found its way into some Protestant teachings. This approach, which echoes ancient Gnostic heresies, places the individual at the center of their spiritual experience.

This is directly opposed to the Christian belief that Christ should be the center of our lives. In Galatians 2:20, Paul says, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." Christianity calls believers to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Jesus (Matthew 16:24).

### **Angel Cards: Not as Innocuous as They Seem**

Among the most prominent and seemingly innocuous New Age tools infiltrating Christian practices are Angel Cards. These are a type of oracle card that claim to offer guidance and insight by connecting individuals with supposed "angelic" messages. The process of selecting a card and interpreting its message is presented as a way to "tune in" to angelic wisdom and guidance.

It may be tempting to see this practice as a harmless, even spiritual, activity, with its emphasis on angels – beings recognized in Christian tradition. However, biblical understanding of angels significantly differs from the New Age interpretation. In the Bible, angels are messengers of God, obedient to His will and commands, serving His purposes (Psalm 103:20). They do not act independently, nor do they provide personal guidance or fortune-telling services.

The practice of seeking personal guidance or attempting to foretell the future, often associated with angel cards, runs contrary to biblical teaching. According to Deuteronomy 18:10-12, divination and fortune-telling are detestable to the Lord. Instead, Christians are encouraged to seek wisdom and guidance directly from God through prayer and the study of Scripture (James 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Thus, while Angel Cards might seem to offer spiritual insight, they fundamentally diverge from Christian principles and beliefs. The Bible reminds us to guard our hearts and minds, discerning what is true and noble, and to focus on God's word for wisdom and guidance (Proverbs 4:23, Philippians 4:8).

This growing acceptance and use of Angel Cards within Christian circles, then, is not a benign trend, but a clear manifestation of the creeping influence of New Age practices. It underscores the necessity for discernment and a robust understanding of Christian doctrines and beliefs to safeguard the integrity of the Christian faith.

## **Conclusion**

The New Age movement, with its roots in ancient paganism, presents a significant challenge to the contemporary Protestant Church. As Christians, it is imperative that we maintain a strong understanding of our faith and its foundational principles. By remaining rooted in Scripture and relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can discern and counteract the subtle influences of this movement, ensuring our faith remains undiluted and focused on Christ.

Paul's admonition to the Colossians is apt for us today: "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8). In a world where the boundaries between biblical Christianity and popular spirituality can blur, we are called to hold steadfast to the truth of the Gospel and maintain our commitment to Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. How has the historical context of ancient pagan practices, as well as their New Age reinterpretations, influenced some practices seen in Protestant churches today? Can you identify any specific examples?
2. In what ways might the incorporation of New Age practices into Christian worship conflict with core Christian beliefs and values? How can this be addressed in a respectful and constructive manner within the church community?
3. Considering the origins and purposes of practices such as mindfulness and angel card reading, how might Christians navigate the balance between societal trends and faithfulness to biblical teachings?