

Delivered from the Dangerous World of Cults, Sects, Secret Societies and Esoteric groups

When we deal with deliverance, we have to remember that many times the greatest battle is the battle over the mind. And many people today across the world are stuck in all kinds of forms of slavery, among them being slaves to some or other form of the cult, or a sect, or a secret society or false worship. They are stuck and enslaved because of indoctrination, brain washing and manipulation.

All across the world for thousands of years, sects and cults have made their appearance, some have stayed like Freemasonry and many have fallen away at the demise of the “leader”. But all these secret societies and cults with its god-like “Messiahs” have come into existence because of the prompting and the work of the seducing nature of demons that deceive. After all, the purpose of the demons is to lead people away from the truth of God and to lead them to down a path of so-called mystery, power and self-gratification.

Again, according to John 8, the Truth of God sets us free, and we are also called as children of the Lord to set the captives free from such demonic slavery by preaching the truth. After all, it is only the Truth of God that can help to set people free from indoctrinations and spiritual enslavement.

While the occult is picking up steam, without a doubt the devil has been using the platform of the sect, the cult and other devious ‘religious’ organisations to enslave and to lead people further away from God. And this is not a minor problem – judging by the number of cults, sects and secret societies and its levels of destruction, the Church should take note and be prepared to keep preaching the Truth so that the captive may be set free.

The myriads of cults, sects, secret societies and religious groups {like Mormonism, Church of Scientology} is a testimony of the devil’s work as he deceives and leads people astray to abandon worshipping God to worship demons. People have become ensnared and entrapped in their own reality, forged by demons themselves, and the more people become deceived, the greater their disillusionment, confusion and ultimate defeat.

The end game of the occult – be it Satanism, Paganism or Witchcraft - is to introduce people to the realm of Satan and his demonic works.

These days, people think it is fine and ok to play around with tarot cards, to go to a fortune teller, and so on. It is not. Again, it acts like a spiritual signature, and it places a spotlight on that person. Before they know it, they have been drawn deeper into the occult. Playing with the Ouija board is not a game. It is a portal for the demonic and a potential open doorway.

The spiritual realm is not be toyed with - there are very serious repercussions if someone thinks it is ok to hold a séance. Before you know it, you are a target of the devil before you have showed interest in his kingdom. How we need to keep our eyes upon the Lord, upon His ways and His True, lest we fall into darkness and spiritual corruption

There are many forms of false worship, be in secret societies (Freemasonry), false religions (Islam), occult groups (Satanism, paganism), esoteric groups (Numerology), esoteric groups that teach the occult (Kabbalah) and also cults and sects. Remember, the purpose of demons is to lead people to a false Messiah – thus, a false light and a false light as what we see with so many cults and sects.

We have seen and still see the rise of many such false Messiahs who lead cult groups, sects and secret societies. But the devil only comes to steal, kill and to destroy (John 10:10). It is no wonder the demise or the operation of such a cult or sect speaks of self-destruction, hopelessness and defeat. It is through these secret societies and cults and secret organisation that the devil ultimately works, causing vast corruption of the spirit, extreme bondage to the occult and eventual slavery in spirit and soul.

We have to remember when it comes to false worship, you get the groups that teach outright knowledge on the occult, then you get the groups who are esoteric and then you get the groups that are esoteric by nature yet teach the occult (for example Kabbalah). In the end, anything that leads someone away from God is dangerous and lethal.

Esotericism (or esoterism) signifies the holding of esoteric opinions or beliefs, that is, ideas preserved or understood by a small group of those specially initiated, or of rare or unusual interest. The term can also refer to the academic study of esoteric religious movements and philosophies, or to the study of those religious movements and philosophies whose proponents distinguish their beliefs, practices, and experiences from mainstream exoteric and more dogmatic institutionalised traditions.

Therefore you can say that that the term *occult* signifies those beliefs and practices which involve evoking (i.e. conjuring) the power or assistance of the unknown (or the unknowable) while the term *esoteric* refers to knowledge or beliefs which are hidden, or which are understandable only by those initiated in their meaning. Synonyms for *esoteric* include the words *arcane* and *mystic*.

Examples of esoteric religious movements and philosophies include Alchemy, Astrology, Anthroposophy, early Christian Mysticism, Freemasonry, Gnosticism, Kabbalah, Neoplatonism, Magic, Merkabah mysticism, Mesmerism [Hypnotism], Rosicrucianism, Taoism, Numerology, Swedenborgianism (The New Church Movement), Scientology, Spiritualism, the Theosophy of Jacob Böhme and his followers, and the Theosophical revivalist movement associated with Helena Blavatsky.

To give an example of how dangerous these Esoteric movements are (considering how they enslave so many), consider the New Church (or Swedenborgianism), which is the name for several historically related Christian denominations that developed as a new religious movement, informed by the writings of scientist and Swedish Lutheran theologian Emanuel Swedenborg.

Swedenborg claimed to have received a new revelation from Jesus Christ through continuous heavenly visions which he experienced over a period of at least twenty-five years. In his writings, he predicted that God would replace the traditional Christian Church, establishing a "New Church", which would worship God in one person: Jesus Christ. The movement was founded on the belief that God explained the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures to Swedenborg as a means of revealing the truth of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. He denied the Trinity and deity of the Holy Spirit. He also said all religions lead to God, though all are not equally enlightened. One of its goals is to bring the world together under a new religious understanding. It teaches a need for Christianity to undergo a rebirth — according to Swedenborgian interpretations. He also maintained there is no personal devil.

What we find here is nothing new – such erroneous doctrines have been around for a long time. Red flags should be raised when someone claims a personal divine message from Christ regarding the Gospel. But again, this is another example of indoctrination and brain washing, leading people further away from our Lord Jesus. Take note, this dangerous mystical non-Christian religion promoted the Oneness of Jesus, which has taken the Church by storm of late. This theology denies the Trinity, with this movement picking up steam of late.

The ramblings of Swedenborg remind us also of Mormonism, which is the predominant religious tradition of the Latter Day Saint movement of Restorationist Christianity. This movement was founded by Joseph Smith, Jr in the 1820s.

Joseph Smith claimed the Book of Mormon was translated from writing on golden plates in a reformed Egyptian language, translated with the assistance of the Urim and Thummim and seer stones. He said an angel first showed him the location of the plates in 1823, buried in a nearby hill, but he was not allowed to take the plates until 1827. Smith began dictating the text of The Book of Mormon "by the gift and power of God". After the translation was completed, Smith said the plates were returned to the angel.

As with Swedenborg, Joseph Smith had a supposed direct revelation from God, having been visited by an angel. Another man who supposedly had a direct revelation from God was the American cult leader of the Branch Davidians sect, believing himself to be its final prophet. Koresh prophesized about the Second Coming of Christ as well as the imminent end of the world. Authorities said he successfully converted more than 100 people and convinced them to live in his secluded compound near Waco after preaching his teachings throughout the US, Israel, Australia and Great Britain. Koresh died in the Waco compound along with 74 other "followers" following a 51-day standoff with the FBI.

And so we need to remind ourselves that the devil himself poses as the angel of light, and he was surely the one behind the supposed divine revelations of men like Koresh, Swedenborg and Smith. After all, their beliefs and

doctrines and religious movements have led to the deception of many. The Branch Davidians sect is but one of many throughout the world that has led to disaster, self-destruction and great deception.

Speaking of the devil pretending to be angel of light, he is the driving force behind a secret society called Freemasonry which goes by many names, including the Scottish Rite, Masonry, Blue Lodge, Eastern Star (for women), and Shriners. Most people, even many Masons, incorrectly believe that Masonry is merely a fraternal order. Masonry expressly denies it is a religion. Nothing could be further from the truth. Freemasonry is a non-Christian occult religion that teaches a different way to salvation and considers Jesus, Buddha, Confucius, and all spiritual leaders to be only messengers of "The Grand Architect of the Universe". It is therefore both esoteric and occult. The Grand Architect of Freemasonry is not just another term for Jehovah. Freemasonry teaches that there are two basic gods: Adonay, the god of the Christians (a god of evil) and Lucifer, a separate god of good. Freemasonry considers the religious scriptures of all religions to be equally valid.

Masonry has at least 33 degrees (the lowest is level 1). At each level, a person is given more details, more Masonic 'truth'. Most Masons never get beyond the first few levels. The higher levels expressly teach that candidates at the lower levels should not be taught the truth but should be given the impression that they are being taught the truth. For instance, the "Lucifer is good and Adonay is evil" is taught at the 30th through 32nd level. At the highest levels, Masons take a blood oath to keep each other's' secrets including murder and treason

It is reckoned that Freemasonry has its roots way back in the days of Babylon, and was influenced by other occult movements such as Kabbalah (an esoteric method, discipline, and school of thought that originated in Judaism) and Gnosticism. It is also reckoned that the Freemasonry and thus the modern-day Illuminati flowed directly out of the Knights Templar. Even though Freemasonry and the Knights Templar continues to be shrouded in mystery, there is the notion that occult teachings have been handed down from generation to generation ever since the days of Babylon, kept alive in the Western world by the secret societies, which are little more than a continuation of ancient occult priesthoods.

As an example of how esoteric teachings and the occult takes hands, consider Kabalism which was a unique version of the ancient mysteries specifically designed to deceive God's chosen people. Unlike the other mysteries, its teachings dealt specifically with Israel, offering occult counter-explanations to the revelations of the prophets, complete with a cleverly disguised occult interpretation of the history of Israel. Moses, for example, rather than being the righteous prophet of God who led the Israelites out of Egypt, was made out to be an occult figure whose purpose was to initiate the Israelites into the enlightened and more advanced teachings of Egypt.

It is reckoned by some that the Kabala is the keystone of all Western occult thought and practice today, and is the cornerstone of belief for all Illumined Ones [Masters of the Illuminati] throughout the world. Whether an occultist is White Magic or Black Magick, their cornerstone of belief and thought is the Kabala. It is also reckoned when the Antichrist arises, he shall be basing his practice of the occult on the Jewish Kabala.

The Kabala began among Jewish priests who were corrupted by the Babylonian mysteries while they were serving in Babylon during the 70-year Babylonian Captivity decreed by God as punishment for Israel's repeated sins. According to reports, during this time of captivity, apostate Jewish priests became infatuated with the Babylonian mysteries, and began a process of converting the key beliefs into Judaism. When fully developed, this Oral Tradition "mystically re-interpreted" the Jewish Pentateuch [Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy]. This mystical re-interpretation was nothing more, nor less, than Satan's work in twisting the entire meaning and purpose of God's original Word in these five books. However, this mystical re-interpretation was Oral Teaching, or Oral Tradition, as Satanic teaching usually is, since they do not want any written literature to fall into the hands of the wrong people.

Kabala remains a complex body of mystical teachings of rabbinical origin, often based on an esoteric interpretation of the Hebrew Scripture or the secret doctrine resembling these teachings. Study of the Kabala is considered an esoteric practice and is closely associated with the mystic system of numerology known as Gematria.

The teachings of Kabbalah are very much found in Freemasonry, such as its substitution of Jesus for a spurious fantasy figure called Hiram Abiff. Instead of using Christ as its model of truth, fidelity and salvation it transfers its loyalty to this phantom figure Hiram. The name Hiram Abiff is not found in Scripture. Yet, the Masonic account of Hiram is often said to be based upon the Holy Bible. In the Master Mason degree, in that portion of the ritual known as the Legend of the Third Degree, there are three central characters. The story line is set around the building of Solomon's temple. The characters are King Solomon, Hiram the King of Tyre and Hiram Abiff are all taken from the Scriptural account of the temple building.

While Kabalism could be viewed as the occult counter-explanation of the Old Testament, Gnosticism, existing as a further development of Kabalism and taking into account Satan's "new problem" posed by the risen Christ, would serve as the main occult counterattack against the New Testament. Gnosticism is seen as the most effective and widely accepted form of pantheism and is considered as being more deceptive and clever than the others. It developed the occult's only major counter explanation to the teachings and of Christ Himself.

Kabalism and Gnosticism combined, composed a type of occult parallel to the Old and New Testaments. Gnosticism, although originally composed of Jewish occultists, rapidly gained Gentile followers until it soon became

predominantly Gentile. As the priesthoods were forced to take on new forms, Gnosticism became a magnet for these occult adepts. Branches of Gnosticism represented the first significant secret societies of the post-resurrection era with various degrees or levels of initiation and the inner circle of initiates worshipping Lucifer.

There are, however, many other forms of esoteric teachings and groups that also deal with the occult. All such forms of cults, sects and esoteric group in the end lead people astray, teaching a different truth and therefore a false worship.

Consider the following such forms of false worship:

Astrology – The study of the positions and aspects of celestial bodies in the belief that they have an influence on the course of natural earthly occurrences and human affairs. Astrology is often used as a form of Divination that consists of interpreting the influence of stars and planets on present and future earthly affairs and human destinies. In ancient times it was inseparable from astronomy.

Alchemy is an art of ancient origins, often interpreted as an enquiry into man's relationship with the cosmos and the will of the Creator, manifested as either a devotional philosophy transforming sinful man into perfect being ('esoteric'), or attempted transmutation of base metals into gold or silver ('exoteric'). The catalyst required was the elixir of life, tincture, or philosophers' stone, the search for which long obsessed men of all rank. Alchemy is considered the basis for the modern science of chemistry, however the more esoteric (symbolic or metaphoric) aspects are still found in regular practice. Alchemy is here considered an esoteric practice.

Think also of the Hermetic Order of The Golden Dawn, which was a magical order of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, practicing a form of spiritual development. It was possibly the single greatest influence on twentieth century western occultism. Concepts of magic and ritual that became core elements of many other traditions, including Wicca, Thelema, and other forms of magical spirituality popular today, are drawn from the Golden Dawn tradition.

Cults

One needs to remember there is a great difference between cults and the occult. The term *cult* refers to a group of people polarized around one individual who is often a magnetic personality. This individual has his or her own understanding of truth, who God is, man's relationship to God, the existence of heaven and hell, as well as a number of other issues of faith. In most cases such individuals incorporate some degree of biblical truth into their teachings in order to gain a certain amount of credibility and in order to deceive the unwary.

Think about The Church of Bible Understanding, The Manson Family, Aum Shinrikyo, Restoration of the 10 Commandments, Order of the Solar Temple, Branch Davidians and Heaven's Gate.

Some of the cults that don't seem so "dangerous" are for example Mormonism and Scientology. The Church of Scientology is a cult created by L Ron Hubbard (Elron) in 1952 as an outgrowth of his earlier self-help system called Dianetics. Scientology and the organisations that promote it have remained highly controversial since their inception. Scientology teaches that people are immortal spiritual beings who have forgotten their true nature.

As with Freemasonry, members of Scientology advance in degrees of knowledge, and with each level are exposed to greater "truths" and thus greater self-empowerment. Clearly, Scientology is a lie and a deception from the devil. It is designed to brain wash people and it is designed for self-enrichment. One of the major tenets of Scientology is that a human is an immortal alien spiritual being, termed A THETHAN that is presently trapped on planet Earth in a physical "meat body." Hubbard described these thetans in "The Space Opera" cosmogony. The thetan has had innumerable past lives and it is accepted in Scientology that lives preceding the thetan's arrival on Earth lived in extraterrestrial cultures. Descriptions of space opera incidents are seen as true events by Scientologists.

Cult educational organisations have compiled lists of more than 2,000 groups about which they have received inquiries. Although the majority are small, some cults have tens of thousands of members. Several research studies lend support to informal estimates that five to ten million.

A **sect** is a subgroup of a religious, political or philosophical belief system, usually an offshoot of a larger religious group. Although in past it was mostly used to refer to religious groups, it has since expanded and in modern culture can refer to any organization that breaks away from a larger one to follow a different set of rules and principles

Here is a scary thought – Jesus is the Truth and there is no other Truth except the Truth of the Lord. However, denominations have existed because of disagreements over the interpretation of Scripture and because of self-interest. In reality, denominations are but a sign many times that many of the Churches are not in agreement with the Lord, since there is only the one true Church [Bride] on earth. The problem is, we have allowed ourselves as the Church to settle for the idea that we need to walk only in partial truth, but this is heresy. Therefore, by definition, every denomination that does not walk in the complete truth of the Lord is a sect.

Even worse, when looking at how a cult is formed, whenever a church is run by a spiritual leader who sees himself as a demi-god, or as a Messiah of the people, thereby calling the shots and ruling the roost, then in fact, many churches are functioning more like a cult. Then manipulation is evident, therefore witchcraft is evident.

Janja Lalich and Michael Langone compiled characteristics associated with cults:

Concerted efforts at influence and control lie at the core of cultic groups, programs, and relationships. Many members, former members, and supporters of cults are not fully aware of the extent to which members may have been manipulated, exploited, even abused.

1) The group displays excessively zealous and unquestioning commitment to its leader and (whether he is alive or dead) regards his belief system, ideology, and practices as the Truth, as law.

2) Questioning, doubt, and dissent are discouraged or even punished.

3) Mind-altering practices (such as meditation, chanting, denunciation sessions, and debilitating work routines) are used in excess and serve to suppress doubts about the group and its leader(s).

4) The leadership dictates, sometimes in great detail, how members should think, act, and feel (for example, members must get permission to date, change jobs, marry—or leaders prescribe what types of clothes to wear, where to live, whether or not to have children, how to discipline children)

5) The group is elitist, claiming a special, exalted status for itself, its leader(s) and members (for example, the leader is considered the Messiah, a special being, an avatar—or the group and/or the leader is on a special mission to save humanity).

6) The group has a polarized us-versus-them mentality, which may cause conflict with the wider society

7) The leader is not accountable to any authorities

8) The group teaches or implies that its supposedly exalted ends justify whatever means it deems necessary. This may result in members' participating in behaviours or activities they would have considered reprehensible or unethical before joining the group (for example, lying to family or friends, or collecting money for bogus charities).

9) The leadership induces feelings of shame and/or guilt in order to influence and/or control members. Often, this is done through peer pressure and subtle forms of persuasion

10) Subservience to the leader or group requires members to cut ties with family and friends, and radically alter the personal goals and activities they had before joining the group.

11) Members are encouraged or required to live and/or socialize only with other group members.

12) *The most loyal members (the “true believers”) feel there can be no life outside the context of the group. They believe there is no other way to be, and often fear reprisals to themselves or others if they leave the group*

Display Charismatic Leadership

Cult leaders will state they possess special knowledge and skills, building a tight-knit team of leaders around them to promote their omnipotence and enforce unquestioning obedience from disciples. Outwardly though, they demonstrate impeccable integrity and charm, and are consistently precise and congruent in their delivery.

Promote Exclusivity

Cult leaders maintain as much vagueness about their activities and beliefs, promoting secrecy at all costs to avoid scrutiny. They will regularly tell each follower in turn that they are special and due a promotion, causing lack of intimacy and boundary issues amongst their disciples

Sensory Overload Promoting Oneness

To keep new disciples in the cult, leaders need to replace all of their existing set of values with new doctrine, goals and definitions. This is generally done forcibly, by aggressively encouraging the disciple to attend regular learning courses and exclusively associating with well-indoctrinated cult members. Speed is also of the essence, to minimise opportunity to examine this new information critically

Here are the typical traits of the pathological cult LEADER (from Narcissist Among Us) – compiled by Joe Navarro (FBI):

- * Has a grandiose idea of who he is and what he can achieve.
- * Is preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, or brilliance.
- * Demands blind unquestioned obedience.
- * Requires excessive admiration from followers and outsiders.
- * Is exploitative of others by asking for their money or that of relatives putting others at financial risk.
- * Has an exaggerated sense of power (entitlement) that allows him to bend rules and break laws.
- * Publicly devalues others as being inferior, incapable, or not worthy.
- * Has ignored the needs of others, including: biological, physical, emotional, and financial needs.
- * Is frequently boastful of accomplishments.
- * Needs to be the centre of attention

* Is arrogant and haughty in his behaviour or attitude.

Having studied at length the life, teachings, and behaviours of Jim Jones (Jonestown Guyana), David Koresh (Branch Davidians), Stewart Trull (The Church of Bible Understanding), Charles Manson, Shoko Asahara (Aum Shinrikyo), Joseph Di Mambro (The Order of the Solar Temple aka Ordre du Temple Solaire), Marshall Heff Applewhit (Heaven's Gate), Bhagwan Rajneesh (Rajneesh Movement), and Warren Jeffs (polygamist leader), what stands out about these individuals is for *Joe Navarro* that they were or are all pathologically narcissistic.

Judging by these characteristics, one should therefore be greatly alert and weary of such leaders who many times appear to be wolves in sheep clothing. Such leaders will only lead one down a path of self-destruction. After all, they all therefore have or had an over-abundant belief that they were special, that they and they alone had the answers to problems, and that they had to be revered. They demanded perfect loyalty from followers, they overvalued themselves and devalued those around them, they were intolerant of criticism (today a lot of spiritual leaders refuse prophetic correction), and above all they did not like being questioned or challenged. And yet, in spite of these less than charming traits, they had no trouble attracting those who were willing to overlook these features.

Today, even in churches, you find the reality of the messiah complex (also known as the Christ complex or savior complex), which is a state of mind in which an individual holds a belief that they are, or are destined to become, a savior. No spiritual leader is ever the saviour of the people – only God. We are only called to lead others to the Lord, who is our and the only true Saviour of the world.

False messiahs are one of the signs Jesus warned about:

- "And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray" (Matthew 24:11);
- "For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect." (Matthew 24:14);
- "For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many." (Matthew 24:5)

Examples of such men who suffered from a Messianic Complex, thus believing they were the true light, include Jim Jones, David Koresh and Inri Cristo to name a few. Cristo for example is a Brazilian philosopher and educator who claims to be Jesus Christ reincarnated. He is well known for his many appearances in the media of Brazil and other countries as well.

Then you get Sergey Anatolyevitch Torop, known by his followers as Vissarion who is a Russian mystic. He founded and heads a religious movement known as the *Church of the Last Testament* with its head church

in the Siberian. Vissarion claims to be a reincarnation of Jesus. There is also a man in Australia named Alan John Miller, who says he is THE Christ.

All across the world for thousands of years, sects and cults have made their appearance – some have stayed like Freemasonry and many have fallen away at the demise of the “leader”. But all these secret societies and cults with its god-like “Messiahs” have come into existence because of the prompting and the work of the seducing nature of demons that deceive. After all, the purpose of the demons is to lead people away from the truth of God and to lead them to down a path of so-called mystery, power and self-gratification. The purpose of demons is to lead people to a false Messiah – thus, a false light and a false light as what we see with so many cults and sects.

Jesus said in *Matthew 24:23-25*: ²³ *At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. ²⁴ For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ See, I have told you ahead of time.*

It should be noted as a point of interest, how many of these cult/sect/esoteric movement leaders often seen themselves as prophets, thus special messengers. The devil has done this on purpose to discredit the true prophetic, and the devil also knows that people are intrigued and fascinated by the prophetic. And so as soon as some or other so-called spiritual guru claims himself to be a prophet, then immediately there is some or other kind of allure, and so man is tricked and is deceived by the devil.

Again, the devil uses the prophetic for a specific purpose, because of the allure and fascination it holds. And so many will stream towards this “prophets”, who claim to be special messengers or have extra knowledge of the spiritual or the divine. Again, many of the cults or esoteric movements are led by prophets, who ultimately lead people away from the Truth of God.

Take note of Deuteronomy 13 (NKJV): Punishment of Apostates: *13 “If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods’—which you have not known—‘and let us serve them,’ 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk[a] after the Lord your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall [b]put away the evil from your midst.*

It is therefore clear in this case that if any prophet leads someone away from God, or the Truth of God, or the Kingdom of God, in any way, shape or form, then they are false. Peter warns in *2 Peter 2: But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you ...*

Indeed, many of these deceptive, dangerous and demonic movements are certainly not led by the prophet of God, for they proclaim, declare and teach knowledge that is contrary to who God is, His Word and His Kingdom. Yet, because of their charismatic nature, they will lead so many people astray and cause them to stumble in their ways.

Sadly, we have seen and still see the rise of many such false Messiahs who lead cult groups, sects and secret societies. And as I mentioned, many come in the form of the prophet. But the devil only comes to steal, kill and to destroy. It is no wonder the demise or the operation of such a cult or sect speaks of self-destruction, hopelessness and defeat. It is through these secret societies and cults and secret organisation that the devil ultimately works, causing vast corruption of the spirit, extreme bondage to the occult and eventual slavery in spirit and soul.

Jesus is the only and true Messiah and Shepherd as He says in John 10. He knew that for hundreds of years, people are going to come with their Messiah Complex to lead people away and to pretend to be the true Light. Jesus is the only true Light.

Sadly, you find in many churches that pastors and spiritual leaders also have this inflated ego, considered more to be the godlike syndrome, but there are those who ultimately think they are the Messiah to their people. Let us always remember Jesus is the head of the Church, and there is no one else who can take His place.

John 10: I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, he who does not enter by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way (elsewhere, from some other quarter) is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The watchman opens the door for this man, and the sheep listen to his voice and heed it; and he calls his own sheep by name and brings (leads) them out. ⁴ When he has brought his own sheep outside, he walks on before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will never [on any account] follow a stranger, but will run away from him because they do not know the voice of strangers or recognize their call. ⁶ Jesus used this parable (illustration) with them, but they did not understand what He was talking about. ⁷ So Jesus said again, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, that I Myself am the Door for the sheep. ⁸ All others who came [as such] before Me are thieves and robbers, but the [true] sheep did not listen to and obey them. ⁹ I am the Door; anyone who enters in through Me will be saved (will live). He will come in and he will go out [freely], and will find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows). ¹¹ I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd risks and lays

down His [own] life for the sheep. ¹² But the hired servant (he who merely serves for wages) who is neither the shepherd nor the owner of the sheep, when he sees the wolf coming, deserts the flock and runs away. And the wolf chases and snatches them and scatters [the flock]. ¹³ Now the hireling flees because he merely serves for wages and is not himself concerned about the sheep [cares nothing for them]. ¹⁴ I am the Good Shepherd; and I know and recognize My own, and My own know and recognize Me - ¹⁵ Even as [truly as] the Father knows Me and I also know the Father—and I am giving My [very own] life and laying it down on behalf of the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep [beside these] that are not of this fold. I must bring and impel those also; and they will listen to My voice and heed My call, and so there will be [they will become] one flock under one Shepherd. ¹⁷ For this [reason] the Father loves Me, because I lay down My [own] life—to take it back again. ¹⁸ No one takes it away from Me. On the contrary, I lay it down voluntarily. [I put it from Myself.] I am authorized and have power to lay it down (to resign it) and I am authorized and have power to take it back again. These are the instructions (orders) which I have received [as My charge] from My Father.

New Age and the Cosmic Christ

In 1901, Herman Bavinck, a Christian theologian foresaw the raging spiritual warfare of our own time.

According to him, it is being temporally being fought between the defenders of supernatural Christian theism and the Genesis account of creation ex nihilo and the promoters of ancient mystical pantheism, evolution and the Big Lie—all who are of one mind with the devil, the father of heresy and monism: “Unless we are mistaken...the twentieth century...is to witness a gigantic conflict of spirits...More serious and fiercer than ever before, the conflict is between the old and the new worldview.”

We are seeing such a battle taking place between those who are standing on the Scriptures, labelled at times as fundamentalists, and those who have adopted the New Age movement, neo-paganism and other so-called enlightened cults.

In Genesis 3 we read the story of the fall of mankind into the curse of sin: *3 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’” 4 Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

Genesis 3 gives us an accurate picture of Satan’s strategy ever since the days of Adam and Eve. And still today, it serves as the premise of all ungodly religions and teachings. He tempted Adam and Eve to believe they can be like God and that they will not die. And this belief system has been gobbled up by the New Age Movement, which basically advocates that there

is no death {as promised by the devil}, and that man is ultimately his own god {again, the devil's lie}.

We see this promise of no death promulgated by the New Age Movement through teachings such as reincarnation, and the rebirth or the awakening of the spiritual consciousness to a higher plateau of existence.

Indeed, for the last 6000 years, Satan has been hard at work to exalt man in his own eyes, and at the same time, to reduce the divinity of God to a state of no longer being the Creator of all but being part of Creation's natural evolution (pantheism). Just as dangerous as pantheism is Deism - this is the knowledge of God based on the application of reason on the designs/laws found throughout Nature. Deism is therefore a natural religion and is not a "revealed" religion.

The Church needs to be aware of the New Age Movement, along with a myriad of other esoteric teachings like the Cosmic Christ awakening. All of these false beliefs are intended to ultimately lead man astray and down a path of spiritual self-destruction.

New Age can be seen as an umbrella term used to describe an organisation of diverse groups that share an enthusiasm for the creation of a new era (or "New Age") exemplified by harmony and enlightenment. It is difficult to define because there is no hierarchy, dogma, doctrine, collection plate, or membership. It is a collection, an assortment of different theologies with the common threads of toleration and divergence weaving through its tapestry of "universal truth."

The New Thought Movement, Spiritualism, and the Theosophical Society first introduced New Age beliefs and practices to America in the 1800s. These ideologies gained popularity during the counterculture of the mid-sixties and early seventies -Hippie Age/Flower Power.

The New Age Movement grew in popularity during the 1970s and 1980s through the teachings of David Spangler and other metaphysical religious groups, but it has existed in various forms since the 2nd century CE.

Beginning with Gnosticism, New Age ideas have continued through a variety of groups including Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry, and the teachings of Helena Blavatsky. New Age ideas have many different origins from a variety of places, but most of them can be traced to Eastern religious traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and other ancient religious traditions.

Gnosticism - derived from the Greek word gnosis meaning "to know" - is the belief that the material world created by the demiurge should be shunned and the spiritual world should be embraced (God's world). The demiurge is a concept from the Platonic, Neopythagorean, Middle Platonic, and Neoplatonic schools of philosophy for an artisan-like figure responsible for the fashioning and maintenance of the physical universe. Gnostic ideas influenced many ancient religions which teach that gnosis (variously interpreted as knowledge, enlightenment, salvation, emancipation or

'oneness with God') may be reached by practicing philanthropy to the point of personal poverty, sexual abstinence (as far as possible for hearers, total for initiates) and diligently searching for wisdom by helping others.

In other words, Gnosticism claimed that salvation could be gained through secret knowledge. Since the Gnostics believed that the material world (matter) is evil and that only the spirit is good, they thus constructed an evil God and beings of the Old Testament to explain the creation of the world (matter), and considered Jesus Christ a wholly spiritual God. These two beliefs clash strongly with accepted Christian doctrine. Christianity teaches that salvation is available to everyone, not just a special few, and that it comes from grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9), and not from study or works. Gnostics were divided on Jesus. One view held that he only appeared to have human form but that he was actually spirit only. The other view contended that his divine spirit came upon his human body at baptism and departed before the crucifixion. Christianity, on the other hand, holds that Jesus was fully man and fully God and that his human and divine natures were both present and necessary to provide a suitable sacrifice for humanity's sin.

Even though there are no clear boundaries within the New Age community, several common themes unify the movement.

The first is that the arrival of the New Age will initiate a heightened spiritual consciousness accompanied by social and personal transformation as demonstrated by the eradication of hunger, sickness, poverty, racism, sexism, and war. There is a belief that the universe is evolving, thus our world is about to undergo a transformation to a higher level. This change will be brought about by a shift in human consciousness toward New Age paradigms.

This Evolutionary Godhood speaks of the next step in evolution. It will not be physical, but spiritual according to the New Age Movement. For the most part, New Agers espouse evolution, both of body and spirit. They say man is developing and will soon leap forward into new spiritual horizons.

When we think of this transformation, we think of terms such as the Age of Aquarius. This "Aquarian Age" is supposed to bring in peace and enlightenment and reunite man with God. Man is presently considered separated from God not because of sin but because of lack of understanding and knowledge concerning the true nature of God and reality.

The second unifying theme is that individuals can get a foretaste of this enlightenment through personal spiritual transformation, healing, and growth.

There is also a belief in the Pantheism-God (god/goddess) which is All and All is God (god/goddess); Monism (All is One); good and evil do not exist, therefore, there are no absolutes in morality; and that there needs to be a separation of the historical person of Jesus from the Christ Spirit.

Pantheism basically says that everything is God and God is everything. Everything that exists is God. Since everything is God we are thus also God. While New Agers sometimes talk about God in personal terms, most understand God as ultimately impersonal. God is often referred to as a force or energy. When (the impersonal) All is God, the personal God of the Bible cannot exist.

This belief is part of the New Age Movement's hope for Global Unity which consists of three major divisions: Man with Man; Man with Nature; and Man with God.

Pantheism of course goes directly against the Biblical view of creation: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"(Gen. 1:1, NIV). New Agers believe that God emanated itself into what we now know as the universe. This means that everything in the universe is god. New Agers treasure the teachings of pantheism because it means that they also are gods/goddesses.

The Bible teaches that while humanity was created in the image of God, mankind is not and never will be God. Isaiah 43:10 (NIV) says, "'You are my witnesses,' declares the Lord, 'and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after Me.'"

Monism speaks about everything that exists is One. All distinctions (including your sense of being distinct from everyone and everything else) are really illusions. The belief that All is One is closely related to the New Age tenet that everything is God.

One of the great strategies of the devil is get people to believe that they can be divine and thus our sensation of existing as finite creatures is an illusion. The New Age Movement, which includes Cosmic Christ, is to get people to become enlightened about their true divinity in order to experientially become one with the All. This is why there are the teachings on exercises intended to transform consciousness to attain enlightenment, which includes techniques such as yoga, meditation, past-life regression, soul travel, and channelling spiritual guides.

Thus, many New Age practices are designed to push one ahead into that horizon. Some of them are astral projection which is training your soul to leave your body and travel around; contacting spirits so they may speak through you or guide you; using crystals to purify your body's and mind's energy systems; visualization where you use mental imagery to imagine yourself as an animal, in the presence of a divine being, or being healed of sickness.

And then of course, if we are supposedly all divine, then we are all right, which introduces moral relativism. Since all is One there is no difference between good and evil, right or wrong. Thus, no evil, and therefore, no need for a Saviour, and so Jesus is taken out of the equation. With the New Age

Movement, man is central and not God. He is viewed as divine, as co-creator, as the hope for future peace and harmony.

Isaiah 5:8-9 says: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." The truth is, Man is not God, and God is not man.*

This idea that man basic nature is good and divine opposes God's Word which says in Romans 5:12: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" and also Ephesians 2:3: "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath"

And then we get to the idea that Jesus is not the only Christ. Jesus is seen as only one of several great teachers who obtained the Christ Spirit (self-actualization of one's deity). In the New Age Movement, Jesus is one of a number of spirit guides who will teach people about this great spiritual discovery and reawakening. The New Age gospel calls not for faith in Jesus Christ, but rather for a shift in consciousness. Evolutionary Godhood means that mankind will soon see itself as god, as the "Christ principle."

New Age groups are often but not always distinguished by their occult practices of psychic readings, Tarot cards, yoga, meditation strategies, and astrology. Many New Age groups also believe in various natural healing practices and traditional medicines including acupuncture, herbal therapy, natural foods, and spiritual healing. Even though there is no standard doctrine within the New Age Movement, many of their teachings focus on individual autonomy, relativism, and spiritualism.

In other word, the New Age Movement can be described as a Westernized form of Eastern religions' beliefs combined with occult practices, self-help, holistic medicines, and forms of astrology.

The New Age movement is certainly not new, but remains the culmination of pantheist mysticism and cosmic evolutionism throughout history. It denies the biblical Christian faith and its sovereign, personal, transcendent God. Instead, it is monistic, seeing the world as all there is, and as equal to divinity ("God).

It uses religious as well as non-religious language to "transform men's consciousness" and put them "in touch with their Higher Selves." It puts no difference between man and other creatures. It believes in the eternal existence of the world within a cyclical history, in reincarnation, and in guidance by "Spirits" or "forces." It sees "good" and "evil" as relative or as the light and dark side of one and the same divinity/force/world.

And with this drive for global unity, New Ageism strongly backs a one-world government.

Considering all of the above, we need to remain discerning, alert, sober and awake. The Apostle Paul summed it up best in Ephesians 5: Walk in Light: 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather [c]expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are [d]exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14 Therefore He says: 'Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.'

Yes, let us wake up to the great deceptions of our time, and let us seek the Lord, seek His Truth and follow Him above all else. No man is our saviour, god or hope, only Jesus! Lastly, let us remember the words of the Apostle Peter:

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.