

The DISCERNER

"HEREBY KNOW WE THE SPIRIT OF
TRUTH AND THE SPIRIT OF ERROR"

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EDITORIAL

WHERE IS THE "SPIRIT OF DISCERNMENT?"

by Dr. Wm. A. BeVier

Our English word "discernment," and related words, occurs several times in the New Testament, but it appears many people today do not know what the word means.

A dictionary at hand defines discernment as: 1.) To perceive (something obscure or concealed); detect. 2.) To recognize or comprehend mentally. 3.) To perceive as separate and distinct; discriminate. (*The American Heritage Dictionary*, 1982)

W. E. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Unabridged Edition, on pages 316-317, presents five Greek words used as verbs, a noun, and an adjective translated "discern, discerner, discernment" in our English New Testament.

The basic ideas expressed in the New Testament in our word "discern" are to separate, discriminate, determine, decide, test, prove, scrutinize, investigate, examine, question, judge (*Vine*). It is easy to understand how the word "discern" should be applied to the cults, as well as to the Christian life in general. The name of our quarterly publication reflects these ideas.

A Christian should apply dis-

cernment in the area of doctrine, e.g., Heb. 13:9. There is true or sound doctrine and there is false doctrine. We are to apply discernment in distinguishing the two.

A Christian should apply discernment in morals, e.g., Heb. 5:14. The mark or characteristic of a mature believer is one who is able to discern both good and evil.

A Christian should apply discernment in conduct, e.g., Gal. 5:17-24. There are things a believer should not do and there are things a believer should do.

A Christian should apply discernment in associations, e.g., II Cor. 6:14-18. A believer is to have no fellowship with unbelievers. A Christian is in the world, but does not belong to the world (Jn. 15:19; 17:14-16). We cannot avoid associating with non-Christians (I Cor. 5:9-10) and we are to witness to them, tell them who Jesus Christ is and what He has done, but we are to have nothing in common, e.g., New Testament word "fellowship," with the non-believer.

Our word "discern" and related words (Greek *anakrino*, *diakrino*, *dokimazo*, *diskrasis*, *kritikos* in the New Testament) have the root "judge" in them. We are living in a social environment and time peri-

od when many people do not want to "judge" (decide, determine) anything and resent anyone else doing it. We are told not to be critical of anything or any person. Teachers are being told by some "experts" in education that grades should not be given to students. Grades can damage a student's psyche and lower their self-esteem. An application of this philosophy of education to all walks of life could mean it makes no difference when a surgeon or an airline pilot does "A" or "F" work. If there are no outside standards imposed by someone beyond ourselves, we are back to the situation described in Judges 21:25, ". . . every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

In contemporary American society there are many people who want to do away with God. But the truth is, God's existence is not based on what people think about Him. Other people seemingly want to make God in "man's image," i.e., make God to be what they want Him to be. But God's character is not changed by human desires. He has told us that, e.g., Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17. The facts are God is who He is and will continue to be who He is. It is God who has told His people to be discerning about doctrines, morals, conduct, and associations.

We are being told we shouldn't judge those who are in "cults." They are sincere, they have as

much right to their ideas as you do, how can you be so sure you're right? In response to such ideas, let us practice discernment. Know what the Word of God says and evaluate both ourselves and others by it.

The "discerning of spirits" was one of the spiritual gifts God gave to the early church (I Cor. 12:10), but later when the Apostle John wrote his first epistle he writes to all believers that we are to "test" (Greek *dokimazete*, imperative, command to examine, discern, prove) ". . . the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." With the completed written Word of God in our hands and the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide us, we have all the enablement we need to make proper discernment of truth and error in spiritual matters.

We need to be doing this, in spite of what unbelievers, cultic or otherwise, are saying about not being critical of others. Our "marching orders" come from God, to whom we are ultimately responsible.

Two closing reminders. Please continue to pray for Religion Analysis Service, that we will have a "spirit of discernment" in these days and, as God enables you, contribute financially to this ministry.

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THE DECEIVING NEW AGE SEDUCTION

by Heather Williams

The New Age Movement has seeped in today where it is least expected. It is deceiving, cunning, drawing the innocent, and luring its followers to unknown destruction, while claiming it is truth. It

is broad in spectrum and includes a vast array of beliefs and "religions" which makes it hard to pin down.

What is the New Age Movement? It "refers to a world view of

philosophy of life that many people hold . . ." (Ankerberg and Weldon 7). It can also be called a religion because it has religious views. For example, much of the New Age Movement is based on pantheism which believes that "God is all and all is God." The New Age Movement is the "fastest growing, most significant challenge to the Church today" with 60 million followers in the United States (Carr 13). It promises a new life, a new person, and a new age. ". . . The New Age claims to be the latest, greatest source of spiritual power around—far superior to the 'old, outdated, patriarchal' religion of Christianity, for example: (Ancient Empires 37).

The New Age Movement includes many different facets. There is no single doctrine but includes and accepts all religions and beliefs. Common practices range from out-of-body experiences to positive mental attitudes. "New Agers, in general, are not exclusively loyal to any one type of teaching or practice" (Ancient Empires 22).

Many may think that this "New Age Movement" is new. However, there is nothing further from the truth. The New Age practices of today have actually been around a very long time. The only difference between back then and now is that the New Age is now more open. In the past it was secretive (Ancient Empires 161). "The New Age Movement is the modern descendent of a centuries-long tradition of occultism that dates back to Babylon" (Carr 75). The Babylonian Mystery Religion is the basis of many New Age groups. Many New Age Movement doctrines grew out of "Western Esoteric Tradition" plus some

Hindu and Buddhist ideas added in a pseudoscientific mold (Carr 15-16). In fact, many New Agers today are frantically trying to find more ancient superstitions to duplicate them. They do not even deny the fact that they are copying old religions under a new disguise, though many do not realize it. "As long as outsiders allow themselves to be leavened by New Age teaching, they will find themselves drifting further and further toward classical paganism" (Ancient Empires 186).

It is hard to nail down and organize the teachings and beliefs of the New Age Movement. The following are four basic New Age Movement teachings according to John Ankerberg and John Weldon:

- 1) that all true reality is divine;
- 2) that personal "enlightenment" is important;
- 3) that altered consciousness, psychic powers, and spirit contact are the means of enlightenment;
- 4) that in many quarters social and political activism is needed to help "network" (organize) people of like mind to produce a united world—socially, economically, religiously, and politically (11).

What is the New Ager's view of God? According to their view there is no difference between a personal higher entity, God, and oneself (Universe 195). New Agers claim that we are divine. Humans are supposedly gods. As odd as it may sound, this twisted view has seeped into once-orthodox Christian teaching. James W. Sire quoted in Shirley MacLaine and the New Age Movement: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. Know thyself and that will set you free; to thine own self be true; to know

self is to know all; know that you are God; know that you are the universe" (21). The self is king. If the self is satisfied it is sufficient. There is no need to worry over ethics. The New Age Movement believes a person is truly one with God and the universe. Since God is within us, the name for God, according to the New Age Movement, is "Inner Self." Therefore, the "Inner Self" is always right if the "Inner Self" is God (Carr 78). Another New Age thought on the topic of God is: "What God is in your mind you must accept" (Hunt and McMahon 71). These views of God go totally against the Bible. In no way does the Word of God ever refer to an individual becoming their own God. God makes it very clear that He alone is far above and beyond any human being. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8-9). Some New Agers are appalled that some people believe there is only one way to God. John 14:6 says: "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" There are clearly no exceptions.

Occultism is the gateway to New Age for many. It goes beyond the ordinary senses. Reaching an "altered state of consciousness" is sought by many New Agers through a variety of means. "... Cosmic consciousness lets you see, react to receive power from and perhaps begin to control spiritual beings that reside in a sort of fifth dimension parallel to our normal four..." (*Universe* 183).

Visualization is another way to reach the desired altered state of consciousness. Joseph Carr stated:

The purpose of visualization is to put our rational minds in neutral so that images can stream forth, supposedly from deep within. We are asked to enter an altered state of consciousness about which we know very little, except that it is shamanic. (94)

The power of imagination makes it possible to visualize "inner gods" and discover spirit guides through guided imagery. These spirit guides always claim to be good. They claim to help others spiritually and guide them (Ankerberg and Weldon). Many times, however, the person practicing these things are opening their minds up to demonic forces. God clearly speaks against such practices in Deuteronomy 18:10-12:

Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spell, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord . . .

Mysticism is at the bottom of many New Age activities. They believe that when everyone discovers their mystical experience we will move into the new world view (Ankerberg and Weldon 7). The mystical world view includes several different beliefs. For instance, there is a "fundamental unity to all things," "time is an illusion," and "all evil is mere appearance" (*Universe* 188). They view sin as the ignorance of personal divinity.

Another way that makes it possible to generate spiritual expe-

riences is through drugs. "The psychedelic experiences of the hippie generation were mystical in nature, a fact that explains why so many veterans of the drug subculture turned to New Age, Eastern religions and occultism" (Carr 64-66). Many former drug-using New Agers move on to yoga practice. Some say they experience the same thing using drugs as they do yoga (Carr 126).

The practice of yoga originated in Hindu meditation. According to Joseph Carr, yoga is a: ". . . psychospiritual technique used to loosen the person's control over his brain in order to contact or generate, as some claim, a Higher consciousness" (126). Some who are quite practiced in yoga techniques admit to the fact that yoga is very dangerous. The goal of yoga is stated by Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahan as: ". . . self-realization—to look deeply within what ought to be the temple of the one true God and there to discern the alleged 'true self' or 'higher self' and declare self to be God" (54). Once again in Scripture, God declares His jealousy as the only God which again proves New Age wrong. "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).

Two of the most basic doctrines of the New Age Movement are reincarnation and karma. Among those who believe these ideologies is the active feminist Shirley MacLaine, well-known among the New Age Movement. She is an actress, dancer and author. MacLaine claims to have experienced who she was in a previous life. She claims to be one with the universe. Her books are full of "energy vibrations, . . . out-of-the-body travel, karma, ESP . . ." as well as other experiences of

the same sort (Ankerberg and Weldon 35). MacLaine fails to address, however, the negative sides of reincarnation. John Ankerberg and John Weldon also state (35-36): "When reincarnation is coupled with karma, for example, it is not easy to feel compassion for those who experience great suffering. Are they not being justly punished for sins in previous lives?" Instead they focus on appealing to both: ". . . the desire for special knowledge and the desire to escape God's judgement" (*Ancient Empires* 93). The Word of God makes it clear that judgment is inevitable. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ . . ." (II Corinthians 5:10).

Karma basically means that you get what you deserve. The more you suffer in this life the better off you'll be in the next life. Therefore, keeping someone from suffering or helping them is actually harming them in their eyes. This is just backwards! This is how they justify sacrifice—they actually think they are helping their victims out! This is where abortion and euthanasia fit right in with the way our society is and how they justify such brutal attacks to life (*Unholy Sacrifices* 34).

The New Age believe man is god. Therefore, the belief in a personal God is supposedly "negative thinking." Those who have this "negative thinking" are considered the low race. To reach the fulfilled New Age, the low race, which is hindering the evolution toward the New Age, must be ciphered out. Hitler and the Nazis with their "superior race" enter into the picture here (*Unholy Sacrifices* 30). Hitler and the New Age Movement have similar beliefs. Nazis

thought they were helping Jews because they believed in reincarnation and the Law of Karma (Carr 22-23). Their beliefs were clearly warped by what is today the New Age Movement philosophy.

Positive mental attitude is a definite part of New Age. "Believe and you will achieve" is the quotation ringing in the air of the New Ager (Hunt and McMahon 24). Confusion comes in when positive mental attitude is not substituted for faith but is considered one and the same: ". . . believing in the power of the mind is somehow the same as believing in God" (Hunt and McMahon 28). Proof that positive thinking does not work and that reality is not an illusion is clearly seen in ill and elderly people.

Instant evolution is another belief of the New Age. "We are told that we create our own evolution, and that if enough of us are willing, we can all evolve in one giant leap forward" (*Unholy Sacrifices* 33). The belief is that man evolved from non-human, non-animal origins to superhuman being which, in essence, is godhood (Carr 22). According to the Word of God humans did not evolve. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27).

What is the goal of the New Age Movement? According to James Carr it is to: ". . . force all humanity to take a 'Luciferic Initiation' in order to enter the New Age alive under the auspices of the one World Religion" (Carr 7). The goal is to bring about a New World Order. This basically means a single religion for all mankind. "The new will overcome the old by a gentler process of ecumenical unity

and absorption of the religious into one another" (Carr 144). It is striving for peace and unity by using powers within ourselves to bring it about. True peace comes only from Jesus as John 14:27 says: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you . . ."

The New Age Movement also envisions a one-world government. The growing belief that the predicted world government must be founded upon a new world religion is being accepted and expressed by an increasing number of influential leaders.

The New Age Movement continues to rapidly expand in numbers today. The followers of this deceptive way are growing. It is becoming the religion of the "yuppies" (upper-class citizens) who are young, urban professionals that are moving up.

The New Age Movement is seeping into education as well. The National Education Association has accepted it and brought its philosophy into the classrooms. This will cause children to grow into adults that won't even think twice about questioning it!

The Supreme Court ruled out Christianity in schools but nothing has been done about New Age because it disguises itself under science. *Ancient Empires of the New Age*, written by Paul deParrie and Mary Pride, states:

Channeling sessions can be recast as "helping the students get in touch with their inner selves." Pagan worship rituals are recast as a means to "overcome prejudice against other races," or even as a way to teach children about that great American virtue, religious diversity. (188)

Why is such a deceptive belief so widespread, powerful, worldwide, and seductive? One aspect which makes the New Age Movement attractive is their belief that other religions are acceptable because they are simply other paths to God. Another inviting aspect of the New Age Movement is that it "awakens and nurtures a fundamental religious impulse" (*Unholy Sacrifices* 13). Flash and impulse attract many to the New Age: playing with crystals, sleeping under a pyramid, reading New Age books about men being captured by extraterrestrials. They do not realize that they are actually playing with fire and there are consequences. Look how Babylon fell. They were practicing many of the same things as those caught up in the New Age (*Ancient Empires* 42-43).

As Christians we must be ever so cautious and test everything. Paul says in II Corinthians 11:14: "... for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light." The New Age is very deceptive and sly. We must refuse to simply accept for truth even things that look true on the outside without first seeing that it falls in line with the Word of God. We cannot apathetically sit and do nothing but we must stand against this hidden evil before it overtakes us. May we follow the instruction given to Timothy: "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (I Timothy 4:16).

AL GORE'S ENVIRONMENTAL SPIRITUALITY

by Berit Kjos

I like Al Gore, but I wonder now that he has become vice president, will his beliefs fuel America's

growing enchantment with earth-centered religions? The personable spokesman for global environmen-

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(This paper is written according to the guidelines for MLA style research papers found in the sixth edition of *Writing Research Papers* by James D. Lester.)

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talism exposes some genuine concerns, but would his earnest, articulate answers blur the meaning of Christianity? He calls himself a Baptist, but how does he view God? Could his beliefs spur the timeless tendency to dilute truth with pagan persuasions?

Gore's best-selling book, Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit (Houghton Mifflin, 1992), offers some alarming clues. In it he . . .

IDENTIFIES THE ROOT PROBLEM OF WESTERN CULTURE: ". . . we lost our feeling of connectedness to the rest of nature." (page 1)

FINDS ANSWERS IN PAN-THEISTIC CONNECTEDNESS: "A modern prayer of the Onondaga tribe in upstate New York offers another beautiful expression of our essential connection to the earth; 'O Great Spirit, whose breath gives life to the world and whose voice is heard in the soft breeze . . . make us wise so that we may understand what you have taught us . . .'" (page 259)

SEEKS WISDOM FROM THE WORLD'S PAGAN RELIGIONS: "The richness and diversity of our religious tradition throughout history is a spiritual resource long ignored by people of faith, who are often afraid to open their minds to teachings first offered outside their own system of belief. But emergence of a civilization in which knowledge moves freely and almost instantaneously through the world has . . . spurred a renewed investigation of the wisdom distilled by all faiths. This panreligious perspective may prove especially important where our global civilization's responsibility for the earth is concerned." (pages 258-259)

POINTS TO AMERICAN INDIANS AS SPIRITUAL MODELS: "Native American religions, for instance, offer a rich tapestry of ideas about our relationship to the earth. One of the most moving and frequently quoted explanations was attributed to chief Seattle in 1855 [It was actually written by Ted Perry for a 1971 environmental movie]: 'Will you teach your children what we have taught our children? That the earth is our mother?' . . . This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all." (page 259)

VALIDATES ANCIENT GODDESS WORSHIP: "The spiritual senses of our place in nature pre-dates Native American cultures; increasingly it can be traced to the origins of human civilization. A growing number of anthropologists and archeo-mythologists . . . argue that the prevailing ideology of belief in prehistoric Europe and much of the world was based on the worship of a single earth goddess, who was assumed to be the fount of all life and who radiated harmony among all living things. Much of the evidence for the existence of this primitive religion comes from the many thousands of artifacts uncovered in ceremonial sites. These sites are so widespread that they seem to confirm the notion that a goddess religion was ubiquitous throughout much of the world until the antecedents of today's religions—most of which still have a distinctly masculine orientation swept out of India and the Near East, almost obliterating belief in the goddess. The last vestige of organized goddess worship was eliminated by Christianity . . .

... it seems obvious that a better understanding of a religious heritage preceding our own by so many thousands of years could offer us new insights ... " (page 260)

ENDORSES FEMININE SUBSTITUTES FOR GOD: "One modern Hindu environmentalist, Dr. Karan Singh, regularly cites the ancient Hindu dictum: 'The earth is our mother, and we are all her children.' ... Guru Nanak [founder of Sikhism] said, 'Air is the Vital Force, Water the Progenitor, the Vast Earth the Mother of All ...'" (page 261)

COMMENDS BAHAI'ISM, THE RELIGION OF MAURICE STRONG, HEAD OF THE RECENT UNITED NATIONS EARTH SUMMIT: "One of the newest of the great Universalist religions, Baha'i ... seems to dwell on the spiritual implications of the great transformation to which it bore fresh witness: 'We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us ... Man is organic with the world.'" (page 261-262)

AFFIRMS THE NEW AGE (SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION) TEACHING OF TEILLARD DE CHARDIN, THE EXCOMMUNICATED CATHOLIC ARCHEOLOGIST: "There is no doubt that many believers and nonbelievers alike share a deep uneasiness about the future, sensing that our civilization may be running out of time. The religious ethic of stewardship is indeed harder to accept if one believes the world is in danger of being destroyed—by either God or humankind. This point was made by the Catholic theologian, Teilhard de Chardin when he said, 'The fate of mankind, as well as of religion, depends upon the

emergence of a new faith in the future.' Armed with such a faith, we might find it possible to resanctify the earth, identify it as God's creation, and accept our responsibility to protect and defend it ... " (page 263)

VIEWS THE EARTH AND ALL ITS PARTS AS SACRED: "... God's covenant, made not only with Noah, but with 'all living creatures,' again affirm[s] the sacredness of creation ... " (page 245)

BLENDS CHRISTIANITY WITH PANTHEISM (GOD IN ALL THINGS): "[My] own faith is rooted in the unshakable belief in God as creator and sustainer, a deeply personal interpretation of and relationship with Christ, and an awareness of a constant and holy spiritual presence in all people, all life, and all things." (page 368)

"My understanding of how God is manifest in the world can be best conveyed through the metaphor of the hologram ... I believe that the image of the Creator, which sometimes seems so faint in the tiny corner of creation each of us beholds, is nonetheless present in its entirety." (page 265)

Earth-centered spirituality and pantheistic gods sound good to people who don't know Scriptures—but they can never heal the earth. The true God is separate from His creation, not in or part of it. Nor is the earth itself sacred, unless God touches it with His personal presence, as He did when He spoke to Moses from the burning bush. Like humanity, it remains fallen, groaning under the curse of corruption, yet vibrantly fruitful when blessed by its Maker (Genesis 3; Romans 1 and 8).

Al Gore's well-meant manual for global salvation will only deep-

en our problems. Feminine or earth-centered spirituality may be "politically correct" today, but it mocks Biblical Christianity and points to the path that has led people from truth to myth since the beginning of time. Yet it fits our times. Like Israel who witnessed God's miracles and settled in the promised land, America is turning from God's Word to beliefs of pagan neighbors within one generation. The sad theme of the book of Judges fits our nation today: "Everyone did what was right in their own eyes" (Judges 17:6, 21:25).

Our cultural problem is separation from God, not from nature. While God told us to care for the earth, He warned us against pagan

religions. Contrary to the revived myths now flooding the Western world, nature-worship brings violence and destruction, not peace and harmony to the land. See for yourself. Read Deuteronomy 8, 9, 18 and 28.

And remember: God alone shows the way to genuine harmony and oneness. The first step is to know, love and follow Him, not popular spiritual distortions or substitutes. To those who follow, all of nature demonstrates the glory, wisdom, love and power of God not because He lives in creation, but because only an all-wise, all-powerful Creator could make such a beautiful earth.

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BOOK REVIEWS

by Ewald Eisele

THE CULT OF THE VIRGIN—Elliot Miller and Kenneth R. Samples. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992. 188pp., Paper, \$9.95.

The Forward to this book was written by Norman L. Geisler. In it he throws light on the position which the authors take regarding the present-day ecumenical movement. He also points out the two main differences between Protestant and Roman Catholic view of the doctrine of Mary. He states: "first of all the Roman Catholic doctrine on Mary has gone well beyond Holy Scripture . . . In going beyond Scripture in their teachings about Mary, Roman Catholics have threatened Scripture as the sole authority for the faith." He further states that, ". . . in exalting Mary beyond her divinely appointed role

as the blessed earthly mother of our Lord, many Catholics have diminished the unique role of Christ in salvation."

The authors, in the Introduction with the sub-title of "The Cult of the Virgin Revives," reveal their ecumenical bias: "The purpose of part one of this book is to explain in detail why Protestants consider the Catholic Mary to be unhistorical and unbiblical. While this may appear antiecumenical, it is ultimately the opposite. For if issues and concerns such as those raised here are not openly addressed, dialogue and communion between Catholics and Protestants (at least evangelicals) will inevitably reach an impasse."

The book is in two parts, almost two separate documents although they do compliment one

another. The first part, "From Lowly Handmaid to Queen of Heaven: The Mary of Roman Catholic Theology," was written by Elliot Miller. The second part, "Apparitions of the Virgin Mary: A Protestant Look at a Catholic Phenomenon," was written by Kenneth R. Samples.

These two parts, 135 pages in all, are followed with notes on the fourteen chapters, a Glossary of eighteen terms commonly used in the book, three Appendixes, a Bibliography, a Subject Index and a Scripture Index.

While many fundamental Christians may not agree with some of the findings and/or statements in this book, it is still a worthwhile addition to the limited information available on the subject. Readers should be discerning regardless what they are reading and by being discerning much good can be received from this book. There is much information here not available elsewhere, information which may be of use to those who have opportunity to witness to Roman Catholic friends.

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UNEARTHLY POWERS: A Christian's Handbook on Primal and Folk Religions—David Burnett. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992. 286pp., Paper, \$12.95.

We in America, in the twentieth century, seems to forget that there are multitudes around the globe who are not living with twentieth century conveniences or luxuries as is our privilege. This book should remind each reader of the wonderful grace of our Lord God in allowing us to live where we do

and have what He has so graciously provided.

This book is not about underprivileged people—it is about people living as their ancestors have lived for centuries. They have the same superstitions, ceremonies, rituals, sacrifices and fears that have plagued their forebears.

The book has twenty chapters, an appendix, a glossary, a subject index, author index and a tribal index. It is fascinating reading and will give just about every reader a wealth of new information. The information is not only about these religions and what their adherents do; it is also about how they may be reached with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There are many (NIV) Scripture references which can be substituted with KJV for those who use that Bible.

Several chapters were of special interest, though it is difficult to decide which are more important. Chapter five: "Ghosts and Ancestors," gives food for thought and also insight into the way some people think about these things. Chapter seven: "The Pollution of Man," was especially enlightening regarding that subject. We very seldom think about human pollution, but, today especially, of the pollution of the environment. Yet there are literally hundreds of different ideas among primitive peoples concerning this "modern" subject. Chapter fourteen: "Shamanism," throws an abundance of light on a subject too often neglected in many other books.

One of the nice features is that the footnotes are all at the end of each chapter rather than at the

end of the book. This saves much page-turning for those who are interested in the documentation of statements and/or sources of information. All in all, this should be a welcome addition to your reference library. Order your copy by name and allow for postage.

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ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS UNMASKED—Dr. Cathy Burns. Shippensburg, PA: Companion Press, 1991. 126pp., Paper, \$5.95.

The sub title reads: "Deception and Deliverance, Where do the 12 steps lead?" The author of this book is well qualified to write concerning this and other subjects. She does extensive research on the subjects about which she is writing. The reader will see this as he peruses the hundreds of documenting footnotes in this book.

She begins by giving an in-depth review of the beginnings of Alcoholics Anonymous. No detail is omitted, names of key figures and key organizations are noted. As mentioned above, all information given is documented. It is always a pleasure to review a book such as this one. One of the main reasons for this is that Dr. Burns backs everything she says with (KJV) Scripture. There is hardly a page which does not have some references to the Word.

Of special interest is the chapter on Step 11: "God—As You Understand Him." In that chapter she covers other Steps, but the eleventh is one of the key issues of AA. Along the same line as Masonry, AA allows just any god that an individual wants to bring along. An alcoholic's god may even

be AA itself! But Dr. Burns won't allow AA to get away with that. She quotes Scripture after Scripture to show that the Word of God will not tolerate, or recognize, confession to another "god" or person, and will not allow some nebulous "Higher Power" to usurp the place of the God of the Bible.

Another important chapter is: "Is Alcoholism A Disease?" So many today, even Christian psychologists, are so blinded by Satan that they cannot read in the Bible that this is NOT a disease but rather, as God calls it, a sin. She includes a little rhyme:

Though now it's a disease

Somewhat akin to colic,

It still takes alcohol

To make an alcoholic.

(a quotation from: "*Liquor:*

The Devil's 'A' Bomb," pp. 7-8)

Then we are given a list of 12 things which must be true if it is truly a disease (to match the 12 Steps?) You have probably heard this one: "It is the only disease that is bottled and sold." This is a welcome addition to the literature on this subject. A thoroughly documented, and Scripturally sound, presentation. You will enjoy reading this and will learn much. Order yours by name and be sure to add postage.

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HIDDEN SECRETS OF MASONRY—Dr. Cathy Burns. Mt. Carmel, PA: Sharing, 1990. 62pp., Paper, \$3.95.

One of the purposes of this book is stated right at the beginning. The author says: "Most peo-

ple who join Masonic organizations have no idea what Masonry ACTUALLY teaches" (p. 5). For those who fit into such a class, this is a short, concise presentation of the inside workings and beliefs of the lodge. Here are four chapters with 276 documenting footnotes! No one needs to ask where a quotation can be found or who said that. Dr. Burns documents everything that she writes. While few have even heard that the "sole aim of Masonry is for man to be able to complete his evolution from the lower forms of nature into a "god-like being," (p. 13) this is one of the documented facts in chapter one.

Chapter two, "Who Is The God Of Masonry?" goes into the Polytheism of Masonry. Clearly shown is the fact that this religion is strictly occultish and could have nothing to do with the Christianity of the Bible. By quoting Masonic authors, Dr. Burns shows that this organization is founded on the "principles, ceremonials and doctrines of the Druids" (p. 33).

Most of the symbols of Masonry are covered. Some are shown in drawings. A number of them show the connection between the Illuminati and the Masons. There is a good discussion regarding the back of our dollar bills and the pyramid with the all-seeing eye above it (p. 37).

Dr. Burns covers many things that other books on the subject miss. She does so in plain, easy to read and understand language. You will enjoy and understand this book. Order by name and please include postage.

* * *

YOUR CHILD AND THE

NEW AGE—Berit Kjos. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990. 180pp., Paper, \$8.95.

This is not just another book on or about the New Age. In all honesty I can say that if you have a child, or a grandchild, or you have an interest in the welfare of children you know, this is a book you cannot afford to pass by. The author, herself the mother of three sons, writes from experience in the front lines of the battle. The book is in two major parts: Part one has to do with the Schools; Part two concerns the Media. The book begins with a Parable which lays a certain amount of ground work for what is to follow. The Parable itself is very interesting and reminds one of the conversation in I Kings 22:19-22.

There are six chapters and three subjects in part one. Every other chapter presents a subject and the following chapter poses the question: What Can Parents Do About, whatever was the subject of the preceding chapter. This is the most practical approach to everyday problems that can be had. There are down-to-earth suggestions concerning a parent's approach to authorities and also direct confrontation with the child. Do not think that the ideas are all the author's. Far from it. She uses Scriptures to show just what God thinks about the subject at hand.

Chapter one deals with Schools and Counterfeit Spirituality. The author states on page seventeen: "In spite of the grandiose claims by New Age leaders and the effective networking among New Age groups, we cannot give them

all the credit for the phenomenal spread of this deception. That belongs to the mastermind behind the scenes, the 'god of forces.' Satan has a brilliant plan and whispers or channels portions of it to any who will listen—anywhere in the world. He intends to set up [a] global government in which he will reign unopposed through his puppet, the Antichrist. To win, he needs to recruit more soldiers. Our children are among those he has targeted." The remainder of the book presents ways and means by which parents can frustrate those plans of Satan.

In part two, of ten chapters, the tools which Satan uses in this war are presented and, again, every other chapter gives the defense or counterattack weapons. Satan's weapons are commonplace things, too often accepted as harmless by Christians: Movies, Toys and Games, Television, Books and Magazines, and Music.

One of the more helpful things in this book is the author's willingness to name names, not only of movies, TV programs and books, but of those responsible for presenting such rot to the public and

especially to our children.

At the end of the main part of the book there are three shorter sections: 1) AFTERWORD, which is very thought provoking and which I would have liked to reproduce in its entirety here if space permitted; 2) GLOSSARY OF NEW AGE TERMS which has just about every term that the average reader would encounter. The source or area of use are also designated, i.e., Occult, Hindu, or New Age. There are over sixty terms listed; 3) LEADING YOUR CHILD TO RECEIVE JESUS AS SAVIOR AND LORD. This is a most important section. Detailed steps are noted and Scripture verses which can be understood by a child are used. One important item should be added. No child will desire to live a Christian life if he or she doesn't see such a life being lived by the parents. In the final analysis, a good example is the best tool to use in the evangelization of one's own family.

This is a very important book and should be read by every parent.

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OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

CLASH OF WORLDS: A Christian's Handbook on Cultures, World Religions, and Evangelism—David Burnett. This is a "How-To" book that has to do with evangelizing people of other cultures and religions. (256pp., Paper, \$12.95)

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ANOTHER GOSPEL: Cults, Alternative Religions and the New

Age Movement—Ruth A. Tucker. This is a comprehensive survey of all the major alternative religions in the United States, including the new ones since the 1960s. There is: 1) A chapter on the New Age Movement; 2) Appendices that include summaries of lesser-known groups; 3) Illustrations and photos of past and present leaders and events; 4) The historical founda-

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tion of the movements in a very readable style; 5) A bibliography of important books on each group, and an index of the people and the topics covered, and much, much more. (462pp., Cloth bound, \$22.95)

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UFOs in the NEW AGE:
Extraterrestrial Messages & the Truth of Scripture—William M. Alnor. The author, a contributing editor for *The Christian Research Journal*, doesn't write about lovable ETs but rather exposes the distortion of Christian beliefs and other dangerous occult activities involved in the New Age UFO movement. (293pp., Paper, \$12.95)

DAWNING of the PAGAN MOON: *Understanding the roots, characteristics, and influences of Western paganism*—David Burnett. This is an in-depth study of today's most controversial and most explosively popular religions. It will help you to understand and defeat paganism. (288pp., Paper, \$10.95)

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