

"... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

The
DISCERNER

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EDITORIAL

Dr. William A. BeVier

No one seems to know for certain how many organizations or groups in this country in particular and the world in general, deserve the designation of "cult." In addition to the traditional "Big Four" (Anthony Hoekema's *The Four Major Cults*, i.e., Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Seventh-Day-Adventism), we certainly need to add the New Age Movement of recent days. But there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other organizations which meet that designation.

Some of these groups have only a few hundred, or even less, members or adherents, but others have tens of thousands of advocates. Some exist as one-house communes in one location, while others are spread around the world, even in unexpected places. Some are poor in terms of financial resources, others like Scientology, the Unification Church and the Worldwide Church of God, control vast resources. Some appear almost Biblical at times in their theology, and others immediately present themselves as clearly non-Christian. Some groups have been in existence for fifty years or more, e.g., Worldwide Church of God (1934), while new groups appear almost daily. As new cults appear, older ones disappear from significance, e.g., Jim Jones' Peoples' Temple, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's commune in

Oregon.

All these variations cause confusion, uncertainty, and divisions even among evangelical Bible-believing Christians on what is a cult, who are its members, and how should we approach or associate with individuals identified as, or suspected of, being cultic.

Religion Analysis Service exists as a resource for Christians (1) wanting help with understanding the history and doctrines of the cults and how we as believers in Christ can approach people involved in or being influenced by the cults, and (2) who need to understand the cults so that we who accept the Bible as God's sufficient revelation to us won't spend time and effort attacking or criticizing those who are really our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The "enemy" (God's and ours) does not wear a distinctive uniform or nametag so that they are readily recognized. But neither do Christians come equipped with a label which indicates they are "true" believers. However, we need to recognize the differences. The Bible gives us sufficient guidance. The Lord in Matthew 7:17-19 and 12:33 spoke of "good" and "corrupt" fruit and "by their fruit you shall know them." Paul wrote of the "works of the flesh" and the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:17-24) and some of the clear distinctions.

Peter presented to us some of the characteristics of false teachers (2 Peter 2) and how we can recognize them.

We not only need to know what the cults believe and say, but more importantly we need to know the Bible, "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) so that we may recognize both truth and error when we encounter them. When we know the "truth," we can recognize any error when we see it (though realizing Satan is a master deceiver, Eph. 6:11, KJ "wiles," Greek "methods"). We measure all else by the known perfect standard, the written Word of God. I was once told that when banks are training new tellers, they have these new employees handle over and over again genuine U.S. currency. They never train them with counterfeit currency. The principle being that if tellers are accustomed to feeling genuine, true money, they immediately recognize by touch that which is counterfeit, even though it might not be apparent to the natural eye. I believe the application of this principle is evident for Christians. If we are accustomed to and thoroughly familiar with the Bible, we will recognize that which is non-Biblical when exposed to it. Unfortunately, being accustomed and familiar with the Bible does not come automatically when a person becomes a Christian. For most of us this required years of careful and prayerful study.

Between the time we first become Christians by personally accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior (see John 3:16-18) and the time we reach and understanding of the Scriptures so we are not endangered by cults and can help others who are,

Religion Analysis Service exists to help us. During the forty years of its operation, R.A.S. has been helping people for the cause of Christ.

Perhaps this is the first time you have read an issue of **The Discerner**. It is the publication of the Religion Analysis Service printed four times a year to provide current articles, book reviews, and other items pertaining to the cults. For those interested, this publication is available by subscription at \$2.00 per year, which pays for postage and handling.

We also publish an annual catalog which lists books, pamphlets, tracts, etc., about the cults and other aberrations of Christianity that are available for purchase from our office. Our literature ranges from full-length books to brief overviews or specialized booklets, pamphlets, and tracts. The catalog gives detailed information and is available (at no cost) upon request, either by telephone or letter, from our office.

We send a newsletter twice a year to our general mailing list reporting on the current status of Religion Analysis Service, its activities and needs. R.A.S. is an incorporated, non-profit ministry, dependent upon the financial and prayer support of God's people for its continuance. Gifts to the R.A.S. are tax deductible.

In addition to our written ministries of **The Discerner**, the catalog, and newsletter, Reverend Ewald Eisele, our Office Manager, is available during normal office hours to respond to questions about the cults and to suggest the various types of literature which are available.

There is one new development I

would like to call to the attention of our readers. This is in the area of Freemasonry (also called "Masons," and includes the Shriners and Order of the Eastern Star, plus their youth organizations of DeMolay and the Rainbow Girls). Many of us grew up personally involved or in families which were members of one or more of the branches of Freemasonry. In times past, no one was to be personally approached and invited to join Masonry. The organization itself and its activities were to so commend the lodge that individuals would ask for the privilege of joining. For a variety of reasons, social and economic (and I trust in some cases because of

people's knowledge of the Scriptures) membership in Freemasonry has declined drastically in recent years. It is probably for this reason that Freemasonry is for the first time advertising publicly to attract new members. Now that Freemasonry is attempting to attract the public to it, Christians need to be reminded of the non-Christian, and to the thinking of many, anti-Christian, beliefs of Freemasonry. R.A.S. has literature available to assist those wanting to know more about Freemasonry. If this is your need, please contact us.

In closing, please continue to pray about the relocation of our office. This is an increasing concern.

COLOSSAE REVISITED

by Ewald Eisele

It was probably A.D. 63 when Paul received news of the church at Colossae from Epaphras. Though Paul had never been there himself, he had a pastor's concern regarding the evident departure from the truth that was taking hold in the church.

"Grievous wolves," incipient gnosticism, were deluding and leading them astray much as the cults of today are doing. The Gnostics, whose name was taken from 'gnosis'—knowledge, were taking the religious world of their day by storm. So-called "mystery" cults such as Isis, the Eleusinian's and Mithraism were the basis of increased interest in the unknown. Because of this background and the interest that had been aroused when the Gnostics came along with their world-view of matter being evil, and their claim of possessing superior knowledge, there was an

immediate desire for this imagined greater knowledge.

The problem in this heresy, that brought Epaphras to Rome to get Paul's help, was what this satanic philosophy did to the person of Christ and especially His deity.

There were two major groups of Gnostics which eventually emerged. The Docetic Gnostics applied their theory to Jesus, claiming that He did not really have a human body, but only a spirit-like, phantom body. He was merely one of the aeons or emanations that radiated from God. The other group is called Cerinthian Gnostics. They said that Jesus was, in fact, human, but His **Christhood** was the aeon, and that it came on Him at His baptism and left Him before He died on the cross. This very conveniently did away with the

Christ, which was not real, and left a mere human Jesus to die on the cross. Both groups believed that the release from the evil of all matter, which included our human bodies, was to be attained only through receiving the gnosis, superior knowledge, which the Gnostic system was offering.

Now many may ask, "What does all of that have to do with our world today?" Everything, really, because the errors of the Gnostic Heresy are with us today and gaining a larger following than they had in Colossae. As Bishop J. B. Lightfoot explains in his commentary on Colossians (pg. 75ff), "gnosticism implies the possession of a superior wisdom, which is hidden from others." Not one leader in the cults could be named who would not fulfill this definition of a gnostic. Lightfoot goes on, "It makes a distinction between the select few who have this higher gift and the vulgar many who are without it."

Let me begin with the so-called Jehovah's Witnesses, who do not witness for Jehovah, nor do they give His message for this age. This is the cult which is controlled by the Watchtower Society which claims that they, and they alone, have access to the knowledge of the truth. They rob our Lord Jesus Christ of His deity with their blasphemous and satanic translation of the Bible which is called **The New World Translation**. This was copied in part from, the writings of a certain Johannes Gerber, a German spiritist. Salvation, according to the Watchtower Society, is obtained **not** by accepting the God-given perfect, holy sacrifice of His divine Son, but by good works and obeying the laws of the Society. When compared with the gnosticism of Paul's day, the doc-

trines of the Watchtower Society come out second best and would not be preferred over the original heresy.

Then there are the followers of Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy. Her cult is called Christian Science. Facetiously called the grape nuts religion, grape nuts being neither grapes nor nuts and Christian Science being neither Christian nor scientific. One of the main philosophies of this cult is that Mind is the greatest thing that there is, and that Mind can overcome any seeming "problems" that a person may encounter. Stemming, as it did, from the New Thought movement, it goes along with many of its basic teachings. In **Science and Health with Keys to the Scripture**, it says on page 29 of the edition I have, "The Virgin-mother conceived this idea of God, and gave to her ideal the name of Jesus—that is, Joshua, or Saviour." And on page 30, "Jesus was the offspring of Mary's self-conscious communion with God." Regarding Jesus' own words, it says on pages 333-334, "Before Abraham was, I am;" "I and my Father are one;" "My Father is greater than I." "By these sayings Jesus meant, not that the human Jesus was or is eternal, but that the divine idea or Christ was and is so and therefore antedated Abraham; not that the corporeal Jesus was one with the Father, but that the spiritual idea, Christ, dwells forever in the bosom of the Father, God, from which it illumines heaven and earth; not that the Father is greater than Spirit, which is God, but greater, infinitely greater, than the fleshly Jesus, whose earthly career was brief."

There are also elements of the Gnostic heresy in the cult called The

Latter-day Saints. They, too, deny the deity of our Lord and even the God of the Bible. They teach that Adam is God and that he became God by working his way to the top. Not only that, any "good" Mormon male can also become a god with his own private world and harem. Mormon women, who have been "eternally joined" to one of these good Mormon men in a Temple ceremony, have the privilege of giving birth, fathered by her own private god, to spirit-children throughout eternity!

Even the Roman Catholic Church has elements of this heresy in its make-up, along with all the other non-biblical errors it teaches. In Col. 2:18-19 Paul condemns the worship of angels, which is closely akin to the Mariolatry of Romanism. The same reasoning is behind both—a God who cannot be approached directly and a sub-standard Christ who is depreciated and stripped of His exalted deity, position, the greatness of His person, work and power.

Then there are the followers of deluded Ellen G. White, called Seventh-day Adventists. They, too, have their share of this error. The teaching of this cult goes directly against what Paul wrote in Col. 2:20-23 regarding prohibition of certain foods, etc., for believers. In that passage he calls it, "a shew of wisdom in will worship." He soundly condemns this in 2:16-17 where is also included "sabbath days" and rules and

regulations inaugurated by man and not by the Lord of the age of grace.

Now these are not the only members of the Cult of Gnosticism with us today, but are only the tip of the iceberg of this teaching. As though these older cults are not enough, along comes the New Age to join hands and enter the ranks of this rank heresy. The New Age religious philosophy goes the whole route in denying the deity of Jesus Christ. They affirm that not only is Jesus Christ NOT divine, but that their lord is Lucifer who is called a brother of the Lord Jesus Christ. They do give lip-service to Jesus, saying that He was a good teacher, but only one of the avatars (aeons) in a long line of super-teachers. The details of their religion are considered in another segment of the study of the New Age in this issue of the *Discerner*.

What did Solomon say? "There is no new thing under the sun" (Eccl. 1-9), all of these, and others, are merely plagiarizers of an ancient heresy that outdates Christianity!

Colossae revisited? The church of Jesus Christ is living there, and needs to revisit the Epistle of Paul to the Colossians. Only there will be found all the answers necessary to refute the Gnostic Heresy of our present day. In that short epistle our Lord Jesus Christ is presented in all of His divine fulness and glory. He is Lord and will not give His glory to another (Isa. 42:8).

A BRAND NEW BOOK!!

THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS AND THE TRINITY by Peter Barnes. This came into the office today and so has not been reviewed—but Peter Barnes is one who can be trusted and this new offering to combat the recently released publication of the Watchtower will, without doubt, be a useful tool. 40 pp \$3.95

BOOK REVIEW

Are The Mormon Scriptures Reliable?

Harry L. Ropp. **Are The Mormon Scriptures Reliable?** Downers Grove, IL: The InterVarsity Press, 1987 rev. ed. 139 pp. \$7.95 paperback.

This book is an up-to-date revision of a book published as **The Mormon Papers: Are the Mormon Scriptures Reliable?** in 1977.

The original author was director of Mission to Mormons until his death in 1978 (now called Intermountain Evangelizing Association, Inc.). Wesley Walters did the revision and updating (1987).

Walters gives documentation that Joseph Smith, Jr., only pretended to know Egyptian in any form. He uses Mormonism's "Book of Abraham" from **The Pearl of Great Price** compared with the papyri manuscripts from which the "Book of Abraham" supposedly was translated to prove this. Walter also gives some of the documentation how the **Book of Mormon** has been changed in over 3,000 places since its original printing in 1830 and changes which have been made between the **Book of Commandments** (1833) and its revision as **Doctrine and Covenants** (1835).

In his annotated bibliography and appendices the author provides information where detailed documented information about Mormonism is

available today (many of the original publications of Mormonism are no longer easily accessible).

The opening chapter of the book clearly states why Mormonism is not Christian. This is followed by chapters on the **Book of Mormon**, the **Book of Mormon** and North American archaeology (there is no evidence the American Indians were Jews from the Middle East and lists errors of Mormon "archaeologists"), and chapters on the **Book of Commandments**, **Doctrine and Covenants**, and the **Pearl of Great Price**. Walters closes with a chapter giving practical advice how to witness effectively to Mormons. A glossary of Mormon terms is at the end of the book, but the book has no index.

I recommend this book for its information and as a manual on Mormonism for anyone wanting to go beyond just the usual historical data about Mormonism, for anyone wanting to improve one's Christian witness to Mormons, and for anyone wanting to keep a person from joining this cult.

Reviewed by Wm. BeVier

This book may be purchased from our office for \$7.95 plus 90¢ postage. You may also purchase the original edition, while the supply lasts, for \$3.95 plus 90¢ for postage.

BOOK REVIEW

The Devil's Web

Author: Patricia Pulling
Publishers: Huntington House,
Lafayette, LA

Reviewed by: Joseph Melnichak
Book review of THE DEVIL'S WEB
as submitted to "Police Marksman"

magazine.

The first question in this review is, "Why should the cop on the street be concerned with the occult and satanism?" Let's face it. Don't you have enough to worry about with just the run-of-the-mill street scum without looking for more? Especially when that "more" is as weird as satanists and occultists? I mean, how often do you run into these weirdo freaks, anyway? After all, this isn't Los Angeles or New York.

Wouldn't it be great if truth in packaging labels extended to bad guys? So when we met one on the street, he would have to wear a sign around the neck that said, "I'm a satan worshiper and a few cans short of a six pack." We would, at once, know this guy's elevator didn't go all the way up, his biscuits needed to go back in the oven, or he needed to go back to the screw factory to get rethreaded. Of course, it doesn't work that way. We don't know in advance whom or what we are dealing with.

Because we don't know ahead of time, we need to know something about a lot of things, so we can do our job better—and stay alive. *THE DEVIL'S WEB*, by Pat Pulling (Huntington House publishers, Lafayette, LA) is a handy guide or street map through the maze of the occult. She does a wonderful job pointing out the dangers to society and to helping professionals. Moreover, unlike many other books on this topic, she doesn't preach.

For a very long time, the law enforcement profession has needed a general text on the occult and satanism. Crimes ranging from vandalism to church theft are committed in the name of Satan. Ritualistic

murders and child abuse are part of some people's cult activity. As professionals, we need to know about these people. We need to be aware of what they are doing, how they are doing it, and why they are doing it.

Pulling takes us on a tour of the occult and devil worshipers. She treats us as intelligent adults, unlike some who assume the reader is an idiot. She lays out her material in a straightforward and factual manner, without editorializing or preaching. Her claims are documented, and she either cites sources in the text or gives names and dates, when appropriate. When she can't, she says she can't and gives the reasons.

What is missing in *THE DEVIL'S WEB* is preaching. Some books on the occult or satanic crimes are nothing more than a pulpit for the author to preach his opinions on the devil. There is none of that here. No, instead, Pulling provides some hard and practical advice at the end of the chapters. She covers such things as what to look for in crime scenes, how to recognize recruiting efforts, why role playing games are dangerous for some people, why some black metal and punk music is dangerous, and what various signs and symbols mean.

But, Pulling does have a vested interest in this and is less than objective. She admits that right off. Her son took his life after becoming entangled in a game of "Dungeons & Dragons." Turning tragedy into positive action, she formed B.A.D.D. (Bothered About Dungeons and Dragons). This organization has become a clearing house for occult crimes, as well as a resource center for concerned parents whose off-

spring are involved in the occult. Pat Pulling has testified across the country in civil and criminal cases as an expert witness. Her credentials are well established.

Pulling provides several things in her book that others have not. First, she has a list of resources in mental health, education, and law enforcement so the reader can get more information. Secondly, she provides a glossary, a comprehensive one, so those who need a reference guide can refer back to *THE DEVIL'S WEB* to look up new words; and she provides a list of symbols and what they mean. Beyond that, she also provides

several practical guides and tactics. These are well thought out and, obviously, culled from resources across the country. These are not some ivory tower pieces of advice from someone who hasn't been there.

If a law enforcement agency had to have just one book in its library on occult and satanic crimes, I would strongly recommend *THE DEVIL'S WEB* by Patricia Pulling. It serves the profession well not only as a reference book, but as a guide through the bizzare world of the occult.

You may order this book from our office. 206pp. \$8.95, plus 90¢ postage.

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

by Ewald Eisele

(Part 5)

In this segment I will conclude the section on *THE SPIRITUAL OR RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT*.

In the last issue of the *DISCERNER*, I concluded with our consideration of the claim of Lord Maitreya that he had been born 2600 years ago and had spent the centuries evolving, through many incarnations, into a perfect spiritual being.

We have to go back those 2600 years for the full story. TARA was a Hindu Goddess, wife of Buhaspati. She bore an illegitimate son by another Hindu god, Soma. Maitreya lays claim to being that son! The choice of the name Maitreya is significant. The world's Buddhists & Hindus are all expecting a LORD MAITREYA to appear, which means about 1/3 of the world is ready to accept one claiming to be him, especially if he comes with supporting miracles.

Benjamin Creme wrote in his book, *The Reappearance of the Christ and the Masters of Wisdom*, that the New World Religion will fuse East and West and produce something entirely new. He states that the new religion will consist of Ancient Mysteries, Reincarnation and an Initiation, which is explained in such a way it leaves little doubt that it will be a Luciferic Initiation. Of what the Initiation consists is not spelled out in any detail. However it will include a mark of identification of some kind (Rev. 13:16-18) indicating allegiance to the person of antichrist and to the religious/governmental system of which he is a part.

An initiation is necessary in order for the individual to enter the Hierarchy and get much closer to divinity than is possible in the physical plane.

Texe Marrs, in his book, **Dark Secrets of the New Age**, says:

The most frightening aspect of the New Age World Religion is the adulation given to Lucifer, who has even been described as "God of Light and God of Good." David Spangler, one of the most admired New Age teachers, has said that Lucifer is "in a sense the angel of man's inner evolution."

Spangler not only taught that Lucifer is "an agent of God's love," but in a shockingly blatant perversion of truth he has declared:

Christ is the same force as Lucifer . . . Lucifer prepares man for the experience of Christhood . . . Lucifer works within each of us to wholeness as we move into the New Age.

What we discover, then, is a consistent account among New Age authorities that Lucifer (Satan) is God and that Lord Maitreya is "Christ." Though the names of these two entities are often changed—Lucifer variously called Sat Nam, Sant Mat, Tanat, Sat Guru, and Sanat—they remain the same beings.

Spangler is also quoted in **The Lucifer Connection**, by Joseph Carr, on page 136, as saying in his book **Reflections**:

Lucifer prepares man in all ways for the experience of Christhood and the Christ prepares man for the experience of God. Jesus said, "As the Christ, I am the way, the truth and the life. No man goes to the Father but through me." This is true. The avenue out of microcosmic limitation into macrocosmic wholeness, universal consciousness and attunement is through the Christ. But the light that reveals to us the presence of the Christ, the light that reveals to us the path to the Christ, comes from Lucifer.

The NAM has also taken up the name TARA. Its printing house in London is TARA PRESS and there are TARA CENTERS around the world. In the USA and Canada there are around 125. The largest centers in the states are in New York and Hollywood, CA.

In the Readers Digest of October, 1982, the NAM had a full page ad which spelled out what they called THE GREAT INVOCATION. This is a prayer to Maitreya the christ. Since its publication, this invocation has been incorporated into the so-called worship services of NA as well as other churches.

On Monday, January 12, 1987, in USA TODAY there appeared a full page ad for this false christ. It was published nation-wide at a cost of \$32,920 per area covered. For further information this address was given: TARA CENTER, POB 6001, North Hollywood, CA 91603, USA.

The religious options for us are limited:

We can believe in **no** god and be atheists.
We can believe in **One** God and be theists.
We can believe in **many** gods and be pantheists.

The NA movement is a combination of atheists and pantheists. The Secular Humanist believed in no god and in the religious arena was a failure. The NA philosophy recognized that man is a worshipping person and needed a god to worship and so brought in the old Garden of Eden lie of Satan which is that man is a **god in his own right**. The New Age religion is the old ancient pantheistic-mystical monism, that is, the belief that all-is-one and all-is-god, with no distinction between good and evil, no biblical concept of sin and salvation, and no accountability for one's actions to anyone but oneself. It is this monistic idea which unites all of the so-called New Age groups and individuals. A recent poll of non-churched individuals here in America indicated greater interest in Eastern religions and New Age beliefs than interest in conventional main-line religions, including Christianity. Pantheism was the choice of 57%, which certainly goes along with the theory of C. S. Lewis, when he said, "Pantheism is the permanent natural bent of the human mind left to itself, that is, untouched by the Regenerating Power of God."

But they **must** have a religious leader because man **needs** someone "religious" to look up to and "worship" even though he thinks of himself as god. While Maitreya is left out of the picture in public education the CONFLUENT EDUCATION of the public schools does influence children to think along monistic lines. Feminist leader and editor of *Ms Magazine* wrote: "By the year 2000 we will raise our children to believe in **human potential**, not God." Eric Fromm, in his book *You Shall Be As Gods* wrote: "Man is god and the only sacred thing is self." The introduction to *The Next Whole Earth Catalog* states, "We are as gods and might as well get good at it."

Deeply rooted in Eastern mysticism, the New Age Movement teaches the myth of reincarnation. Reincarnation is based on the Hindu idea of "Karma," which teaches that our behavior in this cycle of life will determine the progress (or regress) in the next life-cycle.

NEW AGE POLITICAL GOALS

The most advanced New Age political movement is in West Germany with its "DIE grunen"—THE GREENS. It is universally acclaimed as a model New Age political party. With only 30,000 members they won 27 seats in the Bundestag (Parliament). It was the first new party elected in any strength in 30 years.

Their platform is universal for New Agers:

1. Concern for unity, interrelation and interdependence and a recognition of a divine unity with the cosmos.
2. A pantheistic fervor—a Pantheistic Monism: Pantheism=all is god; Monism=all is one.

3. Do away with the old dominating ideas of aggressive, competitive and analytical mentality that has controlled culture and raped the earth. Perpetuating this has been the concept of a Father God who despotically rules the world and who delegates authority to other men who subjugate women, worship warfare and wreck havoc with the VIXI side of our nature. (YIN YANG of the Orient.)
4. There must be a new world order. The nation state must be replaced with the global village. There are no boundaries separating God from humanity, humans from each other or humans from nature = all is one. So, all must be one politically. (Some New Agers look at the United Nations as the Holy of Holies of the New Age. Most look for a messianic one-world leader.)

New Age political influence is not, however, centrally organized. Some of their views are held by those who are NOT pantheistic and/or monistic. But we should view their political agenda in the light of the politics of the Babel of Gen. 11. In listing organizations, it must be kept in mind that an organization committed to a cause that is in line with the New Age agenda may not be directed by New Agers. Organizations that go along with the general ideas of the agenda are:

- Feminist groups of every sort
- Anti-nuke groups
- Peace niks = so-called
- Amnesty International
- Zero population growth
- California New Age Caucus
- New Organization for an American Revolution
- New World Alliance
- New World Federalists
- SANE
- The Sierra Club & Audubon Society
- Greenpeace
- The Wesak Festival (Buddah & Christ are the leaders)
- Planetary Citizens
- Unity-in-Diversity Council
- Creative Initiative Foundation
- Global Education Associates
- Planetary Initiative for the World We Choose

The **CHRISTIAN INFORMATION BUREAU** of February 1988, which is headed up by Dave Hunt, had an article with the title, "*Peace, Peace.*" I want to quote a part of the article, because it pinpoints a growing trend in the nation:

There is a cry for peace at any cost. In 1976 over 125 congressmen signed the Declaration of Interdependence. The docu-

ment called for the dissolution of our national sovereignty. It called for us to become members of a global state with no national loyalties. Although the document was not officially accepted, it demonstrated the spirit of those elected to public office. Recently we have seen Hands Across America, the Day of Prayer for Peace (called by Pope John Paul II), and December 31st of 1985, which was the World Instant of Cooperation. Each of these events tried to join different groups of people together for a common cause—peace. Last year the Harmonic Convergence occurred where mediators around the world supposedly ushered in the Aquarian Age.

On the grass roots level many, many groups have been formed to carry the banner for peace. Even the Girl Scouts are involved. The Greater Minneapolis Girl Scout Council has a patch that says, "Think Globally, Act Locally."

"Think Globally, Act Locally" was used in preparation for the Planetary Congress in 1983. The organizer of the congress was a New Age organization, Planetary Initiative for the World We Choose.

There is another development that bears watching. The NA is very close to providing a spiritual element to Communism that Karl Marx failed to build into the formula in the beginning of the Communist movement. All that Marx considered was the Orthodox arm of Christianity and naturally he could not imagine that the two systems could work together. But the NA movement is providing the kind of spiritual dimension that could be very acceptable to the Communists. Within the foreseeable future, we may witness some very startling developments in this area.

Several grim facts facing our universe are pushing the world population into a one-world mentality as the only hope of survival:

1. The supposed threat of a nuclear holocaust. This is inspired by either Russian Communism or New Age politics. It seems very unlikely that Russia would bomb the U.S. It looks as though they are of the mind that they can take over the nation without any violence at all. According to Dr. Fred Schwartz, who is a nationally recognized authority on communism, "The formula for the conquest of the U.S.A. is: External encirclement, plus internal demoralization, plus thermonuclear blackmail, which will lead to progressively surrendering our freedom."
2. UNSAFE WATER = $\frac{2}{3}$ of the world's population has no access to safe drinking water. U.S.A. could face the same if the EPA report that 43% of our communities' water systems are sub-standard.

3. MALNUTRITION = 70% of the children in underdeveloped countries suffer from malnutrition which results in 10-20 million deaths per year. One half of Africa suffers from food shortages. Yet many of the countries in Africa are embracing Communism, which has a proven history of destroying incentive and reducing farm and industrial production.
4. POLLUTION = Does not stop at national borders or oceans.

These things and others tend to make the common man demand a world government with a central control system for all the various needs of the interdependent population. This is what the New Age is pulling for and why there are so many groups involved in protests of one kind or another. If the signs we see are really going to come to fruition, then a ruthless, vicious, totalitarian government, saying the right things about peace, love, brotherhood, unity and interdependence will soon take control of planet earth. Nothing on the present scene would give us any hope that the trends which will bring this about can be stopped.

Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, in *The Seduction of Christianity*, page 9:

It is our deep conviction, based upon years of research and mountains of evidence, that the secular world is in the late stages of succumbing to the very deception that Jesus and the apostles predicted would immediately precede the Second Coming. We are gravely concerned that millions of Christians are falling victim to the same delusion.

(To be continued in the next issue of *THE DISCERNER*)

POSTMILLENNIALISM, REVIVED AND REVISITED

A new slant on the old idea of postmillennialism, now gaining some momentum among serious Christian thinkers and even touching the fringes of the fundamentalist movement, strikes at the very heart of biblical dispensationalism and directly opposes premillennial theology, a hallmark of Baptist fundamentalism.

Two words, not commonly used, also express this revived postmillennialism. They are **theonomy** and **Reconstructionism**.

To define basic terms, premillennialism is the Biblical teaching that Christ will return prior to the millen-

nium, the prophesied one thousand year literal reign of Christ on the throne of David in Jerusalem over a converted Israel and the entire world. Dispensational premillennialists generally look for the imminent (possibly at any time) coming of Christ, to be followed by a Great Tribulation, described in Christ's Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, etc.) and in the book of Revelation in the New Testament. Old Testament prophecies about the Day of the Lord in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the minor prophets also will be fulfilled in connection with the

Second Advent of Christ, involving the deliverance of Israel and the establishment of Christ's theocratic kingdom on this earth.

Postmillennialism in the classic sense was a teaching that the whole world would eventually be converted to Christ, enjoy a thousand years of peace and prosperity after which Christ would finally return. He would then preside over the resurrection of the dead and the general judgment, ending this present earth's history.

The new postmillennialism appeals to the Messianic and millennial prophecies of the Old Testament for support, interpreting this prophetic picture as having fulfillment, during the millennium, which they understand will come about through the submission of the nations of the world to Mosaic law. This will be precipitated by opposition to present government (or infiltration, as some encourage) as well as the preaching of the gospel.

Theonomy literally means God's law. Reconstructionism implies the supplanting of present laws in all countries, including the United States, with the Mosaic law, universally applied. Reconstructionists deny that the Law was solely for

Israel, deny that Israel has a glorious destiny and apply Old Testament Scriptures dealing with Israel to the Christian era and to the whole world.

Their basic approach to the Bible is therefore nonliteral. Their interpretation of Scripture does not follow a strict grammatical-historical, literal meaning track. It is in opposition to historic fundamentalism and Baptist theology as articulated by John Clarke, James R. Graves, J. Frank Norris and thousands of other writers who were unabashed, crusading premillennialists.

It has arisen among Reformed, Covenant theologians who are anti-dispensationalists. Most of its advocates are articulate, brilliant Presbyterians, but some professing Baptists have already embraced it.

While containing interesting, even helpful elements, the overall teaching of postmillennialism, theonomy and Reconstructionism must be rejected. Our premillennial heritage, literalist approach to Biblical interpretation and our own Articles of Faith demand its rejection.

—James O. Combs
Baptist Bible Tribune
Plains Baptist Challenger
DECEMBER, 1989

NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM OUR OFFICE

THE TRUTH ABOUT TONGUES AND THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT, by Hugh F. Pyle. The author, of many Christian books, goes directly to the Scriptures to examine this controversial subject. This is an excellent book for Christians because it looks at experience in the light of the Bible, instead of looking at the Bible in the light of some experience. 150pp \$5.95

IDOLS FOR DESTRUCTION, by Herbert Schlossberg. America is steeped in idolatry and the author argues that the biblical concepts of idolatry and judgment should be our models for understanding our society, rather than those which see only inevitable disintegration. Schlossberg looks at the idols of history, humanity, mammon, nature,

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power, and religion. He shows that all of these areas of our secular culture are humanistic and sub-Christian. Those idols have the power to destroy our nation, and he calls for a biblical remnant that refuses to bow down to any of these and who will be willing to speak for the truth. Hard cover. 344pp \$19.95

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