

The great reversal

How demonic doctrines and practices arose in the church in the last 150 years that were the opposite of God's word

Introduction

I, with numerous others, have written many papers explaining the development of heresy in the churches in recent decades. I have looked at this from multiple angles and given explanations and exposition of the truth and have shown how it was perverted by church leaders.

In this paper I want to give a comprehensive analysis of the matter with as little comment as possible. I want to itemise certain fundamental errors and simply show how these contradict Biblical teachings. The errors gained ground because church members were ignorant of Bible teachings; thus the fault also lies with congregations as well as corrupt leaders.

The background to this downgrade of doctrine and practice in the last century is a concerted attack on the church by the devil to suck the life out of Christians by perverting the truth and corrupting practice. All the devil had to do was to promote some church leader into popularity and then get him to spout lies and errors. Before long, a movement would follow these heretical teachings and one strand of doctrine was ruined. By using one church celebrity after another, issuing multiple heresies, gradually the whole church foundation was affected by corrupt ideas.

Now there have been so many attacks on the truth that every sort of historical heresy is now present in the church all at the same time, plus some new aberrations, including paganism and occultism. A full analysis of every error would take many books, here I will outline some of the main issues.

The seeds of the errors have been around for centuries, sometimes a heretical movement dominated a century. However, while one or two heresies tended to dominate, others faded away. Thus the 17th century had to deal with the growing problem of Arminianism and Amyraldism but it didn't have to fight Arianism. The 18th century may have been preoccupied with Deism and humanism (and a few other things) but not with Sabellianism, Ebionism or Gnosticism. The problem today is that virtually every major heresy of the last 2,000 years is upon us all at once. Even heresies once thought to be long dead (like Docetism) have found modern adherents.

In the following demonstrations I will select only a few of the main proponents, sources and quotes. A book of hundreds of pages could not contain all the relevant sources and quotes necessary to document all the proponents of a certain error.

Authoritarianism

This is a constituent of many Charismatic churches and cults. It is where church leaders assume authority over the members of the church, and sometimes an imperious control. Often there is some authoritative formal title given to the despotic person in charge, such as: apostle, prophet, archbishop, pope, and so on, but sometimes the title belies the authoritarianism, such as where a 'pastor', 'brother' or a 'minister' attains despotic control.

Reversal

Church leadership in the Bible is commanded by Jesus to be humble, lowly, the servant of all, and the last of all. Any kind of domination is utterly condemned. For this reason churches are only led by a team of equal elders and decisions are by consensus of all the body. Authoritarian leaders reverse this to be the sole commander-in-chief of a church, or even of multiple churches in a denomination, ruling by despotic power over a hierarchy of sub-leaders and then the congregation, in a feudal system. Ordinary members are often treated as fodder to produce money to support the machine ruled from above.

Proponents of authoritarianism

There are hundreds of examples of this and scores of churches and organisations; here are just a sample.

Non-Charismatic

- Churches with hierarchical leadership structures e.g. Anglican Church, Roman Catholic Church and Episcopalian Church.
- Churches where the pastor or 'senior minister' has total power, even if there are other elders.
- Cults based upon personality or formal office. There are hundreds of these, such as: Scientology, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Shakers, Adventists, Armstrongism, Jonestown, etc.
- The Chinese Shouters. Witness Lee in the USA.

Holiness Movement

- Shiloh Community, 1895-1920, led by Frank Sandford who was eventually imprisoned for manslaughter.
- John Alexander Dowie [1847-1907], Zion City. Faith healer, then apostolic leader of the restorationist Zion community. He eventually proclaimed himself as prophesied Elijah. He died in disgrace.

Charismatic

- Churches that are led by apostles or super-apostles.
- Churches that are led by prophets.
- Churches that are led by a dominant pastor.
- The Children of God cult led by David Berg.
- The New Churches and Pioneer People (UK). The Ground Level (Stuart Bell). Salt and Light (Barney Coombs).
- UK Restoration churches. New Community. New Frontiers. Ministries Without Borders (Keri Jones).
- Juan Carlos Ortiz.

- The Fort Lauderdale Five ('Christian Growth Ministries'; Charles Simpson, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Don Basham, Ern Baxter [and also John Poole].) The US Shepherding Mvt.
- New Apostolic Reformation: Peter Wagner. Every Nation. Victory Churches International. Bethany Cell Church Network. Praise Chapel. New Covenant Ministries. Sovereign Grace Ministries. Christian International Apostolic Network (Bill Hamon). Kingdom Community Network.
- Rick Joyner.

There are many, many more.

Sources

The root source of the idea of hierarchical leadership and authoritarian leaders is demonic; it is the way that the devil controls his legions of demons. This system then found its way into the world and is the way that the institutions of the world organise large numbers of people. We see this in the military rank system, the commercial business world with top executives down through lines of managers and we see it in national governments.

Jesus did not adopt this method of leadership. The apostles did not model this method of leadership but condemned it.

Written sources include:

- *Call to Discipleship*, Juan Carlos Ortiz.
- *Spiritual Authority*, Watchman Nee.
- *Restoration* magazine.
- Harvestime publications.
- *Fulness Magazine* (1970s precursor of the New Churches and Pioneer People).
- New Frontiers publications.
- Christian Growth Ministries publications.
- Witness Lee books.
- New Apostolic Reformation sources.

Teachings

- Root claim: that one man at the top of the leadership structure controls everybody beneath him.
- There is a split between the leadership levels (clergy) and the ordinary church members (laity).
- In the worst cases, claiming that the top leader gets his instructions directly from God and everyone else has to comply. This denies the priesthood of all believers and is blasphemous (the leader claims to be a mediator between men and God).
- It is either forbidden to question the leader or questioning is restricted or questioning is considered as demonic, rebellion, cursed etc.
- The people are considered as the authentication of the leader's ministry. The bigger the congregation, the bigger the authority.
- The leader always promotes 'yes men' to positions of leadership, even if they are unqualified.

Errors

- A failure to see that leadership is service.

- Failure to see that the first are last.
- Failure to follow the example of Jesus.
- Failure to follow the clear teaching of the Bible.
- Failure to see that decision making in the local church is centred in the whole body.
- Failure to build the church as the NT demonstrates (i.e. small meetings in homes led by a team of equal elders).
- Failure to equate leadership with being like a nursing mother or a caring father.
- Failure to institute mutual edification and koinonia.
- Bullying.
- Favouritism.
- Lack of accountability.

Quotes by errorists

[End-time prophets] 'Possess the Spirit without measure. For they are the best of all the generations that have ever been on the face of the earth. ... They will move into things of the supernatural that no one has ever moved in before ... They'll move in the power that Christ did... They themselves will be the generation that's raised to put death itself underneath their feet.

Bob Jones, tape: *Visions & Revelations* (1988) quoted in David Cloud, *The New Prophets*, Way of Life Literature, Oak Harbour, Washington, p10.

[Apostles] are first in authority.

John Noble, '*First Apostles Last Apostles*', last page (no numbered pages).

Every Christian must ... learn to submit.

John Noble, '*First Apostles Last Apostles*', last page (no numbered pages).

Obedience to Sandford's will was non-negotiable and absolute ... Any sign of wilfulness or independence was destroyed. ... Sandford interpreted any dissent as the work of Satan.

Ronald Enroth, *Churches That Abuse*, P61, 65. [Regarding Shiloh Community, 1895-1920.]

I think it's a sin to let any denomination church be bigger than us.

Kip McKean, *The Super Church*, Boston leadership Conference, August 1992. [International Churches of Christ (Boston Movement).]

We [apostles] hear from God and pass God's will to you (sic).

Terry Virgo, heard by the writer in a New Frontiers meeting (then Coastlands) in the 1980s.

Prophets are the most specifically designed individuals to hear God's voice. It is their role to receive and make known the divine messages directed to God's people ... it is apostles, working hand in hand with prophets, who have the task of setting in order and implementing what God wants done on earth.

C Peter Wagner, *Apostles Today*, section 'Intercessors, Prophets and Apostles', Baker Kindle Edition, (2012).

Only through submission to apostles under Christ will the church have apostolic authority.

John Kingsley Alley, *The Apostolic Revelation: The Reformation of the Church*, Peace Publishing, p87.

Leaders and ministries of the church are meant to recognise the authority of Christ on the apostles, and give the willing submission of their own hearts to Christ and the apostle whom Christ sends them.

John Kingsley Alley, *The Apostolic Revelation: The Reformation of the Church*, Peace Publishing, p87.

Biblical teaching

Attitude

Do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Matt 23:8 [I.e. do not take any title of religious authority over men.]

And He [Jesus] sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, 'If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all'. Mk 9:35

But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. Mk 10:42-45

Do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek *them*. Jer 45:5

For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. Lk 14:11

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Jm 4:6

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 1 Pt 5:2-3

Elders alone lead the church

From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. ... Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [episkopos, bishop], to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:17, 28 [These verses show that elders and bishops are the same people.]

On the following *day* Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. Acts 21:18

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour. 1 Tim 5:17

For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you. Titus 1:5

Let him call for the elders of the church. Jm 5:14

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder. 1 Pt 5:1

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another. 1 Pt 5:5

Elders are also called:

- Leaders (1 Tim 5:17, 'rule', *proistemi* = to go before, to lead; Heb 13:7, 17, 24, *hegeomai*, 'to lead after consideration').
- Pastor-teachers (Eph 4:11) i.e. shepherds and instructors.
- Steersmen (NKJV 'administrations', KJV 'governors'; 1 Cor 12:28; lit. a pilot).
- Bishops ('overseer', the term preferred by Greeks; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1ff.; Titus 1:7).

Conclusion

There is no place for authoritarianism in God's church. Church meetings are small and meet in homes where any kind of despotic leader is entirely inappropriate. In any case, God's prescribed leadership for the church is a team of equal elders with no such thing as a senior pastor.

All large churches that have a hierarchy and powerful leaders, culminating in an authoritarian leader are completely unbiblical and in fact follow a demonic system.

Decisionism

This refers to a variety of theological systems that pervert the Gospel and deny the sovereignty of God in grace. The fundamental notion is to elevate the place of man in salvation, but it includes multiple other heresies.

This is a vast subject to cover, since it involves many doctrinal systems, that we can only summarise and simplify here.

Reversal

The Bible shows that God is completely sovereign in salvation. Man can do nothing to initiate or even co-operate, in conversion. He must be made willing by grace. Decisionism is the various theological systems which claim that man either needs no salvation at all, initiates his own salvation by free will, or co-operates with God in salvation using free will to enable grace to work.

Proponents

Historical, Pre-Reformation

- Pelagius (British monk preaching in Rome).
- Many Celtic saints were Pelagians though there were attempts to combat this.¹
- The original Semi-Pelagians were: Cassian [d. 440,], Vincent of Lerius [d. 450], Faustus of Rheghuim [d. 485], Honoratus [bishop of Marseilles].
- Almost all Roman Catholics except genuine Augustinians.
- Abelard [1079–1142] who propounded the Moral Influence or Example theory of the atonement (see later).

Historical Post-Reformation

- Erasmus (humanist champion of free will).
- Spanish Jesuit Luis Molina [1535-1600].
- Jacob Arminius [1560–1609]; the Remonstrants (followers of Arminius); other followers: Samuel Hoord (Oxford theologian), Walter Browne, Robert Shelford (Cambridge University), John Goodwin (Puritan Arminian).
- Archbishop Laud (a closet Jesuit).
- Amyraldians included: Moise Amyraut, Richard Baxter and John Davenant.
- Later Arminians included John Wesley [1703–91], Hugo Grotius [1583–1645, see later], the first Baptists in England then the General Baptists.
- Unitarians.

¹ Germanus was from Auxerre, Gaul, and was invited by British bishops to lead two missions to Britain to combat the Pelagian heresy in 429 and 447. He built and strengthened churches. Welsh monasticism derives from his work.

- Quakers.

Modern

- DL Moody.
- RA Torrey.
- Billy Graham.
- Tim Lahaye.
- Luis Palau.
- Most Classical Pentecostals are Wesleyan Arminians.
- Methodists.
- Roman Catholics are Semi-Pelagian.
- Quakers.
- Most evangelistic organisations, such as Campus Crusade for Christ (now Agape).
- Most Charismatics are Arminian or worse (e.g. Roger Forster, Gerald Coates, Graham Kendrick) and even those that claim to be Calvinistic are Amyraldian (e.g. New Frontiers).
- In fact the vast majority of Gospel preachers are Decisionist.

Sources

- Abelard's [1079-1142] rationalistic 'Moral Influence' theory. [God does not need satisfying for sin. Christ did not suffer God's wrath for sin but suffered as a perfect example of a man who honoured the law because of God's love. Christ's death is then accepted instead of man's death. Men serve God by being inspired by Christ's example; i.e. by good works.]
- The works of James Arminius.
- The works of the Remonstrants (followers of Arminius).
- Roman Catholic sources.
- Amyraldian sources, especially the school of Saumur.
- *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (1646) [Amyraldian.].
- Most Dispensational works are Arminian.
- Wesleyan sources.
- Holiness Movement sources.
- Anglican sources.
- Most Brethren sources.
- The majority of modern books on the Gospel and the theology of salvation.

Teachings

- Root claims: God loves everybody. Jesus died for everybody. Man can choose to believe and be saved. Free will reigns.
- Pelagianism. [Pelagius denied total depravity, election, the imputation of Adam's guilt, the need of redemption and upheld that man has the power to save himself through good works. Man's nature was not totally depraved but innocent and man could use his free will to choose holiness. He reasoned that if man is responsible, he must be able; he can choose the good and perform it]
- Semi-Pelagianism. [Fallen man has some power to do good, but needs grace as well after man's will seeks it first. Grace follows man's decision. It taught that man, though fallen, was not spiritually dead, only sick, and has some power to do good but needs

grace as well which is found through the Bible. Man's will co-operates with the Spirit in regeneration and initiates it by free will. Man's decision is supreme and election is denied. This synergistic system (the basis of Arminianism) forms the essence of all future synergistic errors (i.e. man co-operating with God in conversion).]

- Arminianism. [James Arminius; Early 17th c. Fallen man has power to believe, and choose grace. Denial of justification by God's gift of faith. Denial of all the doctrines of grace.]
- Wesleyan Methodism was a slightly different form of Arminianism.²
- Amyraldism. Similar to 4-Point Calvinism. [A self-contradictory halfway house between Calvinism and Arminianism. Universal atonement but election upheld.]
- Marrow Theology. This was a form of disguised Amyraldism ('*Christ is dead for all*'). that prevailed amongst the Marrowmen during a theological controversy in Scotland after 1720.
- Universalism. [Everyone is saved; no hell.]
- Socinianism. [Faustus Socinus; Late 16th c. Men repent by their own power. There is no penal atonement or universal atonement; Christ's death was just a moral example. The cross did not atone for sin, nor did it move God to pardon sin. Christ saves men by showing an example of faith and obedience in his life and death.]
- Moral Government. [The ideas of Grotius based upon the medieval Moral Example Theory of the atonement. Influenced by Abelard and propounded by Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) to make a bridge between Reformed doctrine and Socinian teachings. It states that Christ did not die as a substitute for man's sin, did not suffer God's wrath for sin, but suffered as a perfect example of a man who honoured the law. This death is then accepted by God to satisfy the law that sin demands death; Christ's death being accepted instead of man's death. As a result of the cross, God relaxed the rule that men should die for sin and the cross also becomes a deterrent. The cause of the cross was God's sense of right and wrong, not the need to propitiate wrath. God's justice does not require all the demands of the law to be met, he can alter his requirements as he sees fit. Salvation becomes understanding what to do, and doing it after seeing the cross. The combination of Abelard's Moral Influence theory and Grotius' Governmental Theory is the Moral Government theology evidenced in heretics like Charles Finney, where salvation becomes completely Pelagian.]
- Fullerism. [I.e. Andrew Fuller's Gospel. A combination of Amyraldism, Marrow Theology, New Divinity and Moral Government ideas to make Gospel preaching more amenable to sinners. Where it prevailed it frequently led to Socinianism. Fuller is today championed by people such as John Piper, Tom Nettles, Michael Haykin, Errol Hulse, Robert Oliver, Crawford Gribben, The Banner of Truth Trust and Sword & Trowel Magazine (Peter Masters).]
- New Divinity and New Haven Theology. [The corruption of New England Calvinism after the death of Jonathan Edwards, which became more and more Arminian and rationalistic. Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803), Joseph Bellamy (1719-1790), Timothy Dwight (1752-1817), Nathaniel Taylor (1786-1858)]
- Oberlin Theology [CG Finney school; Moral Government (Grotianism) plus New Divinity. Finney was a virtual Pelagian.]
- The Free Offer Gospel. [God loves everyone and Jesus died for everyone yet God chooses people. Virtually Amyraldism.]

² So-called 'Evangelical Arminianism'. Wesley held to total depravity and the need of supernatural (prevenient) grace to effect salvation. This is similar to Semi-Augustinianism (see later).

Practices

- Preaching the wrong Gospel, which is accursed (Gal 1:6-9).
- Telling people that God loves them and Jesus died for them.
- Errors of Gospel presentation centring upon men: getting people to raise a hand, stand up, come to the front etc. during a meeting to identify that they want to be saved.
- Getting people to recite a set prayer and then telling them that they are saved.
- Using emotional tactics and peer pressure in large meetings.
- Crusade evangelism. [Surveys show that the success rate of this method is abysmal over several years.]
- Alpha Courses. [Based upon socialising, love bombing, dumbed-down Gospel teaching and centring upon Charismatic mysticism.]

Errors

- Denial of the sovereignty of God.
- Denial of God's decree of predestination.
- Blasphemy of the work and life of Christ.
- Denial of all the doctrines of grace (total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints).
- Elevation of the powers of man.

Quotes by errorists

Arminianism

The Jesuits found their whole system of grace and free-will; agreeing with the Semipelagians, against the Jansenists [a revival of Augustinianism] and St. Augustine. Bower's *History of the Popes*, Vol. 1, p350.

They [Papists and others] assert that no fouler blasphemy against God can be thought or expressed, than is contained in the doctrine of predestination.

J. Arminius, *Works*, p115.

We have planted that soveraigne drugge Arminianisme, which we hope will purge the Protestants from their heresie; and it flourisheth and bears fruit in due season. For the better prevention of the Puritanes, the Arminians have already locked up the Duke's [of Buckingham, patron of Laud] ears; and we have those of our own religion, which stand continually at the Duke's chamber, to see who goes in and out ... Our foundation is Arminianisme, ... This we second and enforce by probable arguments.

The Hidden Works of Darkness, p89-90, (1645). *The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady*, p55. The Jesuit corruption of the 17th century Church of England.

I may boast of mine own, when I obey God's grace, which it was in my power not to obey, as well as to obey.

Grevinchovius [Nicholas Grevinckhoven, d. 1632, minister of the Arminian party.]

All unregenerate men have, by virtue of their free-will, a power of resisting the Holy Spirit, of rejecting the offered grace of God, of contemning the counsel of God concerning themselves, of refusing the gospel of grace, of not opening the heart to him that knocketh.

Arminius, *Artic. Perpend.*

The efficacy of the death of Christ depends wholly on us.

Remonstrant's *Apology*

The providence of God doth not determine the will of man.
Arminius, *Artic. Perpen.*

True conversion and the performance of good works is a condition required on our part before justification.
Filius Arm. *Praef. ad cap. 7. ad Rem.*

There is nothing more vain and foolish than to ascribe faith and regeneration to the merit of Christ.
Remonstrant, *Apology.*

We retain still after the fall a power of believing and of repentance, because Adam lost not this ability.
Rem. Declar. Sen. in Synod.

Faith is not obtained by the death of Christ.
Corvinus, *ad Molin.*, cap. 28. p. 419.

The sole and only cause of election is not the will of God, but the respect of our obedience.
Episcopius [Simon Episcopius (1583–1643) was a Dutch theologian and Remonstrant at the Synod of Dort. His name is the Latinised form of his Dutch name ‘Simon Bischoop’.]

Our free-wills (sic) have such an absolute and uncontrollable power in the territory of all human actions, that no influence of God’s providence, no certainty of his decree, no unchangeableness of his purpose, can sway it at all in its free determinations.
Remon. Act. Synod, p16.

Conversion and the performance of good works is a condition preredquired to justification.
Filius Arm. *Praef. ad cap. 7. ad Rem.*

I believe, that the grace of God ...may be, and hath been, resisted.
John Wesley; *Works*, Vol 13, p604.

I do not believe the doctrine of irresistible grace.
John Wesley; *Works*, Vol 10, p449.

The God of love is willing to save all the souls that he has made. ... But he will not force them to accept it; he leaves them in the hands of their own counsel.
John Wesley; *Works*, Vol 7, p355.

Men are as free in believing or not believing as if he [God] did not know it at all. Indeed, if man were not free, he could not be held accountable either for his thoughts, words, or actions. If he were not free, he would not be capable either of reward or punishment; he would be incapable either of virtue or vice, of being either morally good or bad.
John Wesley; *Works*, Vol 6, p256.

We have received it as a maxim, that ‘a man is to do nothing in order to justification.’ Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God, should ‘cease from evil, and learn to do well.’
John Wesley; *Works*, Vol 8, p396-7.

Yet I believe, (and that without the least self-contradiction,) that final salvation is ‘by works as a condition.’
John Wesley; *Works*, Vol 10, p432.

Adding more modern quotes would be tiresome and pointless. These quotes are the root of the issue, from Arminius, from the Remonstrants (his followers) and from John Wesley who is the reason that Arminianism gained a following in England.

Biblical teaching

God is sovereign in salvation

The Lord GOD has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away. Isa 50:5

The Son gives life to whom He will. Jn 5:21

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. Jn 6:44

Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father. Jn 6:65

You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. Jn 17:2

The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. Acts 16:14

He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. Rm 9:18

Salvation is of the Lord

Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD. Ex 14:13

Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD. Ps 27:1

The salvation of the righteous *is* from the LORD; *He is* their strength. Ps 37:39

Our God *is* the God of salvation; and to GOD the Lord *belong* escapes from death. Ps 68:20

The LORD has made known His salvation. Ps 98:2

The salvation of our God. Isa 52:10

Truly, in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel. Jer 3:23

Salvation *is* of the LORD. Jonah 2:9

Salvation and glory and honour and power *belong* to the Lord our God! Rev 19:1

God predestines men to salvation or doom

The LORD has made all for Himself, yes, even the wicked for the day of doom. Prov 16:4

The wicked are reserved for the day of doom; they shall be brought out on the day of wrath. Job 21:30

What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory. Rm 9:22-23

The riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence ... according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself. Eph 1:7-9

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will. Eph 1:11

[God] has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began. 2 Tim 1:9

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. 1 Pt 2:8

For a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. 2 Pt 2:3

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment. 2 Pt 2:9

For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation. Jude 1:4

The choice to do spiritual good requires supernatural power from God

Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Jn 1:13

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Jn 3:6

This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent. Jn 6:29

By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God. Eph 2:8

For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake. Phil 1:29

Choosing God comes from sovereign grace

Choosing Christ, deciding to believe and repent, is a gift of sovereign grace given only to the elect.

You have also done all our works in us. Isa 26:12

Many are called, but few chosen. Matt 20:16

For many are called, but few *are* chosen. Matt 22:14

Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Jn 1:13

Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.' Jn 6:29

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit. Jn 15:16

Him God has exalted to His right hand *to be* Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:31

God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. Acts 11:18

Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. Acts 14:27

Man cannot save himself because he has no power

Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? No one! Job 14:4

The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek *God*; *God is* in none of his thoughts. Ps 10:4

Thus says the LORD: 'Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength.' Jer 17:5

'Who then can be saved?' But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With men *it is* impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible'. Mk 10:26-27 (see also Matt and Lk)

There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one. Rm 3:10-12

By the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight. Rm 3:20

He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion'. So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. Rm 9:15-16

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor 2:14

Man cannot save himself because he is blind to grace

Those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe. 2 Cor 4:3-4

Their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Eph 4:18-19

Man cannot save himself because he is enslaved to sin

Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.' Jn 8:34

You were slaves of sin. Rm 6:17

[Men] all their lifetime [are] subject to bondage. Heb 2:15

Man cannot save himself because he can only sin and do no good

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that every intent* of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. Gen 6:5 [Everything a sinful man does is wicked, even that which seems good to others.]

Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? No one! Job 14:4 [Everything done by man comes from an unclean source. If the root is bad the fruit is bad also.]

The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD. Prov 15:8 [Even religious acts are wicked.]

The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination. Prov 21:27

The ploughing of the wicked *are* sin. Prov 21:4 [Even neutral acts done by the reprobate are wicked.]

One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *is* an abomination. Prov 28:9 [God does not hear the prayers of the wicked, they are an abomination.]

There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one. Rm 3:10-12 [No man can do any good, thus he cannot believe in Christ without special grace.]

Man cannot save himself because he is dead to grace

And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Eph 2:1 [A dead man cannot save himself.]

We were dead in trespasses. Eph 2:5

God does not love everybody

You shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them. Lev 20:23

You hate all workers of iniquity. Ps 5:5

The wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates. Ps 11:5

Everyone proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD. Prov 16:5

All their wickedness *is* in Gilgal, for there I hated them. Because of the evil of their deeds. Hos 9:15

I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Zech 11:8

Says the LORD. 'Yet Jacob I have loved; but Esau I have hated, and laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness'. Mal 1:2-3

As it is written, 'Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated'. Rm 9:13

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Jm 4:6

Faith is a gift from God

Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent'. Jn 6:29

They reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. Acts 14:27

Those who had believed through grace. Acts 18:27

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Eph 2:8-9

For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake. Phil 1:29

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith. Heb 12:2

Repentance is a gift from God

God has exalted to His right hand *to be* Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:31

God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. Acts 11:18

The goodness of God leads you to repentance. Rm 2:4

God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will. 2 Tim 2:25-26

Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. Heb 12:16-17 [I.e. repentance cannot be worked up by man even if he wants to.]

The denial of Justification by faith ALONE

Reversal

This doctrine, the bedrock of salvation, teaches that being justified with God is a sovereign act of God that is received by faith, that is given graciously to the elect, in order to appropriate salvation and have a righteous standing in heaven. It is founded upon the atonement of Christ. Many heresies deny this, either by claiming that man needs no justification (e.g. Pelagianism or Socinianism) or by claiming that man contributes to his justification through good works (e.g. Romanism, Oberlin theology).

Proponents

Ancient

Judaisers, Ebionism, Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Semi-Augustinianism [Caesarius the bishop of Arles, 470-543; Second Council of Orange, 529].

Pre-Reformation

Romanism.

Post-Reformation

Arminianism, Socinianism, Fullerism, Oberlin Theology (CG Finney – his Pelagianism questions whether Finney was even a genuine believer).

Modern

- Post Vatican II Romanism. [Which condemns belief in justification by faith alone.]
- Methodists.
- Unitarians.
- Pentecostalism and Charismaticism where conversion depends upon a mystical experience rather than doctrine.
- Alpha Courses. [Where people are considered saved because they fell over after a manipulated emotional experience.]
- Strict Baptists that adhere to eternal justification and deny Reformed theology.
- The New Perspective on Paul [EP Sanders, James Dunn, NT Wright, Alan Sogate, John Armstrong, Don Garlington, Thom Smith, Scott Hafeman, Robert Gundry].
- Federal Vision [Auburn Avenue Theology: Norman Shepherd, Douglas Wilson, Duane Garner, Mitch Lusk, John Kinnear, Steve Schlissel, John Barach, Peter J. Leithart, James Jordan and Steve Wilkins.].
- Liberal theology.
- Liberation Theology.

Sources

- Pelagius and his followers; including some Celtic English / Irish writers.
- CG Finney's *Systematic Theology*.
- The works of The New Perspective on Paul authors.
- The works of Federal Vision authors.
- The works of liberal theologians.
- The works of some Methodists.
- Roman Catholic sources.
- The works of many Messianic Christians.

Teachings

- Judaizers. [Early apostolic churches that were influenced by Jewish preachers demanding that Christians follow the Law of Moses, thus denying justification (see Galatians).]
- Ebionism. [An early cult which was a mixture of Essene folk from Qumran and legalistic Christians. Eventually this sect exalted the law, rejected the letters of Paul and rejected the pre-incarnate life and divinity of Christ. They taught that keeping the Mosaic Law was essential for salvation]
- Pelagianism. [Man is not dead in sins and fully able. No election, no redemption. Human good works by free will.]
- Semi-Pelagianism. [Man fallen but not dead in sin. Free will initiates grace, man then co-operates [good works] with the Spirit. Modern counterpart: Arminianism.]
- Semi-Augustinianism. [Man fallen. Prevenient grace comes to all to trigger free will, and then man co-operates with God in salvation doing good works. Modern counterpart: Evangelical Arminianism (Methodism)]
- Romanism. [Rome denied (and still denies) justification by faith alone. Romanism is essentially a Semi-Pelagian religion, based on works righteousness. It teaches the

necessity of the works-righteousness of the sinner and also of the church leadership officiating various supposed means of grace. Rome also teaches that justification can be received in baptism and can be lost.]

- Modern Lutheranism. [Lutherans soon departed from Luther's position. Today they are similar to Arminians (except the Missouri Synod). They teach infant baptism and baptismal regeneration,³ free will works and the loss of salvation.]
- Arminianism, Fullerism – see 'Decisionism'.
- Socinianism. [No justification by faith necessary. God does not need a satisfaction by atonement.]
- Government Theology of Finney. [Similar to Grotianism. God sovereignly pardons sinners without the acquittal of a judge, not a forensic system. It is pardon with conditions; viz. penitence and reformed behaviour, which must be continued to the end. This is human merit.]
- Liberal theology (20th c.). [God is not involved in any supernatural way. He is a moral figurehead. Man autonomous. God is dead.]
- New Perspective on Paul (Late 20th c. Early 21st c.). [Denies justification by faith based on a historical overview making Paul's statements in Romans mean outward inclusion in the covenant community (Gentiles being included in a new community of Jews and Greeks).]
- Federal Vision (Early 21st c.). [Denies justification by faith based on a restatement of the covenant.]

Errors

- Denial of justification by faith.
- Denial of sovereign grace.
- Baptismal regeneration.
- Affirmation of man's ability to believe without grace.
- Affirmation of a conditional covenant.
- Affirmation of man's ability to conform perfectly to the law and not need grace (Pelagianism). Meritorious works.
- Affirmation of man's ability to believe on the basis of an unbiblical prevenient grace given to all men if they choose to use it.⁴ (Semi-Augustinianism, Wesleyan Arminianism).
- Denial of the gift of Christ's righteousness within justification. Denial of imputed righteousness. (Many heretics and some Strict Baptists).
- Teaching the necessity of the ordinances of the church in order to be justified, such as baptism (Roman Catholicism).
- Teaching the necessity of good works of faith to gain justification (yet denying meritorious works apart from faith). Thus the two types of good works in Federal Vision. [True justification will produce works of faith but no human work can merit it.]

Quotes by errorists

See 'Arminianism'.

³ An infant cannot behave rationally and cannot exercise faith. Lutherans affirm that water baptism is necessary for salvation.

⁴ Biblical sovereign grace is given only to the elect.

The only man who has the right to say that he is justified by grace alone is the man who has left all to follow Christ. [This bases justification upon human works.]

Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Some theologians have made justification a condition of sanctification, instead of making sanctification a condition of justification ... [Sanctification] is a state of consecration to Him. This is present obedience to the moral law ... It certainly cannot be true that God accepts and justifies the sinner in his sins. The Bible ... conditions justification upon sanctification in the sense of present obedience to God ... By sanctification being a condition of justification, the following are intended: 1) That present, full and entire consecration of the heart and life to God and his service, is an unalterable condition of present pardon of past sin, and of present acceptance with God. 2) That the penitent soul remains justified no longer than his full-hearted consecration continues.

CG Finney; Systematic Theology, Bethany House (1976), p368-9.

Our own works, or obedience to the law or to the Gospel, are not the ground or foundation of our justification ... They are the conditions of our justification ... None of these must be omitted upon pain of eternal damnation. [This is pure Pelagianism; man is saved by his own obedience and only continues to be saved if he continues to obey.]

CG Finney, Systematic Theology, p375.

[Justification] is not founded in Christ's literally suffering the exact penalty of the law for them, and in this sense literally purchasing their justification and eternal salvation. ... [The atonement is not] a proper full payment of the debt of the justified.

CG Finney, Systematic Theology, p373, 374.

Neither is the atonement nor anything in the mediatorial work of Christ, the foundation of our justification.

CG Finney, Systematic Theology, p375-6.

Justification is conferred in Baptism, the sacrament of faith. It conforms us to the righteousness of God.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, part three, section one, chapter three, article 2.1, 1992.

Biblical teaching

The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'.
Rm 1:17

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness. Rm 3:21-25

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Rm 3:28

There is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.
Rm 3:30

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. Rm 4:5

It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offences, and was raised because of our justification. Rm 4:24-25

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Rm 5:1

Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? Rm 8:30-31

A man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. Gal 2:16

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree'), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Gal 3:13-14

The Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Gal 3:22-24

And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith. Phil 3:9

Conclusion

This is so important because justification by faith is the bedrock of salvation. If this is corrupted, salvation is wrecked. Note Luther, '*if this doctrine of justification is lost, the whole Christian doctrine is lost*'.

Liberalism

Under this heading we include a number of doctrines and practices which all serve to undermine the truth of God's word and even his very existence.

Definitions

*Secular liberalism*⁵

Essentially this is a progressive political outlook where one considers the opinions of people other than oneself. It usually sides with Left-Wing politics.

It is supposedly centred on safeguarding the freedom of the individual within society, but in many cases it leads to repression ('nanny-state'). Liberal ideas first took shape in the struggle for religious toleration in the 16th and 17th centuries. The liberal view was that religion was a private matter; it was not the business of the state to enforce a particular creed. This later developed into a more general doctrine of the limited and constitutional state, whose boundaries were set by the natural rights of the individual (for instance in the political thought of Locke).

Around 1800 liberalism became associated with the doctrines of the free market and laissez-faire, and reducing the role of the state in the economic sphere (this became the basis of Tory policy). This tendency was reversed later in the 19th century with the arrival of 'New Liberalism', committed to social reform and welfare legislation.

⁵ I acknowledge a debt from the New Oxford Encyclopaedia and Dictionary here.

In contemporary debate both schools of thought are represented, some liberals harking back to the classical economic ideas of the late 18th century (for instance, Hayek), others embracing the mixed economy and the welfare state (for instance, Rawls). Despite their economic disagreements, liberals unite in upholding the importance of personal liberty in the face of encroachment by the state, leading to demands for constitutional government, civil rights, and the protection of privacy. Liberals today are closely related to Social Democrats.

Church liberalism

This was a humanist, modernist theological movement, which freely criticised all theological standards. It was also known at first as 'Modernism', as part of the modernistic approach in society that was utopian before two world wars ruined its ideals. Modernism referred to its preference for the new as opposed to the old and was closely connected to scientism, when there was optimism about potential scientific achievements.

It is also closely connected to evolutionary theory, which was very popular at the time liberalism developed. This gave rise to a number of evolutionary theories about Biblical revelation (such as the patriarchs being unable to read or write).

In essence it was a movement demanding freedom from all a priori theological meanings; that is, all Biblical doctrines can be denied if not proven empirically. Thus some liberal theologians averred that since the existence of God cannot be absolutely proven, God doesn't exist. Many claimed that miracles were irrational and therefore never happened. It was reliance upon human wisdom. In every case time has proven the liberals wrong.

Liberalism went back to the beginning of church history when heretics questioned God's revelation, but it took off as a movement with Schleiermacher, after the Enlightenment.

Key components of liberalism include Higher Critical theories about the origins, composition and authenticity of the Bible. Divine revelation and inspiration were denied; the Bible was claimed to be written by men, usually long after the time claimed in the Bible. From this the very doctrine of God was attacked, claiming that God arose from human consciousness; thus the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the atonement and the resurrection were all denied. After this it was a small step to deny sin, the devil, hell, and grace. Instead of a Gospel of grace, liberals preached a social gospel based on the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Liberalism infected all sorts of churches, leaders, institutions, and seminaries and was promoted in a multitude of books, pamphlets and sermons. However, after WWI it began to wane as people became less convinced about optimism for man's future.

Liberalism resurfaced in a lesser form in later movements, such as Neo-Orthodoxy (dialectic theology), existentialism, or socialism. Many statements made within the Charismatic Movement are basically liberal in tone. Many liberals became complete apostates and atheists.

Liberalism can also be called scepticism.

Liberation Theology

This is a very different thing. This is the Catholic activist theology of Latin America to bring about a Communistic liberation of the poor. It is Christianity plus Marxism.

Reversal

The teachings of liberalism (Liberal Theology, liberalism, liberal schools of interpretation, liberal attitudes) serve the purpose of either reversing or annihilating God's truth. The truth of God and his word is turned into a lie. It is an attack on truth.

Proponents

Vast numbers of people in different schools. For example:

Historic

- Friedrich DE Schleiermacher [1768-1834].
- New Divinity.
- Unitarianism.
- The Social Gospel. Walter Rauschenbusch [1861-1918].
- Ecumenism.
- Scepticism.
- Higher Criticism. Johann Eichorn [1752-1827], Julius Wellhausen etc.
- Julius Wellhausen [1844-1918].
- SR Driver [1846-1914].
- Charles A Briggs [1841-1913].
- Albrecht Ritschl [1822-1889]. Focused on the kingdom of God as a transformed society.
- Paul Tillich [1886-1965].
- Rudolph Bultmann [1884-1976]. Propounded Form Criticism. The Gospels can be broken down into smaller, earlier units of oral tradition which are not authentic. Suggested that John's Gospel was based on Gnosticism.
- Adolf von Harnack [1851-1930]. German theologian and church historian.
- Henry Ward Beecher [1813-1887], American Social Gospel preacher.

Modern

- Albert Schweitzer [1875-1965].
- Harry Emerson Fosdick [1878-1969].
- Paul Tillich [1886-1965] synthesised liberal theology with existentialist philosophy, became Neo-Orthodox.
- Reinhold Niebuhr [1893-1971].
- Richard Niebuhr [1894-1962].
- Emil Brunner [1889-1966].
- Leslie Weatherhead [1893-1976].
- JAT Robinson [1919-1983].
- John Shelby Spong [1931-].
- John Hick [1922-2012].
- Hans Kung [1928-] Swiss Catholic theologian.
- Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza [1938-] German Feminist theologian.
- Marcus Borg (*The Jesus Seminar*).
- The Anglican Church became thoroughly liberal over 100 years ago and remains so in formal statements.
- Matthew Fox [1940-].
- Rob Bell [1870-] Former pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church, Grandville, Michigan until 2012.

- Brian McLaren (Emerging Church).
- Rick Warren (Purpose Driven Church).
- Tony Campolo.

Sources

- Rob Bell, *Love Wins*, (2011).
- JAT Robinson, *Honest to God*.
- Marcus J Borg, *Jesus: Uncovering the life, teachings and relevance of a religious revolutionary*.
- Brian D McLaren, *A self-discovery guide for your spiritual quest*.
- Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian faith*.
- Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the history of Ancient Israel*.
- Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the NT*.
- Rudolf Bultmann, *The history of the synoptic tradition*.
- Rudolf Bultmann, *NT mythology and other basic writings*.
- Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*.
- Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology*.

Teachings

- A focus upon man, humanism.
- Self-consciousness is more important than revealed truth.
- Truth is empirical not revealed.
- The need to demythologise the Bible.
- The Documentary Hypothesis. [As man became more sophisticated in history, so the Bible gradually portrays a more sophisticated picture of God. Complex theology, therefore, cannot be ancient. Moses did not write the Pentateuch; instead a series of individuals (termed J, E, P, H, D) wrote various documents, being edited together after the exile, before 300 BC. Frequently a single verse is claimed to have been written by two authors.] Wellhausen and others.
- The Gospels are conflicting stories written late after the death of Christ.
- Jesus isn't God, but an exemplary man.
- Creation is good, human existence is social.
- Man is not sinful. Sin is not heinous but a wrongful desire for independence.
- Man is being gradually perfected, society is improving.
- Miracles did not really happen. Miracles are myths, there was no Garden of Eden, no virgin birth, no resurrection and no flood. The Bible is just the same as the Hindu Upanishads or Bhagavad Gita.
- The resurrection is a myth.

Errors

- Denial of Biblical inspiration.
- Denial of the authority and authenticity of the Bible.
- Denial of many doctrines including: the Trinity, the sovereignty of God, the deity of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the second coming, heaven, hell, atonement, grace, sin and the devil.
- Denial of all miracles.

- Worldliness.

Quotes from errorists

Truth is where God's been. Revelation is where God is. ... A true God chaser is not happy with just past truth; he must have present truth. God chasers don't want to just study from the mouldy pages of what God has done; they're anxious to see what God is doing.

Tommy Tenney, *The God Chasers*, Introduction.

This is misguided [the doctrines of heaven and hell] and toxic and ultimately subverts the contagious spread of Jesus' message of love, peace, forgiveness and joy that our world desperately needs to hear.

Rob Bell, *Love Wins* (2011).

We should consider the possibility that many, and perhaps even all, of Jesus' hell-fire or end-of-the-universe statements refer not to post-mortem judgment but to the very historic consequences of rejecting his kingdom message of reconciliation and peacemaking. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 67-70 seems to many people to fulfil much of what we have traditionally understood as hell.

Brian McLaren, *Christianity Today*, archives.

In a universe of love there can be no heaven which tolerates a chamber of horrors no hell for any.

John Robinson, *In the end, God*, p133.

The full perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world supposed to have been made on Calvary, I believe, for most men today more demythologising even than the resurrection.

John Robinson, *Honest to God*, (1962), p79

Whatever it was that people experience in Jesus has today come to be identified with medieval doctrines based on premodern assumptions that are no longer believable.

John Shelby Spong.

Death is ultimately a dimension of life through which we journey into timelessness.

John Shelby Spong.

The Gospels are first-century narrations based on first-century interpretations. Therefore they are a first-century filtering of the experience of Jesus. They have never been other than that. We must read them today not to discover the literal truth about Jesus, but rather be led into the Jesus experience they were seeking to convey. That experience always lies behind the distortions. ... The Gospels are not in any sense holy, they are not accurate, and they are not to be confused with reality.

John Shelby Spong, *Why Christianity must change or die*.

Healing, for Jung, comes with the embrace of our shadow, the acceptance of our evil. Evil too is part of God, Jung suggested, because it too is a part of Being.

John Shelby Spong, *A new Christianity for the world*.

We know that life has emerged from a single cell that evolved into self-conscious complexity over billions of years. There was no original perfection. If there was no original perfection, then there could never have been a fall from perfection. If there was no fall, then there is no such thing as 'original sin' and thus no need for the waters of baptism to wash our sins away. ... So most of our Christology is bankrupt. Many popular titles that we have applied to Jesus, such as 'saviour', 'redeemer', and 'rescuer' no longer make sense.

John Shelby Spong, *Biblical literalism: A Gentile heresy*.

Biblical teaching

The sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish. Matt 12:39-40 [I.e. Jesus accepted that the miracle of Jonah in the fish was real.]

As the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Matt 24:37-39 [I.e. Jesus accepted that the flood really happened.]

Go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded. Lk 5:14 [I.e. Jesus confirmed that the Books of Moses were written by Moses.]

Your word is truth. Jn 17:17

Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent'. 1 Cor 1:17-19

We have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 2 Cor 4:2

He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. Col 1:15-17 [Christ is God.]

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses. Col 2:13 [The effects of the atonement are real.]

All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17

We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 2 Pt 1:16

Conclusion

Liberal theology is nothing but a false religion, an alternate religion to Biblical Christianity.

It originally centred on the powers of man at a time when man was achieving great things and technology was developing fast. This led to humanism, materialism and utopianism. But this did not last long, as man's wickedness became obvious in revolutions and world wars.

Furthermore, the claims of Higher Criticism and of errors in the Bible were gradually proved to be wrong. It was discovered that writing began very early for example (e.g. Cuneiform scripts). Also archaeology gradually found more and more artefacts proving Bible stories, such as the existence of the Hittite Empire which Liberal theologians had said were a myth.

Liberal teachers often became atheists or fell into sin and liberal churches gradually faded away or became completely apostate.

From time to time liberal ideas appear again in new movements (such as the Emerging Church), but these will fail in time.

Mysticism

A key feature of modern churches, especially the Charismatic variety, is the substitution of mysticism for spirituality. Spirituality involves union with Christ and being filled / led by the Spirit and always results in obedience to God's word in practice. It is never irrational and does not lead to losing self-control.

Mysticism results from passivity or certain physical and psychic disciplines and may involve psychic phenomena but is always a withdrawing into the self and focusing upon emotionalism instead of rationality. Lack of self-control is the norm.

Analysing this succinctly is very difficult because there are such a huge variety of methods, activities, resultant phenomena and so on. In fact, there are whole schools of mystical training based on one method as opposed to another one.

There are two types of modern Christian mystics (in my view). The first is a person influenced by historic mystics, and especially by Catholic mystics. Usually this leads to some form of contemplative prayer technique. The second is a person that knows nothing about historical mystics or mystical knowledge but practises mysticism without knowing it. These tend to be modern radical Charismatics, with the Toronto Blessing being an example of mysticism in action.

Reversal

Mysticism reverses a number of Biblical doctrines (see conclusion). Chiefly it claims that man can initiate actual immediate union with God through a number of personal disciplines that are usually passive and introspective and result in irrationality and loss of self-control.

Proponents

Ancient

The Gnostics, Alchemists, Hermetics, Magicians, witches, Kabbalists, Greek mystery cults, Neo-Platonists.

Historical

Hildegard of Bingen [1098-1179], Bernard of Clairvaux [1090-1153], Francis of Assisi [1182-1226], Meister Eckhart [1260-1327], John Tauler [d. 1361], Julian of Norwich [1342-1416], Ignatius Loyola [1491-1556], Teresa of Avila [1515-82] John of the Cross [1542-91], etc.

Later historical

Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians, John Wesley, William Law, Brother Lawrence, Lancelot Andrews, Thomas a Kempis, George Fox and the Quakers, Philip Jakob Spener and Pietism, Quietism and Miguel de Molinos, Gerhard Tersteegen.

Proto Charismatic

Catholic Apostolic Church in London (Edward Irving's church). The Shakers. New Thought. Unity.

Anglican or Anglo-Catholic or Catholic

William Law [1686-1761]. Evelyn Underhill, Thomas Merton, Bernadette Roberts, Sister Lucia, Sadhu Sundar Singh, Frank Laubach, Brennan Manning, Karl Rahner, Henri Nouwen, John Michael Talbot. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Matthew Fox, Bernadette Roberts and Katherine Nelson.

Pentecostal

William Seymour, Charles Parham, Kathryn Kuhlman, John Lake, John Boruff and a multitude of others.

Latter Rain

Sharon Church, North Battleford; George Hawtin; William Branham; George Warnock; Fred Poole; Kevin Conner; Dick Iverson; Destiny Image publications, Cecil Cousen (UK).

Non denominational

Sam Fife and The Move, Maranatha Campus Ministries, The Living Word Fellowship, Assembly of the Body of Christ. Rudolf Steiner. Emanuel Swedenborg [1688–1772]. Rosicrucianism;⁶ Theosophy;⁷ Spiritualism and Faith Healing; Wicca and other magic occult groups; New Age (multiple groups within this movement). Frank Viola. Joyce Huggett [b.1937]. Agnes Sanford [1897-1982]

Charismatic

Signs & Wonders Mvt., Toronto Blessing, Pensacola Revival, Lakeland Revival. Bill Hamon, Bill Britton, James Goll; New Apostolic Movement. Tim Keller.

Modern Quaker

John Wimber, Thomas Raymond Kelly, Richard J Foster.

Sources

- Historic writings. Most especially the writings of the medieval Catholic mystics.
- Occult practices and ideas. Especially Egyptian Hermetic literature (Hermes Trismegistus).
- False religions. Especially Hinduism and Kundalini yoga; Brahmanism and Vedantism. Soka Gakkai Buddhism has influenced certain Charismatics such as Yonggi Cho. The Taoism [Daoism] of the Chinese philosopher Lao-tze.
- Platonism, Philo of Alexandria [30 BC - 50 AD; mixture of Greek philosophy and Jewish doctrines], Neoplatonism, especially Plotinus [205-270]; his was a syncretism of previous philosophies based on Mysticism as an emanative and pantheistic Monism.
- Pseudo-Dionysius. [One of the first 'Christian' mystics.]
- John Scotus Eriugena (ninth century) mixed up Pseudo-Dionysius with Plotinus creating heretical ideas.
- The Jewish Kaballa.
- Alchemy.

⁶ A secretive 17th- and 18th-century society devoted to the study of metaphysical, mystical, and alchemical lore. An anonymous pamphlet of 1614 about a mythical 15th-century knight called Christian Rosenkreuz is said to have launched the movement. New Oxford Dictionary.

⁷ Theosophy (Greek, 'divine wisdom') is a religious philosophy claiming insight into the nature of God and the Universe through direct experience, making use of such means as mysticism, meditation, occult practices, and hidden meanings in sacred texts. Theosophists include Neoplatonists and Gnostics, but they are now more generally identified with members of the Theosophical Society, founded in New York by Helena Blavatsky (1831–91). The ideas of the society were heavily influenced by Hinduism and its base moved to India, where its leading exponents was Annie Besant (1847–1933). New Oxford Dictionary.

- Shamanism (witchcraft).
- Theosophy.
- New Age mysticism.
- Human enthusiasm.
- *Celebration of Discipline and Prayer*, Richard Foster.
- *Listening to God*, Joyce Huggett.
- John Wimber recommended Teresa of Avila and Ignatius Loyola in his book *Power Evangelism*.
- Giving oneself over to demonic influences.
- In some cases illness produced mystical effects.
- *The Theologia Germanica*.
- *The Cloud of Unknowing*.
- *The Imitation of Christ*, Thomas a Kempis.

Teachings

- Definition: Mysticism seeks the direct and immediate union of the soul with God through contemplation and love, and attempts to determine the various methods of realising this goal.
- Terse definition: Mysticism begins with a mist and ends in schism.
- Root claim: union with God in the light by some discipline or another. This is usually based upon a looking inward to find God in the depths of our being beyond rationality.
- The methods used are contradictory: speculative vs. practical; contemplative vs. volitional; orthodox vs. heterodox.
- The need for the utter death of the self-life; including rationality and intellect.
- The dark night of the soul.
- Renunciation.
- Hedonism (the opposite of renunciation).
- The Inner Light (e.g. Quakerism).
- Rising up the mystical ladder in various stages (the number differs).
- Surrender to inner emotions that pretend to be God.
- Surrender to some leader that pretends to show the way to union with God.
- Illumination, often by some mystical experience or self-deprivation.
- Some mystical cultic groups (like the Latter Rain Movement) produced multiple novel teachings; such as: Spirit-filled people will be invulnerable to bullets, will pass through walls, will not need to wash, will never get sick etc.

Practices

- Asceticism
- Fasting
- Passivity in modern worship during ambient music.
- Laying on of hands from an adept.
- Some form of mystical prayer discipline (of which there are many).
- Purification (many sorts).
- Meditation (many sorts).
- Imaging God (Cataphatic mysticism) e.g. Spiritual exercises of Ignatius Loyola.

- Stillness (Apophatic mysticism) e.g. 'Cloud of Unknowing'.
- Ecstasy resulting from some mystical experience.
- Visualisation (a mystical visionary experience to gain some desired effect or goods).
- Inner healing or healing of the emotions.

Results

- All sorts of esoteric phenomena.
- Altered state of consciousness (trance).
- Screaming, crying, uncontrollable jerking, jumping, twitching, animal noises, laughing etc.
- Falling over backwards ('being slain in the Spirit').
- Levitation.
- Gibberish tongue speaking.
- Stripping off of clothes.
- Inappropriate behaviour (this has included public sex).
- Dancing in unison in a crowd.
- Stigmata resulting from some mystical experience.
- Miracles resulting from some mystical experience. E.g. feeling healed after a mystical experience (which invariably fades when the adrenaline and endorphins diminish).
- Rigidity. [It has been known for someone to be bent backwards over an oblique object and be hit with hammers on the chest and the person not feel anything.]
- Paralysis.
- Visions.
- Some unusual manifestation, such as 'gold dust'.
- Death.

Errors

- Introspection: we do not look inwards to find God.
- Denial of rationality.
- Denial of self-control.
- Denial of doing things decently and in order.
- Emotionalism; many of the claims of feeling God's presence are merely heightened emotionalism.
- Turning the focus away from the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Trusting in the teachings and advice of many false, dangerous people; including non-Christians, teachers from a false religion, teachers from a false Christian sect.

Quotes by errorists

Irrationality

Don't think! Drink!

Rodney Howard-Browne; affirmed at multiple meetings during the Toronto Blessing.

Drink and get drunk on the new wine of the Spirit.

Rodney Howard-Browne quoted in Sydney Allen Hunter; *The Toronto Curse*, (1996).

To come to the knowledge of all desire the knowledge of nothing.

John of the Cross; *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Bk 1, Ch. 13, No. 10-13.

The human soul is pure at root

Man's soul was originally pure but sin has darkened it, like a diamond caked in mud [sic].

Teresa of Avila.

To realise the soul's potential it must return to its divine source –'the shining sun in the centre of the soul'.

Teresa of Avila.

The soul is God's garden which must be cultivated for God to delight in it.

Teresa of Avila.

God's ground and the soul's ground is one ground.

Meister Eckhart.

The 'Inner Light of the Living Christ' in all people.

George Fox.

Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.

C.G. Jung.

The eye through which I see God is the same eye through which God sees me; my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, one love.

Meister Eckhart.

Having been made one with God, the soul is somehow God through participation. ... through this substantial transformation.

John of the Cross, *The Living Flame Of Love*.

Supposed union with God based upon human activity

New ways of knowing and loving based on states of awareness in which God becomes present in our inner acts.

Bernard McGinn, *The essential writings of Christian Mysticism*, (2006).

Renunciation

When all longings that are in the heart vanish, then a mortal becomes immortal and attains Brahman (infinite consciousness or God) here.

Katha Upanishad.

Passivity

Nothing in all creation is so like God as stillness.

Meister Eckhart.

In order to realise the Self, renounce everything. Having cast off all (objects), assimilate yourself to that which remains.

Annapurna Upanishad.

It is indeed the mind that is the cause of men's bondage and liberation. The mind that is attached to sense-objects leads to bondage, while dissociated from sense-objects it tends to lead to liberation.

Amrita-Bindu Upanishad.

One has to go beyond the mind to experience the spiritual bliss of desirelessness.

Meher Baba.

Example of a mystical discipline

[Use] breath prayers throughout the day ... You choose a brief sentence of a simple phrase that can be repeated to Jesus in one breath.

Rick Warren; *The Purpose-Driven Life*, p89.

I began practising meditation, specifically breath prayer, once again. I integrated the use of Tai Chi and yoga.

John Michael Talbot (American Catholic singer, writer, presenter and founder of a monastic community), *Christianity Today*, 22.10 2001. [Note how a supposed Christian mystical technique led someone into false religion.]

Contemplative prayer is nothing other than coming into consciousness of what is already there.

Brennan Manning (former Franciscan priest and alcoholic), *Signature of Jesus*.

There is a Christian tradition that practices a form of prayer that employs no words. It's beyond speaking in tongues and deeper than the Toronto blessing. ... contemplative prayer is a prayer of interior silence that is beyond words. ... Their [Catholic mystics] writings have uncovered practical forms of spiritual communion that I've found to be of great profit personally.

Frank Viola, April 2006 newsletter.

Mindless repetition

The quiet repetition of a single word can help us to descend with the mind into the heart.

Henri Jozef Machiel Nouwen (a Dutch Roman priest).

Pick out a word or two. Tell your children to sit quietly and repeat the word in their heads – not thinking about the word, just repeating it.

Pope John Paul.

Pantheism

We need to become aware of the Cosmic Christ, which means recognising that every being has within it the light of Christ.

Matthew Fox (an episcopal priest, a former Dominican friar).

Emotionalism

Some of the values of the emerging church are an emphasis on emotions, global outlook, a rise in the use of the arts, and a rise in mysticism.

Josh Reich (pastor of Revolution Church, Tucson, Arizona).

Emphasis on mysticism

The Christian of the future will be a mystic or he will not exist at all.

Karl Rahner (Catholic Jesuit theologian).

Visions and prophecies often lead us in the conflict of prayer and give us a sense of direction.

Terry Virgo, *The Spirit-Filled Church*, p108.

Bible teaching

Focus on Jesus not our inner man

I will wait on the LORD. Isa 8:17

Woe to those ... who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD! Isa 31:1

I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. Mic 7:7

Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.
Phil 3:20

Those who eagerly wait for Him. Heb 9:28

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith. Heb 12:2

Consider Him. Heb 12:3

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
Jude 1:21

Look above, not within

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. Col 3:1-2

The danger of introspection

The imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth. Gen 8:21

If *God* puts no trust in His saints, and the heavens are not pure in His sight, how much less man, *who is* abominable and filthy, who drinks iniquity like water! Job 15:15-16

He who trusts in his own heart is a fool. Prov 28:26

Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness *is* in their hearts while they live.
Eccles 9:3

The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it? Jer 17:9

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are *the things* which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man. Matt 15:19-20

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells. Rm 7:18

The need for rationality

I thank God -- through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God.
Rm 7:25

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Rm 12:2

Let all things be done decently and in order. 1 Cor 14:40

[I Pray] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know. Eph 1:17-18

Put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. Eph 4:22-23

Put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.
Col 3:10

Let us watch and be sober. 1 Thess 5:6

Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober. 1 Pt 1:13

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

Denial of asceticism, special diets and false rituals

The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rm 14:17

Food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. 1 Cor 8:8

After you have known God, or rather are known by God, how *is it that* you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? Gal 4:9

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Gal 5:1

Let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths. Col 2:16

Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – ‘Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle’, which all concern things which perish with the using -- according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh. Col 2:20-23

... speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. 1 Tim 4:2-5

Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. Heb 13:9

Error of mindless repetition

When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. Matt 6:7-8

Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God *is* in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few. Eccles 5:2

In the multitude of dreams and many words *there is* also vanity. Eccles 5:7

In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips *is* wise. Prov 10:19

Conclusion

Christian mystics often believe that some psychic phenomenon or some physical reaction is an evidence of God's presence or blessing. Thus Charismatics state that being slain in the Spirit is God's power at work or that an altered state of consciousness (which produces all sorts of aberrant behaviour) is someone under the power of God.

All this is nonsense. In fact multiple false religions, cults, sects, and occult groups produce exactly these same phenomena as the result of demonic activity. Nowhere does God command that we should go into trances or fall over backwards to grow in grace. Nowhere does God allow us to abandon rationality or intellect or self-control.

We could write a huge encyclopaedia about all the various forms of mysticism but this is not our place here. I have covered the basic factors and have shown that these contradict the Bible.

Mysticism produces the opposition of numerous Biblical truths and sound practices. For example: it replaces self-control with abandonment. It replaces rationality (a sound mind)

with passivity and senselessness. It denies total depravity and asserts that the human soul is united with God deep down. It replaces spirituality with emotionalism. It downplays or even denies the seriousness of sin. It denies election. It denies or downplays justification. It denies God's word in favour of the Inner Light. Many forms teach Pantheism, Monism and other doctrines that deny God's attributes. It purports to make man like God, denying God's transcendence. The devil and his deception is completely ignored. The list is endless. Chiefly it denies the value of the cross, replacing redemption's effects with mystical disciplines to achieve union.

Occultism

I have mentioned various aspects of the occult within these pages, but here I need to devote a section to it especially, in order to reveal its severe threat to orthodoxy.

It can be proven that a large part of the problems within the churches these days is due to the infiltration of occult teachings and practices, through wave after wave of erroneous movements.

Definition

The word 'occult' means 'hidden' and is usually defined as: supernatural, mystical, or magical beliefs, practices, or phenomena. The origin of the word is late 15th century from the Latin *occultare* 'secrete', frequentative of *occulere* 'conceal', based on *celare* 'to hide'; the adjective and noun from occult- 'covered over', from the verb *occulere*.

The divisions of the occult (according to occultists) are:

- **Magic:** a belief that specific ends can be achieved through ritual actions, often involving spells and incantations, which invoke supernatural forces. The power of apparently influencing the course of events by using mysterious or supernatural forces, usually spirits.
- **Divination:** the practice of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown by supernatural means; fortune-telling. There are a wide variety of methodologies in doing this, such as: augury, crystal ball gazing, numerology, seances, Tarot cards, I-Ching, astrology, tea-leaves etc.
- **Spiritualism:** a system of belief or religious practice based on supposed communication with the spirits of the dead, or evil spirits, especially through mediums (clairvoyants), witchdoctors (shaman) and others.

Statement

For the purposes of clarity, the Bible makes the following very clear:

- The dead do not communicate with the living. They are held by God for judgment or, in the case of saints, they are with the Lord.
- Any supernatural or parapsychological communication is not with dead people but with demons.
- Demons are spirit beings; they are fallen angels submitted to Satan.
- Satan is not sovereign. He is a created being, an angel, created by God to serve him but he rebelled and is now active around the earth, having been cast out of heaven. He is called by many names: the devil, Lucifer, Beelzebub, the dragon etc.
- Satan and his demons can be resisted by Christians.
- Demons are immaterial, being spirits, and cannot manipulate real material things (as in Hollywood movies).

- There are no such things as ghosts, dryads,⁸ sprites,⁹ nymphs,¹⁰ sylphs,¹¹ elves,¹² goblins,¹³ etc.
- There are many witches.

Reversal

Christianity is the refection of God in Christ whereby his elect people manifest the character of God through obedience to his word in thought, word and deed. True spirituality is union with Christ and godliness is the manifestation of that in righteous works and spiritual fruit.

The occult is the reversal of all of this, leading men into esoteric dogma and works that are rooted in satanic principles. The operation of occult teachings is by the prevalence of demonic activity based upon the destruction of truth. It seeks to reverse every aspect of God's word, making the truth a lie.

Proponents

Too many to list fully; there are hundreds of historic and modern proponents. Of these we can mention:

Secular

- Sumerian religion [pre-flood and post-flood]. Nimrod and his following.
- Old Babylonian religion and witchcraft [post-flood].
- Akkadian Empire and subsequent Assyrian and Babylonian Empires.
- Buddha, Jainism, Lao Tse, Confucius, Zarathustra, Pythagoras, Celtic myths [6th Century BC].
- The Sibylline priestess on Delos. The Pythoness of Delphi. The cults of Mithras, Osiris and others.
- Gnosticism, Hermetism, Mithraism, Alchemy, Zoroastrianism [1st c.].
- Neoplatonism [3rd c.].
- Islam, Shintoism, Sufism, Kung Fu [6th c. +].
- Cathari, Knights Templar, Zen, Cabal, Roger Bacon, Medieval mystics [12th - 13th c.].
- Paracelsus, John Dee, Nostradamus, Catholic mystics, Lutheran mystics [16th c.].
- Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry, Shakers, Mesmerism, Swedenborgianism, occult development, Satanism developments, Voodoo [18th c.].
- Explosion of occult and mystical development, new religions, new church cults, new Christian sects, UFOs, spiritualism [19th c.]. Controversial experiences of spirit communication occurred in America with the experiences of Kate (1841-1892) and Margaretta Fox (1838-1893), and particularly Andrew Jackson's claims to be a medium in 1843. From these the Victorian fascination with seances and spiritualism grew rapidly. Edgar Cayce (1877-1945) famous clairvoyant.

⁸ Tree spirits.

⁹ Fairies, pixie, imp, brownie, puck, kelpie, sylph, naiad.

¹⁰ Usually a water spirit but sometimes a wood spirit; sprite, sylph. Nymphs can be identified as: dryad, hamadryad, naiad, nereid, Oceanid, oread, sprite, sylph, undine.

¹¹ Air spirit.

¹² A supernatural creature of folk tales; typically represented as a small, delicate, elusive figure in human form with pointed ears, magical powers, and a capricious nature.

¹³ A mischievous, ugly demon or creature of European folklore. The name is probably derived from the Latin *gobelinus*, a spirit, which is also related to *kobold*, the German demon of mines. They are usually depicted as miners fascinated by gold.

- The Mind Sciences. Mesmerism etc. Mind over matter. Positive thinking. French Kabbalist magician Eliphas Levi. [19th c.].
- Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Anthroposophy [19th c.]. The Lorian Association and the writings of people like Mme. Helena Blavatsky, Alice Bailey, Annie Besant.
- The redesign of ancient witchcraft by Gerald Gardner to promote Wicca as a genuine religion in 1954.
- Explosion of new occult and mystical development. Start of what becomes New Age, drug culture [1960s].
- The Findhorn Centre [1960s].
- David Spangler [20th century].
- Shamanistic type of ritual, multiple forms worldwide.
- Hindu cults. Guru Maharaj Ji of the then Divine Light Mission (now Elan Vital).
- Kundalini yoga [‘serpent power’] associated with the bloodthirsty goddess Kali (Shakti). The Kundalini rises through six centres, called *chakras* (energy centres that produce occult effects such as clairvoyance); arriving at the seventh at the top of the head. At this stage, the person experiences bliss which is supposed to represent the Hindu reintegration with God. The physical manifestations (*kriyas*) which occur are taken to be the height of religious experience. These include: twitches and spasms, tingling feelings, involuntary bodily movements, jerks, shaking, fatigue, rapid breathing and heartbeat, numbness, involuntary crying or laughing (sometimes for days on end), hearing inner sounds (like water flowing, birds singing, ringing), mental confusion, altered states (trances), ecstasy, out of body experiences, twisting like a snake and hissing, roaring like a lion, barking like a dog, rapid neck movements, being slain in the spirit, or healing powers.
- The secular acceptance of Hindu meditation, the promotion of Chinese Qigong and Hindu chakra; new Gnosticism, the new impetus to the study of Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen and new cults.

‘Christian’, historic

- Gnosticism.
- The Montanists.
- The Medieval Mystics.
- The Zwickau Prophets (*Storchites*, 1520s).
- Quakerism, Quietism, Reformation ‘enthusiasts’ (i.e. fanatical Charismatic mystics like the Schwenkfelders).
- The French Prophets (1688 ff.).
- The Jansenists (17th c.)
- The New Light Prophets (1742 ff.).
- The Jumpers (Wales, 1760). The congregation was encouraged to cry out ‘gogoniant’ (Welsh for ‘glory’) and such like, then to work themselves into a violent agitation, then to jump until they were exhausted and fall down on the floor. This was clearly typical of enthusiast and pagan excesses found in many aberrant groups and uncontrolled ‘revivals’.
- The Shakers (1770 ff.).
- The Methodists.
- Cane Ridge Revival (1801) in the American west.
- The early Mormons (1830 ff.).

- Holiness meetings led by Maria Woodworth-Etter (1844-1924) who was called ‘The Voodoo Priestess’ by the newspapers.
- The Catholic Apostolic Church (London, 19th c.).

‘Christian’, modern

- Rudolph Steiner.
- PP Quimby. New Thought.
- The Azusa Street ‘revival’ (1906-1910).
- The Unity cult.
- Smith Wigglesworth.
- AA Allen.
- Latter Rain.
- William Branham (1909-1965). He had been directed by voices in his head from an early age and in 1946 was told by one that he would be a great healer. He had a chief voice, which he called his angel, to whom he was in complete bondage and fear all his life. While this would be considered delusional, psychotic or even demonic today, Branham was able to start a church of people who believed him to be led by God. He was even publicly accused of witchcraft by co-workers.¹⁴
- Agnes Sanford.¹⁵
- Ruth Carter Stapleton.¹⁶
- Morton Kelsey (see later).
- John & Paula Sandford (*Elijah House*).
- Chester & Betsy Kylstra, Olsen, Payne.
- Ed Smith (*Theophostic Counselling*).
- Robert McGee (*Rapha*).
- Leanne Payne, David Seamands,
- William Vaswig (of Renovaré fame).
- Norman Vincent Peale.
- Paul (now David) Yonggi Cho of Korea. (Visualisation). Cho was clearly influenced in his teaching by the local variant of Buddhism, Soka Gakkai (Value Creation Society). What he teaches is exactly what is taught by this Japanese Buddhist sect [the lay organisation of Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism founded in 1930, but based on the teaching of the 13th century teacher Nichiren].
- Word of Faith teachers. EW Kenyon,¹⁷ Kenneth Hagin,¹⁸ Kenneth Copeland. Randy Clark of St Louis and John Arnot of Toronto Airport Vineyard Church.
- Ellel Grange (UK), Ellel Ministries.
- Matthew Fox.
- Charles Kraft.

¹⁴ Branham, *Prophet or Profiteer*, Alfred Pohl and David Cloud, Way of Life Literature, Oak Harbour, Washington (1991), p16. See also, Pohl, *17 Reasons Why I Left the Tongues Mvt.*, p79+., p17, p26.

¹⁵ Agnes Sanford is a popular Christian writer whose ideas are almost New Age and Pantheistic. Her ideas are Jungian, combined with Shamanistic occult techniques. She started the inner healing epidemic. See Hunt, *Seduction of Christianity*, chapter 9, for a concise summary of her zany and dangerous beliefs.

¹⁶ Stapleton is a disciple of Sanford and promoter of inner healing. She has said that people can be ‘born again’ by listening to great music or staring at great works of art.

¹⁷ Popularised New Thought concepts into various heretical teachings leading to a mystical shamanism which became a key influence of Word Faith through his plagiarist Kenneth Hagin.

¹⁸ Leading proponent (‘father’) of Word Faith errors, disciple of the heretic E. W. Kenyon.

- The Toronto Experience of the mid-1990s.
- Paul Cain.
- The Kansas City Prophets.
- Bob Jones.
- Todd Bentley.
- Gerald Coates. Pioneer People churches, especially Revelation Church, Chichester.
- John Wimber. [See later.]
- Rick Joyner, Morningstar Church, North Carolina. [He is also a member of the Order of the Knights of Malta of the Roman Catholic Church.]
- John Crowder, the Mystical School.
- Todd Bentley, the Lakeland 'Revival'.
- Bill and Beni Johnston, Bethel Church, Redding, California.
- Mike Bickle, Int. House of Prayer (IHOP).
- Note that there are elders and church leaders who are actually Freemasons, Theosophists and Anthroposophists.

Sources

Secular

- The 'Hermetica': 1st-3rd century writings of Greek and Egyptian origin concerning the Egyptian god Thoth and the Greek god Hermes (Mercury). They combine Greek philosophy (especially Platonic thought) with Oriental religions. 'Hermes Trismegistus': in Theosophy, the 'Thrice-Greatest Hermes' (a character in the Hermetica). A combination of the Egyptian god of wisdom (Thoth) and Hermes; a powerful deity who can stop the evil forces in the world.
- The Egyptian Book of the Dead.
- The I-Ching.
- The Tao te Ching.
- Cornelius Agrippa, *Agrippa's occult philosophy: natural magic*.
- Eliphas Levi, *Transcendental Magic*.
- Theosophical books, e.g. Helena Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*.
- Rosicrucianism sources.
- Freemasonry works.
- Swedenborgianism works.
- Books on magic.
- Works of Gerald Gardner.
- Mind Science books.
- Anton LaVey, founder of the Church of Satan, San Francisco, e.g. *The Satanic Bible*, *The Satanic Rituals*.
- Aleister Crowley, *Magick; The Book of Thoth; The Book of lies*.
- Scott Cunningham, *Living Wicca*.
- Arthur Edward Waite, *The pictorial key to the Tarot*.
- Antonio Venitiana Del Rabina, *The Grand Grimoire*.
- *Simon Necromonicon*.

There are many thousands more.

'Christian'

- Agnes Sanford (1897-1982, multiple books); e.g. *The Healing Light* (1947), *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit* (1966), *The Healing Power of the Bible* (1969), *Sealed Orders* (1972).
- Ruth Cater Stapleton (1930-83), *The Gift of Inner Healing* (1976), *The Experience of Inner Healing* (1977). Her refusal to accept medical treatment for cancer (believing in faith healing) led to an early death.
- Morton Kelsey (1917-2001), *Encounter with God* (1972), *God, dreams and revelation* (1973), *The other side of silence* (1976), *Healing and Christianity* (1973), *Adventure Inward* (1980), *Companion on the inner way* (1983) etc.
- Richard Foster books, e.g. *Celebration of Discipline* (1978), *Celebrating the disciplines* (1992), *Streams of living water* (1998), *Meditative prayer* (1983).
- Multiple books, sermons, seminars and videos by John Wimber.
- Word of Faith books, seminars, videos etc.
- Latter Rain works, especially, *The Feast of Tabernacles*, George Hawtin.
- Radical Charismatic books, videos, etc.
- New Apostolic Reformation books.
- Rick Joyner books, especially *The Final Quest*.
- Books promoting Celtic Spirituality.
- Yonggi Cho books, e.g. *The Fourth Dimension* (1979).
- The Open Synod Group of the Church of England recommends for further study, C.G. Jung's *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*.

Streams

- The occult background to psychotherapy.
- The occult background to the baptism in the Spirit.
- The occult background to speaking in tongues.
- The occult background to emotional enthusiasm.
- The occult background to mysticism.
- The occult background to miracle working and healing.
- The occult background to Word of Faith doctrines (name it and claim it).
- The occult background to visualisation.
- The occult background to Inner Healing.
- The occult background to altered states of consciousness.
- The occult background to Latter Rain doctrines and practices.
- The occult background to sacramentalism, fetishism.
- The occult background to communing with the dead.

Teachings

Latter Rain doctrines

- Imposition of hands to receive gifts of power.
- Christians can be demonised and need deliverance.
- God has restored the offices of apostles and prophet in power.
- Healing can be received by the laying on of hands.
- Praise ushers God into our presence.
- Women have an authoritative role in the church.

- The church will; be victories over the world and usher in the kingdom.
- Manifest Sons of God teachings: there are a special group of overcomers in the church who will become immortal. Some proponents (like Branham) held multiple heresies, see elsewhere in this paper.
- Note how all these transferred to the Charismatic Movement after being outlawed by Pentecostal denominations (e.g. the Assemblies of God denounced Latter Rain teaching on 20 April 1949).

Word of Faith Doctrines

- Name it and claim it faith and prayer. (Similar to magic.)
- Prosperity teaching (materialism).
- Visualisation (occult).
- Healing by faith.
- Multiple theological errors (e.g. about the Trinity, about Christology).

Agnes Sanford errors

- Inner Healing.
- Rebirthing.
- Healing of the Memories.
- Visualisation (Imagineering). [One could forgive another's sins through visualisation.]
- Pantheism.
- Mysticism.
- Astral travelling.
- False view of atonement.
- People's minds are connected, and can travel back and forward through time touching other minds in history as well as angelic and demonic minds.

Morton Kelsey errors

- Kelsey was an Episcopalian priest and Jungian psychologist. Wimber dedicated a seminar to this man.
- He equated Jesus with a witchdoctor as having 'extra-sensory perception'.
- He adopted shamanistic methods.
- He received guidance from the dead.
- He equated the Holy Spirit with 'the self'.
- He commended false religions and divination.

John Wimber errors

- *John Wimber* believed in: ghosts, ancestors, earthly gods and goddesses who live within trees and rivers, Maya¹⁹, evil eyes,²⁰ planetary influences, etc.²¹
- He believed that some people are 'natural healers'.²²
- This is unabashed shamanism, as is the use of the use of relics, or psychic auras in healing, or the unbiblical 'spiritual' experiences which form the foundation of many

¹⁹ In Hinduism, refers to the world of illusion.

²⁰ The ability in witchcraft to cast a spell on someone by merely looking at them.

²¹ Wimber: *Signs Wonders and Church Growth*, section 3, 'Today's tension with the miraculous: world view'.

²² Healing Seminar Syllabus, Section 2, *Healing in the NT* (1983), also Ministry Training Seminar, Part 2, Vineyard Christian Fellowship (1982), p1.

Vineyard practices: slaying in the 'spirit', healing, demonic manifestation, screaming, laughing, vibrant irreverent noisy worship, shaking, falling, jumping on the spot or quiet passive contemplation.

- He felt he could get accurate information from a demon as well as God's word.²³
- Wimber opposed the 'western', intellectual approach to the Bible, demanding a *paradigm shift*, a New World view on the pattern of Third World intuitive religion (i.e. Eastern mysticism). He accepted the Oriental mindset, which did not rely upon scripture but upon subjectivity.
- In fact, many of the manifestations seen in Vineyard meetings are common in occult and oriental religions.
- Wimber also emphasised psychic healing using visualisation and inner healing techniques as described by Agnes Sanford.
- Promoted Morton Kelsey.
- He introduced Roman Catholic ideas, long rejected, such as the validity of relics but also overt occult concepts.²⁴
- Wimber's friend and colleague, Peter Wagner, even describes the occult use of observing auras as a guide to discerning a person's problem.²⁵ Wimber refers to the same thing as '*radiance on the face*' or '*warmth flowing out of hands*'.²⁶ These methods (e.g. used in healing of memories) are identical to the practices of psychic healers. They arise, at best, from subjective mental impressions; at worst they are demonic pretensions.
- Other methods, like receiving a tingling feeling in a part of one's body identifying that God will heal an organ in that area, are completely occultic in nature. Never in scripture did the apostles work this way. It is, however, a feature of eastern occultic religions and sects, which Wimber has opened himself up to with his 'paradigm shift'.

Matthew Fox

- A Gnostic teacher who believes that the mystical teachings of Christ, which parallel world religions and which support universalism, have been deliberately hidden.
- Fox invented a New-Age '*Planetary Mass*' and runs the *Institute for Creation Spirituality*, a New Age association.
- Fox also promotes homosexuality, drug-use, astrology and witchcraft as helpful spiritual aids.
- He does not believe that Jesus is the only way to God; indeed Christ is a divine presence that permeates creation (i.e. pantheism) and is in every creature. The 'Cosmic Christ' is the image of God present in all things who connects all the atoms in the universe and who incarnates himself in Lao-Tzu and Buddha as well as Jesus.²⁷

Mysticism

Multiple errors spread out throughout many denominations (see mysticism).

²³ Media Spotlight, Special Report: *The Vineyard*, p23.

²⁴ Wimber: *Signs Wonders and Church Growth*, section 3, 'Today's tension with the miraculous: world view'. Healing Seminar Syllabus, Section 2, *Healing in the NT* (1983), also Ministry Training Seminar, Part 2, Vineyard Christian Fellowship (1982), p1.

²⁵ C. Peter Wagner, *How To Have A Healing Ministry Without Making Your Church Sick!* Regal, Ventura Calif. (1989), p228.

²⁶ These sorts of manifestations are called '*Cosmic reality*' by Wimber. See *Healing Seminar Syllabus: 2 Observations, A Spiritual Phenomena*, p74-75.

²⁷ See Tal Brooke ed. *The Conspiracy to Silence the Son of God*, in passim; David L. Smith, *Handbook of Contemporary Theology*, p303-4.

Doctrines inducing trances (altered state of consciousness)

Found in many denominations based upon several different methods, such as baptism in the Spirit.

Pantheism

God is found in all natural objects; God is the universe. See also Gaia doctrines (earth goddess). See also Monism, all things are one.

Spiritualism

- Necromancy (q.v.) – communing with the dead, found in several preachers (e.g. Hinn, Joyner).
- Channelling (spirit guides), found in many methodologies, such as by Agnes Sanford.
- Grave-sucking (sucking up the air over a grave to receive the anointing from a dead person's bones), John Crowder, the Mystical School.

Divination

Found in predictive prophecy, visions, dreams etc.

Mind Sciences

Christian psychotherapy goes back to Franz Mesmer, Gustav Fechner, Sigmund Freud, Wilhelm Reich and Carl Jung.

- Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815). Was inspired by mystic Paracelsus. He believed that the planets influenced the human body through a 'subtle fluid' in the body. He equated this inner energy with 'bioenergy' or the 'inner light' of occultists and mystics. He developed the theory of 'Animal Magnetism' which resulted in faith-healings. His sessions would invoke very similar behaviour and phenomena as seen in the Toronto Blessing and other outbursts in history. Mesmer's ability to control his patients by his will is the beginning of hypnotism and the Mind Sciences, and thus Positive Thinking, Faith Healing, Christian Science, New Thought etc. The Magnetic Fluid of Mesmer is the Chinese Taoist's and Japanese Buddhist's Ki or Chi, the Hindu's Prana, the magician's Grand Elixir and many more. It is simple occultism. Mesmer was called one of the world's first psychotherapists and directly influenced psychiatry.
- Mesmer is linked to Freud through the French doctor Martin Charcot (1825-1893) who sought to separate the technique of hypnotism from its occult baggage. Freud was fascinated by hypnotism and the behaviour of patients, which he saw as neuropathology.
- One of the founders of modern psychology was Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801-1887). He was greatly affected by what we would now call Kundalini yoga. Fechner then spent his days extolling the virtues of science and pantheism. This was another strand in the process of making occult practices acceptable science. The talk of a natural superforce in everything went back to the ideas of the Neoplatonists. He was also impacted by an experience of the 'Ascended Masters', spirit beings first recorded in historic Tibetan Buddhism and taught in modern Theosophy as rulers of the world. Freud was also deeply affected by Fechner.
- Wilhelm Reich took this concept of a universal energy further equating it with sexual energy, the repression of which leads to neuroses and social problems. His cure was his 'Orgone Therapy', to bring about emotional release through suggestion, physical manipulation and exercises, known as 'Bioenergetics'. He went so far as to teach that an orgasm was the key to emotional health and engaged in sex with patients. His radical education and child-rearing techniques led to the libertarian school, Summerhill, where children regulated themselves without rules or structure. Reich was also a long-term psychotherapist to its founder and headmaster, A.S. Neill. His later books brought

together Western psychology and Eastern mysticism. His division of the body into seven principal 'energetic' segments running from the head to the base of the spine was an unwitting copy of Tantric Kundalini yoga based on seven chakras (showing the devilish root of all occult ideas). This 'serpent power' is released to bring an ecstatic experience of cosmic consciousness called ānanda but many gurus restrict this because the effects can be dangerous. Many others, including Charismatics, would later follow this pattern unwittingly (e.g. Toronto) without restriction or understanding. Others would focus on his generation of sexual energy, which derived from many sources: Taoism, Tantric Buddhism, Transcendental Magic, and led to others (Theosophy, and the Order of the Templars of the Orient, and magician Aleister Crowley). Numerous writers attribute the 60s sexual revolution to Reich. Many psychotherapy techniques stem from Reich's therapeutic pathway, such as Primal Therapy, Rebirthing, Bioenergetics, etc. which helped to encourage the development of Neo Gnosticism (a term to cover many New Age aspects of modern mysticism).

- Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), chief pupil of Sigmund Freud, is the person at the root of many psychotherapy practices used by churches. Of all Freud's students, he is the most obviously involved in the occult. Churches were less disposed to Freud due to his anti-Christian feelings or to Reich due his focus on sex and ended up following someone steeped in the occult. For example, his teachings lie behind the method of Inner Healing. He is the founder of 'Transpersonal Psychology' based on archetypes and mystical states of consciousness, through techniques such as induced trances, drugs, meditation and visualisation. After a nervous breakdown Jung was first visited by his spirit-guide, a spirit being (demon) called 'Philemon', who conjured up '*an Egyptian-Hellenic atmosphere with Gnostic colourations*'. Such discarnate spirit beings he called archetypes and encouraged people to find them, though he thought that they were psychic emanations from former civilisations, held in the 'collective unconscious'. Contact with these archetypes was later called visualisation by modern Gnostics, Jung called it 'active imagination', which Agnes Sanford took up as 'Imagineering'. These entities are supposed to help the person become their true self by being inner guides. As Jung conversed with these archetypes, his life began to fall apart with nightmares, hauntings, poltergeists and visions, which also affected his family. Failing to see this for what it was, Jung continued. As he got older he began to hate God whom he blamed for evil in the world and sought a 'cure' for God. Like many others, Jung's task was to co-ordinate Eastern mysticism and Western philosophy and ended up with occultism. Jung stared at mandalas to aid meditation, read the Gnostics and studied the I-Ching. He also attended the Eranos Conferences for the study of Theosophy, Mysticism, the Esoteric Sciences and Philosophies and all forms of Spiritual Research. One lecturer was Alice B. Bailey, founder of the Lucis Trust (formerly Lucifer Trust), an influential occult speaker who was very foundational for New Age groups. Jung was so steeped in occultic Gnosticism that his biographer relates, '*God-Jung...believed in his own divinity*'. Yet this is the man that Christian psychotherapists have mined for their ideas. The Anglican Church has a very large Jungian following, including Martin Israel and he is popular amongst many Charismatics.

Practices

- Spiritualism, Necromancy (communicating with the dead). Benny Hinn claims Katherine Kuhlman as his female spirit guide who showed him his future ministry from beyond the grave and told him to follow her.²⁸ On another occasion he claimed to have

²⁸ June 11, 1997 edition of his *This Is Your Day* program.

seen Elijah.²⁹ He has stated that both Kuhlman's and Aimee Semple McPherson's graves carry a supernatural 'anointing.'³⁰ This is pure Spiritism.

- Exorcism (Deliverance ministry).
- Channelling (spiritualism), where occult knowledge is received from spirits; different cults give them different names (ascended masters, elementals, aeons, angels etc.).
- Laying on of hands to impart power for various things.
- Fetishes. The idea that charms or talismans have magical power or contain a helpful spirit is a pagan idea that is thousands of years old. 'Fetish' is the term usually applied to West African cults who believed that spirits could possess certain objects or ward off evil spirits. This belief was taken to America and later developed in Voodoo and Santeria.³¹ 'Charm' can be an object or an incantation which has supernatural powers, and is a term used in many occult religions. A 'talisman' is an object on which is engraved a character or picture that can harness supernatural power to protect the wearer. This differs from an 'amulet', which was worn to ward off evil spells; a practice going back to the ancient Egyptians. Sacramentalism: regarding sacramental rites, there is no end to the variations of these in occult religions. Charismatic churches and organisations have used endless varieties of unbiblical rituals and objects in the attempt to bring about some divine blessing, often some kind of healing. The most obvious are those who use gems and semi-precious stones to aid meditation or healing prayer. Others have used swords to 'knight' people in order to make them better spiritual warriors. One Hove Messianic Church blew ram's horns on the South Downs to bring about a revival. The Assemblies of God church in Brownsville Pensacola, at the height of the frenzied emotionalism, set up a copy of the Jewish altar of incense while a leader, dressed in the regalia of the High Priest, convinced a large number of leaders and wives (including famous British leaders) to burn a note containing their problems in order to bring release. The Jesus Army have repeatedly established sacraments that are like fetishes or talismans, such as getting everyone at a conference to bring a washed stone and pile up a cairn at the foot of the platform to affirm their repentance and commitment.³² They also made wooden crosses, which were then prayed over, and given to folk to enable special grace. The Jesus Army also encouraged everyone to wear a nail at the Wembley Praise-Day in 1999 to dramatically symbolise '*willing discipleship ... commitment to a life of self-denial and sacrifice*'.³³ Seven Assemblies of God pastors smashed bricks with a sledge hammer while an evangelist threw a bottle of oil into a river as an expression of '*prophetic symbolism*' in order to encourage an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Australia.³⁴ Benny Hinn planned to set up a healing centre in Dallas that will have '*Healing Statues of Biblical saints from the Old Testament. It's going to have a Healing Fountain an Eternal Healing Fire*'.³⁵ Other items and actions regularly used to symbolise or impart spiritual power include: flag waving, banners, candles, marching round the room, crosses, pendants, medallions and so on. The Pentecostal leader AA Allen even distributed 'miracle saw-dust' from the floor of his 'miracle valley' tent.³⁶

²⁹ Honolulu Crusade, February 28, 1997.

³⁰ Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997, pp. 168-169.

³¹ Voodoo and Santeria are syncretistic cults based in the Caribbean. They are a combination of Roman Catholicism (learned from Spanish missionaries) and African witchcraft. Santeria is located in Cuba mainly founded upon Nigerian religions; voodoo (properly, Vodun) began in Haiti being inspired by the witchcraft cults of Dahomey (now Benin), but both have spread.

³² *Jesus Life*, No. 46, (1998).

³³ *Jesus Life 2K* #50, 1999 4th Qtr, p3 and p9.

³⁴ *Vanguard*, Issue 10, May 1999, p9.

³⁵ Benny Hinn, from a Video screened on *This is Your Day*, 24 August, 1999; quoted from *Contending Earnestly For the Faith Journal*, 5.2, p21.

³⁶ *Contending Earnestly For the Faith Journal*, 5.2, p21.

- Being slain in the Spirit: This is when a person falls to the floor backwards, usually today into the arms of a 'catcher' but sometimes into chairs, resulting in physical damage. The initial cause of this is a leader laying hands on, or even hitting, a person's forehead. The background cause is the passivity and suggestibility of the victim, resulting from letting his mind go during a long emotional worship time that involves repetitive singing and loud music. In extreme cases, where the leader is deeply versed in occult techniques, people fall to the floor in droves upon the leader waving his hand or blowing on them from some distance away. In very extreme cases a person may be thrown against a wall by the motion of a leader many yards away.
- Mysticism (see section on this).
- Visualisation: This is claimed to be a technique to develop faith. It centres around the idea of having a clear goal or objective and imagining this as a distinct image in the mind. This image is then cultivated, developed in detail and grown to support faith until the wanted item is received. Some have called this 'imagineering'.
- Predictive prophecies used as divination.
- Drumming sessions to bring about trances.
- Marching around the room.
- Corporate shouted prayer.
- Astral travelling. This is an out of body experience where it is assumed that the person, in the form of an 'astral body', separates from his physical body and travels in the air way beyond his body. This has been taken so seriously that the Pentagon and CIA had departments of astral travellers who could identify military targets in foreign countries by 'astral projection'. In actual fact, this is where an occult-ridden person sees with the eyes of a demon. It is a demonic communication. The human consciousness does not travel outside its body.
- Trance Music, such as Goa music. This is becoming common in American churches which look like a night club. It has been described as Kundalini yoga dancing.
- The Law of Attraction, e.g. Joel Osteen.

Errors

Too many to list.

Quotes and references

Necromancy

Benny Hinn visits Kathryn Kuhlman's grave. Hinn says,

I heard Kathryn's voice and suddenly there she was ... she said "Ask! We're waiting for you to ask! We're praying with you to ask." ... A week later the anointing hit my life.³⁷

Rick Joyner claims to regularly see William Branham in heaven.³⁸

Rick Joyner converses with the apostle Paul. In his book *The Final Quest* he relates visions of meetings with the apostle Paul, who then states that he has been waiting to meet Joyner;

³⁷ Sermon preached at Blaisdale Arena, Honolulu, 28.2.97 quoted in R Liichow, *The Two Roots of Today's Revival*, p193.

³⁸ In *The Final Quest* Joyner relates a vision of seeing a man whom he considered had 'gone off the rails' in his teaching yet is sitting on a great throne in the highest part of heaven's throne room. All commentators believe this to be William Branham; Joyner does not name him specifically, however, the description makes this obvious.

note the incredible arrogance of Joyner in considering that Paul looked up to him! What is more, he states that Paul fell short in his apostolic calling and work.³⁹

Morton Kelsey communed with the dead.⁴⁰

Spiritualism

Now let me talk about an angelic experience with Emma. Twice Bob Jones asked me about this angel that was in Kansas City in 1980: 'Todd, have you ever seen an angel by the name of Emma?'. ... He told me that Emma was the angel that helped birth and start the whole prophetic movement in Kansas City in the 1980s. ... In walks Emma. As I stared at the angel with open eyes, the Lord said to me, 'Here's Emma'.

Todd Bentley, *Gentle Wisdom* (Peter Kirk, apologist for Bentley), *Todd Bentley and an angel called Emma*, 24 May 2008.

Lord zap them in their homes; wreck them in their homes; let them be undone in their homes. Tonight is a historic night. ... I saw the angel of the Lord, a healing angel. ... There is a strong prophetic anointing tonight; you have to catch it in the atmosphere. ... we are getting ready for [the] greatest showing on earth ... Greater than Jesus on earth. ... three powerful angels are here; Emma, means healing.

Todd Bentley, 13 May, 2008 (Lakeland Revival speech).

As I watch you, you vibrate, you close demonic vibration.

Bob Jones to Todd Bentley, 13 May, 2008 (Lakeland Revival speech).

Visions and prophecies often lead us in the conflict of prayer and give us a sense of direction.

Terry Virgo, *The Spirit-Filled Church*, p108.

William Branham required his 'angel' to hear words of knowledge.

Folk Lore

John Wimber believed in ghosts, maya (the illusion of the world - Hinduism), planetary influences, gods in trees & rivers (dryads, nymphs), and other forms of shamanism.⁴¹

Occultism

Shamans, witches, witch doctors, and mediums have the power to control the supernatural forces which cause disease, poverty, oppression, crop failure, hurricanes, barrenness, drought, and mental illness.

C Peter Wagner, *Your Worldview Makes a Difference*, p61.

We should give ourselves to learning as much as possible about spiritual beings and power, even from other peoples'. ... In ministering to people, I find it necessary for them to be released from bondage to the need to understand.

Charles Kraft, *Christianity With Power*, Servant Pub. (1989), p89, 48.

One could argue that ASCs [altered states of consciousness, trances], in the context of faith in Christ and prayerful obedience, are the basis of dynamic, personal, relevant, living faith.

Dr. Patrick Dixon, *Signs Of Revival*, p260.

³⁹ Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest*, Morning Star Publications, 1996, pp. 131-132

⁴⁰ Morton Kelsey, *Christo*, p39, 148-149; *Afterlife: The Other Side of Dying*.

⁴¹ Wimber: *Signs Wonders and Church Growth*, section 3, 'Today's tension with the miraculous: world view'. Healing Seminar Syllabus, Section 2, *Healing in the NT* (1983), also Ministry Training Seminar, Part 2, Vineyard Christian Fellowship (1982), p1.

Pantheism

According to [the alchemist] Basilius Valentinus, the earth (as *prima materia*) is not a dead body, but is inhabited by a spirit that is its life and soul. All created things, minerals included, draw their strength from this earth-spirit. This spirit is life...and it gives nourishment to all the living things it shelters in its womb.

Carl G Jung.

Biblical teaching

You shall not permit a sorceress [‘witch’] to live. Exod 22:18

Nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying. Lev 19:26

Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I *am* the LORD your God. Lev 19:31

A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood *shall be* upon them. Lev 20:27

There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, *or one* who practices witchcraft, *or a* soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things *are* an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. Deut 18:10-12

They [apostates] caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practised witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. 2 Kg 17:17

So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. 1 Chron 10:13

He [Manasseh] practised soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. 2 Chron 33:6

And when they say to you, ‘Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter’, should not a people seek their God? *Should they seek* the dead on behalf of the living? Isa 8:19

You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, *and* the monthly prognosticators stand up and save you from what shall come upon you. Behold, they shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame; *it shall not be* a coal to be warmed by, *nor a* fire to sit before! Isa 47:13-14

Because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, the mistress of sorceries, who sells nations through her harlotries, and families through her sorceries. Behold, I *am* against you," says the LORD of hosts. Nahum 3:4-5

Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination⁴² met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. ... Paul, greatly

⁴² ‘A spirit of divination’ literally, ‘having a spirit, a python’. The reference is to the heathen god Apollo, who was regarded as the god of prophecy. Greek *Puthōn*, was the name of a huge serpent killed by Apollo. / Python was the name given to the serpent that kept guard at Delphi, slain by Apollo, who was called *Puthios Apollo* and the prophetess at Delphi was termed *Pythia*. ... Plutarch (A.D. 50-100) says that the term *puthones* was applied to ventriloquists (*eggastrimuthoi*). In the LXX those with familiar spirits are called by this word ventriloquists (Lev 19:31; 20:6,27, including the witch of Endor 1 Sam 28:7). It is possible that this slave girl had this gift of prophecy ‘by soothsaying’ (*manteuomene*). Present middle participle of *manteuomai*, old heathen word (in contrast with *propheteuo*) for acting the seer (*mantis*) and this kin to *mainomai*, to be mad, like the howling dervishes of later times. [Easton’s Bible Dict / Robertson’s Word Pictures.]

annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her'. And he came out that very hour. Acts 16:16

Many of those who had practised magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totalled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. Acts 19:19

Idolatry, sorcery, ... and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal 5:20-21

Prosperity claims

A constituent of Word of Faith church doctrines ('name it and claim it'). This is where 'faith' is used for materialistic ends. In fact, this doctrine is not about faith or God's blessing but is closer to occult incantations.

Reversal

The Bible teaches us to be content and to trust in the sovereignty of God's providential control of our lives and circumstances. When we are in need we are encouraged to pray but to submit to God's control whether or not the petitions are gained. This error denies all of this and encourages Christians to be selfishly motivated and to seek to gain whatever they want (money, security, goods, health, houses etc.) by using a certain kind of prayer and faith. In fact, it is bringing occult ideas to be used for selfish ends.

Proponents of prosperity theology

Precursors

PP Quimby, New Thought, Christian Science, Unity, Charles Fillmore, Andrew Carnegie, Russell Conwell.

Higher Life

EW Kenyon.

Word of Faith tradition

Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, David Yonggi Cho, Benny Hinn, Joyce Meyer, Paula White, John Avanzini, Earl Paulk, TD Jakes, Marilyn Hickey, Fred Price, Morris Cerullo.

Pentecostal tradition

TL Osborn, AA Allen, Robert Tilton, Oral Roberts, Gordon Lindsay, Reverend Ike, Jim Bakker.

Charismatic tradition

Joel Osteen, Bruce Wilkinson.

Non-denominational

TD Jakes, Credo Dollar.

UK

Matthew Ashimolowo.

Sources

- Secular mind science (e.g. Mesmerism, psychology).
- Occultism.
- The mixture of occultism with Christianity in New Thought and others.

- The root links are New Thought – Mind Science - Pentecostalism - EW Kenyon – Kenneth Hagin – Kenneth Copeland.
- Word of Faith sources.

Teachings

- Root claim: We obtain anything we want by faith.
- This faith (positive confession) is released by a spoken declaration.
- Some (e.g. Yonggi Cho) emphasise the need for visualisation, long concentration and meditation on the desired object. This stems from Cho being influenced by Soka Gakkai Buddhism.
- God the Father has a physical body.
- Christians are 'little gods'.
- Christ became demonic on the cross.
- Redemption was secured in hell.
- Jesus was born again in hell.
- Jesus was reincarnated in hell.

Errors

- A focus on the world.
- A focus upon materialism.
- Promotion of greed.
- Equating money with blessing.
- Positive confession is more like occult incantation than anything else.
- Visualisation.
- Affirming that poverty is a curse.
- Multiple theological errors.
- Note: modern American promoters of this lie have all become rich on the gifts of poor people, having multiple limousines, mansions, and aircraft.

Quotes by errorists

Are we gods? We are a class of gods'
Kenneth Copeland; *Christianity in Crisis*, p116.

God came from heaven, became a man, made man into little gods.
Benny Hinn; *Christianity in Crisis*, p382, n. 43.

Until we comprehend that we are little gods and we begin to act like little gods, we cannot manifest the kingdom of God.
Earl Paulk; *Satan Unmasked*, p97.

God is a being who stands about 6'2"-6'3", weighing about 200lbs and has a handspan of 9" across.
Kenneth Copeland; *Christianity in Crisis*, p121.

God the Father ... is a person; and he is a triune being by himself separate from the Son and the Holy Ghost. ... each one of them is a triune being by himself. ... There's nine of them.
Benny Hinn; *Christianity in Crisis*, p123-124

Copeland denied that Jesus was God.

Christianity in Crisis, p137-138.

Being poor is a sin when God promises prosperity. New house? New Car? That's chicken feed.

Robert Tilton; *Trinity Broadcasting Network*, 1990.

Give \$10 and receive \$1000; give \$1000 and receive \$100,000.

Gloria Copeland; *God's will is prosperity*, p54.

The blessed Book brings such life and health and peace and such an abundance that we should never be poor any more.

Smith Wigglesworth.

Bible teaching

God favours the poor

The LORD hears the poor. Ps 69:33

He sets the poor on high, far from affliction, and makes *their* families like a flock. Ps 107:41

He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save *him* from those who condemn him. Ps 109:31

I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* justice for the poor. Ps 140:12

'What do you mean by crushing My people And grinding the faces of the poor?' Says the Lord GOD of hosts. Isa 3:15

But on this *one* will I look: on *him who is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word. Isa 66:2

Blessed *are you* poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed *are you* who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed *are you* who weep now, for you shall laugh. Lk 6:20-21

Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? Jm 2:5

Jesus was poor

And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD'), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, 'A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons'. Lk 2:21-24 [This was the offering made by a poor person according to Leviticus law.]

Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head'. Matt 8:20

Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you. Matt 17:27

[Jesus did not have the ready money for the temple tax, which amounted to an Attic drachma or the Jewish half-shekel, about one-third of a dollar. Every Jewish man twenty years of age and over was expected to pay it for the maintenance of the temple. But it was not a compulsory tax like that collected by the publicans for the government. This tax for the Jerusalem temple was due in the month Adar (our March) and it was now nearly six months overdue. But Jesus and the Twelve had been out of Galilee most of this time. The payment had to be made in the Jewish coin, half-shekel. Hence the money-changers did a thriving business in charging a small premium for the Jewish coin, amounting to some

forty-five thousand dollars a year, it is estimated. Note that Jesus did not have this small amount.]⁴³

Is this not the carpenter. Mk 6:3 [This was considered a lowly occupation in that time.]

Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance. Lk 8:3 [Because Jesus had no money.]

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. 2 Cor 8:9

Paul was poor

To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. 1 Cor 4:11

In hunger and thirst. 2 Cor 11:27

Contentment

Be content with your wages. Lk 3:14

I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Phil 4:11-13

Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. 1 Tim 6:6-11

A bishop [overseer] must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money. Titus 1:7

Let your conduct be without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. Heb 13:5

Riches

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matt 6:19

Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me'. But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, 'How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!' Mk 10:21-23

Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God'. Mk 19:23-24

The rich He has sent away empty. Lk 1:53

But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full, for you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Lk 6:24-25

⁴³ I am indebted to Robertson's Word Pictures here.

Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits. Jam 1:9-11

Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? Jm 2:5

Attitude

Then He said to His disciples, 'Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on'. Lk 12:22

And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Lk 12:29-31

Conclusion

The claims of Word of Faith teachers and others are entirely false. God does not call us to be rich or even to be healthy. In fact, he calls us to tribulations (see later).

If Jesus was poor and the greatest apostle was poor, why should we think that we should be rich?

The claim of faith-healing

There are multiple variations of the claim that Christians can, and should, be healed by faith. This includes physical and emotional (psychic) healing. The claim includes the idea that Christians should not be sick and should have victory over ALL ill-health.

This idea chiefly goes back to the perversion of Christian teaching by the syncretism of people like PP Quimby and his followers (such as Christian Scientists) whereby occultism was added to Christianity and sickness (and even death) was to be overcome by faith. However, faith-healing, or prayer for healing, has arisen sporadically and locally in the church for generations and was common amongst the Quakers.

This was then adopted by later groups, such as Holiness teachers, Pentecostals and later by Charismatics. There was also a widespread secular faith-healing movement paralleling the one that went on in the church.

Many proponents adhere to the false idea that healing is an automatic blessing as part of the atonement. It is no such thing. The Signs and Wonders Movement made healing a constituent of Gospel preaching, thus expecting miracles on the street to enable people to be saved. All of this is false.

Reversal

The Christian must trust in the sovereignty of God in his circumstances. This includes sickness, ill-health, afflictions and negative situations. He is to be content in all circumstances, though he can pray for assistance but must submit to the will of God in this just as Jesus did in Gethsemane. Faith-healers deny this and even command people not to be submissive to God (i.e. don't pray 'thy will be done' when seeking healing). They teach that healing is an automatic privilege produced in Christ's atonement and the only reason Christians are not healthy is because of their lack of faith.

Proponents

Note that the traditions which feature healing by faith as a Christian privilege are almost entirely modern denominations and cults. Apart from a few individuals and the occasional prophetic cultic movement, there is little evidence of healing teaching being commonplace after the later church fathers (say after Augustine, 354–430, who testified of some healings by faith). This in itself ought to cause consideration.

Precursors

Quakers (Society of Friends), especially George Fox. The Brethren or Dunkers (German Pietists founded by Alexander Mack). The Shakers. The Mormons. The Adventists (Ellen Gould White). Oneida Community (John Humphrey Noyes). Edward Irving (Catholic Apostolic Church).

Christian syncretism (admixture with the occult)

PP Quimby, New Thought, Christian Science, Science of the Mind (or Religious Science; Ernest Holmes), Unity, Charles Fillmore, Andrew Carnegie, Russell Conwell.

19th century European tradition

Johann Blumhardt (Lutheran), Dorothea Trudel, Otto Stockmayer.

19th century Holiness tradition

Maria Woodworth-Etter, Phoebe Palmer, Ethan O Allen, Carrie Judd (Montgomery), Elizabeth Mix, John Alexander Dowie (Zion), WB Godbey, Charles Cullis, AJ Gordon (Baptist), William Boardman, AB Simpson etc. Church of the Nazarene, Pilgrim Holiness Church.

Higher Life

EW Kenyon, Andrew Murray, William Boardman.

US Pentecostal tradition

Charles Parham, William Seymour (Azusa St), FF Bosworth, John G Lake, TL Osborn, Jack Coe, AA Allen, Aimee Semple McPherson, Charles S Price, Oral Roberts, Kathryn Kuhlman (Kuhlman focused on mainline denominations).

UK Pentecostal tradition

The Jeffries brothers (Elim), the Apostolic Church, Smith Wigglesworth, Steve Ryder (Australia).

Latter Rain tradition

William Branham, Paul Cain, Rick Joyner.

Healing Revival

AA Allen, EW Schambach, William Branham, Gordon Lindsay.

Roman Catholic tradition

Historic: healing at saint's shrines, relics etc. Modern: Francis MacNutt, John Bertolucci.

Shepherding Movement

Fort Lauderdale Five.

Word of Faith tradition

Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, David Yonggi Cho, Benny Hinn, Fred Price, Paul Crouch, Marilyn Hickey, Morris Cerullo, Charles Capps, Robert Tilton, Jerry Savelle. Rhema churches.

Non-denominational

Agnes Sanford, Alfred Price (Episcopalian), Credo Dollar, Bill Johnson (Bethel Church USA).

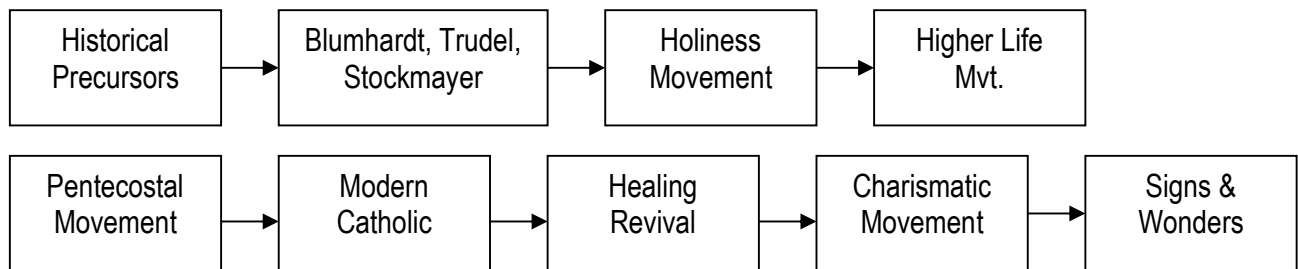
US Charismatic

Signs and Wonders Movement, John Wimber and affiliates (Third Wave). New Apostolic Reformation affiliates. Vineyard churches. Larry Lea.

UK Charismatics

Ian Andrews and the Chard fellowship tradition. Restoration Movement, New Churches. New Frontiers churches. Pioneer People churches. Lots of people claim to be able to pray for healing but no great faith-healer of note has arisen from the UK Charismatics.

The summary of healing movements occupies 21 pages of the Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements where most articles are short or, at most, a few pages.



Sources

If you check Amazon or Google you will find thousands of books on various forms of non-medical healing.

- Mind-power (based on Mesmerism).
- Pagan ideas (many methodologies).
- Occult ideas. (Faith healing is common in the occult. Shamans frequently invoke spirits to heal someone.)
- New Thought, Unity authors.
- Christian Science authors.
- New Age sources.
- Holiness healing tradition.
- Pentecostal healing tradition.
- Latter Rain tradition.
- The Healing Revival (William Branham etc.).
- Charismatic tradition.

Specific books (mostly Pentecostal) the most important in bold

- TL Osborn; *One hundred divine healing facts.*
- **TL Osborn; *Healing the sick.***
- AA Allen; *The price of God's miracle working power.*
- **AB Simpson; *The Gospel of healing.***
- Aimee Semple McPherson; *Divine healing sermons.*
- **FF Bosworth; *Christ the healer.***
- EW Kenyon; *His name on our lips brings healing.*
- **AJ Gordon; *The ministry of healing.***

- Kenneth E Hagin; *God's word on divine healing*.
- RA Torrey; *Divine healing*.
- **Andrew Murray; *Divine healing***.
- **Francis MacNut; *Healing***. [The first and the most comprehensive Catholic book on healing written in an intelligent manner.]
- John Wimber; *Power Evangelism*.
- **John Wimber; *Power Healing***.
- **Agnes Sanford; *Healing gifts of the Spirit***.
- Agnes Sanford; *The healing light*.
- Charles Capps; *God's creative power for healing*.

And many thousands more. The above are key works.

Teaching

- Root claim: God gives his children the right of always being healed.
- The atonement includes the gift of automatic healing and this needs to be appropriated by faith.
- Sickness is a curse, which must be resisted.
- Sickness is under the control of the devil.
- Kingdom theology (i.e. over-anticipated kingdom ideas).
- Inner healing (healing of the memories), initiated by Agnes Sanford.
- Exorcism (deliverance ministry) for healing.

Quotes by errorists

You are entitled to all the rights and privileges in the kingdom of God, and one of their rights is health and healing.

Kenneth Copeland; *Healed ... to be or not to be*, p25.

All you have to do today is receive your healing by faith.

Benny Hinn; *Rise and be healed*, p44.

There is no sickness problem. There is simply a problem of the believer's coming to know his inheritance in Christ.

EW Kenyon.

Can disease lodge in the body that you touch? You have to be greater than the disease.

Smith Wigglesworth.

Christians need never be sick, any more than they need to be sinful. It is always God's desire to heal you.

TL Osborn.

God is as willing to heal believers as he is to forgive unbelievers.

TL Osborn.

When I saw for the first time ... that sickness was not the will of God, everything in my nature rose up to defeat the will of the devil.

John G Lake.

Sickness should have no more mastery over us than it had over the body of Christ when he was on the earth.

Gordon Lindsay.

Every believer ought to have a ministry of healing.

Kenneth Hagin; *The Word of Faith*, January, 1972.

Biblical teaching

God is sovereign over sickness

He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. Gen 32:25

Then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues -- great and prolonged plagues -- and serious and prolonged sicknesses. Deut 28:15

The plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it. Deut 29:22

And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life'. So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Job 2:6-7

Saul's servants said to him, 'Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you'. 1 Sam 16:14

You [Jehoram] will become very sick with a disease of your intestines, until your intestines come out by reason of the sickness, day by day. ... After all this the LORD struck him in his intestines with an incurable disease. Then it happened in the course of time, after the end of two years, that his intestines came out because of his sickness; so he died in severe pain. 2 Chron 21:15, 18-19

Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him'. Jn 9:1-3

When Jesus heard *that*, He said, 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it'. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. ... Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe'. Jn 11:4-6, 14-15

Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. ... Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter answered her, 'Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?' She said, 'Yes, for so much'. Then Peter said to her, 'How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out.' Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying *her* out, buried *her* by her husband. Acts 5:5-10

Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him [Herod Agrippa], because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. Acts 12:23

There hath no temptation [trial, affliction] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. 1 Cor 10:13

For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep [i.e. died]. 1 Cor 11:29-30

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness'. Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities. 2 Cor 12:7-10

Paul was sick

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me. 2 Cor 12:7

You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. Gal 4:13

I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. Gal 4:15 [Because he had glaucoma.]

Paul's apostolic workers were sick

Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger [apostle] and the one who ministered to my need; since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. Phil 2:25-26

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities. 1 Tim 5:23

Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick. 2 Tim 4:20

Church members in the apostolic age were sick

Many *are* weak and sick among you. 1 Cor 11:30

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. Jm 5:14

The Christian life involves afflictions

In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Jn 16:33

We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22

We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance. Rm 5:3

If children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*. Rm 8:17

We know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also *you will partake* of the consolation. 2 Cor 1:7

But in all *things* we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in sleeplessness. 2 Cor 6:4-5

We ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure. 2 Thess 1:4

Share with me in the sufferings for the gospel. 2 Tim 1:8

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings. 1 Pt 4:12-13

Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Rev 2:10

Conclusion

Every time an unbiased medical team investigated claims of faith healers they find no genuine evidence of real healings. Some of these teams have included Christian doctors.

What they find is some pain relief due to heightened emotions and adrenaline, but the underlying issue remains. Many of the books on healing refer to anecdotal evidence mixed with a few misinterpreted Scriptures.

Many times a faith healer has proclaimed someone healed only for them to die of their sickness days later. In some cases the faith healer helped to kill a patient, such as when Smith Wigglesworth punched a man in the stomach and he later died.

Sometimes God's sovereign justice intervenes. In 1955 Jack Coe told the parents of a polio-ridden, 3-year old boy that he was healed. This was during a convention in Miami. Coe told the parents to remove the leg braces; but the boy was not cured and was in constant pain. Coe was arrested and charged with practising medicine without a licence but got off since Florida exempted faith healing from this law. Later that year Coe succumbed to polio and died.

The problem saints have is accepting the will of God. God never promised us an easy life, a luxurious life, a happy life, a pain free life or a life without sickness. Indeed, he told us that we must expect tribulations. Submitting to the will of God is the key to a contented life, not trying to avoid what he gives us.

However, God does heal miraculously when he wills it.

Most of the proponents listed here can be safely affirmed to be false teachers; indeed some were vile heretics teaching the foulest blasphemies (e.g. Branham). Perhaps some were sincere but deluded but some were certainly charlatans (many of the Pentecostals, such as AA Allen).

However, there were some that were more Biblical and devout. Some were genuinely godly people who sought to pray for healing while affirming the sovereignty of God. Some encouraged penitent prayer and repentance from sins before prayer for healing, such as the 19th century Germans. Some founded hospices and hospitals. Even Quaker George Fox had a far more reverent approach than modern Charismatics. Some, like AJ Gordon and Andrew Murray were intelligent expositors and not fools.

So, we cannot claim that every leader who prays for miraculous healing is a charlatan or a heretic - but many are.

God has never stated that his people would be free from sickness. Indeed, the fact that we suffer with Christ and enter many tribulations means a difficult life not an easy one.

It is clear that apostolic workers and even great apostles suffered from sickness and were not healed. There is no precedent for saints to be ever healthy.

As for healing in the atonement, this is a fallacy. Statements about healing in connection with the Messiah (such as Isa 53:5) refer to the healing from sin that comes with redemption or to the healings that authenticated the ministry of the Messiah and his delegates.

Seeker sensitive church meetings

This is where churches plan to grow in numbers by making meetings as attractive and unthreatening to sinners as possible. Thus there is no mention of sin, or repentance and all the attributes of the world are used to make meetings entertaining (i.e. rock bands, music

to enhance speeches, lightweight preaching, jokes, drama, lighting effects, popular culture content, etc.).

Reversal

The church is a mystery to the world and is not part of this world. The local church never complies to worldly ideas or practices and meets in houses led by a small team of elders over small congregations operating as a family. Seeker-Sensitive doctrine reverses this. Churches are large, meeting in big spaces (such as dedicated buildings or warehouses), where everything in the main meeting is dedicated to the outsider in order to make his presence comfortable and unthreatening.

Proponents

The prominent seeker-sensitive church is the Bill Hybels' church at Willow Creek, Illinois. After his initial success (which faded over time, many of his mature members left dissatisfied) over 1,600 other churches copied this model.

Next to this is the church of Rick Warren, Saddleback Church, Lake Forest, California.

Teaching and practice

- Root claim: dumb-down the Gospel so that it is not threatening to sinners.
- Arrange meetings so those sinners feel welcome.
- Do not mention sin or repentance.
- Make the meeting an entertaining experience.
- Arrange the church around outsiders. Centre on 'felt-needs'.
- Rely upon commercial business models for strategies.
- Use market research to focus on the right target groups.

Errors

- It is blasphemy to centre the church upon sinners. The church is the body of Christ and must comply with the instructions of the Head of the body and glorify the Head.
- It is sin to dumb-down the claims of the Gospel, which include the fact of hell and the sinfulness of all men.
- It is wrong to so focus upon sinners that the purposes of gathering are lost: that is to enable the mutual edification of the brethren for their growth and to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Quotes by errorists

The ground we have in common with unbelievers is not the Bible but our common needs, hurts and interests human beings. You cannot start with a text.

Rick Warren; *The Purpose Driven Church*, p295.

People's immediate needs are a key to where God would have you begin speaking (i.e. sermon).

Rick Warren; *The Purpose Driven Church*, p227.

[Speaking of music in church] More people are won to Christ by feeling God's presence than by all of our apologetic arguments combined ... It is the sense of God's presence that melts hearts.

Rick Warren; *The Purpose Driven Church*, p241.

Being seeker-sensitive in our worship is a Biblical command.

Rick Warren; *The Purpose Driven Church*, p243.

We have attracted thousands more because of our music. ... Use more performed music than congregational singing.

Rick Warren; *The Purpose Driven Church*, p285, 291.

Identify your target and define the event. The target at Saddleback's weekend seeker services is the adult seeker. The target determines the musical style, lyric content, presentation, length of service and stage look of the event.

Rick Muchow; *Insights on worship programming your music to serve the purposes*.

Biblical teaching

Not focusing on sinners

My speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. 1 Cor 2:4

Do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. Gal 1:10

Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. Eph 6:6

Do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. 1 Thess 2:4

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jm 4:4

The Lord's Supper

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Acts 2:42

Now on the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread. Acts 20:7

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 1 Cor 10:16

Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. 1 Cor 11:20 [Paul was criticising the Corinthians failure; it should have been to eat the Supper.]

Koinonia

Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Rm 14:19

Let each of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good, leading to edification. Rm 15:2

That the church may receive edification. 1 Cor 14:4

Let it be for the edification of the church *that* you seek to excel. 1 Cor 14:12

Let all things be done for edification. 1 Cor 14:26

For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. 1 Cor 14:31

From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Eph 4:16

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. Eph 4:29

Edify one another. 1 Thess 5:11

Conclusion

It is a sin, pure and simple, to focus the attention of the local church upon sinners and to try to make the meeting attractive to outsiders. The focus of the local church is: 1) Christ, and particularly the Lord's Supper as a remembrance and praise; 2) serving each other with mutual encouragement, edifying teaching and comfort. Corporate worship (a prominent aspect of seeker-sensitive churches) is not a stated NT focus for meeting.

As for the various methods used to aid the planning of such churches (e.g. market research), this is just worldliness.

Self-esteem doctrines

The 20th century saw the gradual appropriation of many principles of psychology and psychiatry imported into churches and old doctrines were twisted beyond recognition. Few understood the occult or heathen foundation of many of these ideas.

Though there are many teachings that spewed out of this movement, the most obvious example is the promotion of self-esteem, which is the very opposite of the Lord's command for self-denial.

For thousands of years believers have managed successfully without psychology. Now, instead of looking to God and his word applied by the Spirit for comfort, psychologists encourage patients to look to themselves and to the methods of sinful men.

Reversal

The Bible explains that the Christian is focused upon Christ to the detriment of himself. He is to die to himself, to deny himself, to be lowly, to be contrite, and to put on Christ. The Gospel of self-esteem teaches the exact opposite and is based upon the ideas of men, which are based on occult principles at root. Pre-eminent among these ideas is the principle of boosting the self-esteem of all men in order for them to be able to live peacefully. This usually involves a downplaying of sin and errors.

Proponents

- James Dobson (multiple books).
- The *Boundaries* teaching of Henry Cloud and John Townsend.
- The *Theophostic Counselling* of Ed Smith (a combination of Freudianism and Agnes Sanford's inner healing methods, based upon unbiblical premises).
- Agnes Sanford, William Backus, Marie Chapien, Martha Rogers, Gary Collins, Lawrence Crabb, Paul Meier, Frank Minirth, M Scott Peck, Paul Tournier, Richard Dobbins, Joseph Palotta, Cecil Osborne, Charles Solomon, H Norman Wright, Robert Schuller, Mary Vander Goot, Archibald Hart (Fuller Seminary).
- The Christian Association for Psychological Studies.
- Many thousands of counsellors in churches, many of whom are women that counsel men.

Sources

- Secular psychology: William James, Eric Fromm, Abraham Maslow, BF Skinner, EL Thorndike, William Glasser, Stanley Coopersmith, Clyde Narramore.

- Secular psychiatry: notably the occult ideas of Carl G Jung (1875-1961) and the fraudulent lies of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939)⁴⁴ but also Carl Rogers (a spiritualist, 1902-87) and Alfred Adler (1870–1937).

Teachings

- Blaming current problems upon difficulties in the past, especially in childhood.
- Responsibility for sin is abrogated and a selfish desire for happiness, above all else, is fostered.
- Self-fulfilment, through high self-esteem and self-love.
- Low self esteem is credited as the cause of rape, violence, genocide, wars, political intrigue, mental illness, drug abuse, social disorder, hared, alcoholism etc. according to James Dobson.⁴⁵ [How odd, then, that many of these things are actually perpetrated by egotists.]

Practices

Different therapies blame different things for human problems: the stars, mothers, fathers, lack of sex, too much sex, bio-chemical make up, diet, low self-esteem, life-style or karma from past lives. One psychologist admits, *‘the field of psychology today is literally a mess. There are as many techniques, methods and theories around as there are researchers and therapists’*.⁴⁶

There are over 250 therapies and 10,000 techniques that often contradict one another.

Many Christian counsellors are women, thus denying Paul’s command that a woman should have no authority over a man (1 Tim 2:12).

Errors

- Studies show that there is no *‘convincing evidence that even years of analysis in the most expert hands, radically alter a person’s fundamental “psychopathology”*’.⁴⁷ For hundreds of years good pastors have consistently achieved better successes than the thousands of modern psychologists.
- Problems of living are not brain problems requiring scientific cures, but problems of the mind requiring Biblical solutions: knowledge, wisdom, guidance and loving support.
- *‘Volumes of research have been done to demonstrate the absolute unreliability of psychiatric diagnosis.’*⁴⁸ *‘Psychiatrists are no better than other citizens in predicting a human being’s conduct.’*⁴⁹
- A greater percentage of patients who did not have treatment improved over those who did.⁵⁰
- Christians have no need for the wisdom of the world. The application of God’s word is the best counsel possible.

⁴⁴ Many of the conclusions of Freud have been discredited because he lied about experiments and successes.

⁴⁵ *Hide or Seek*, Fleming H Revell Co., (1979), p21, 165-166.

⁴⁶ Martin Bobgan, *Psychoheresy*, p31.

⁴⁷ Anthony Storr, *The Art of Psychotherapy*, p151.

⁴⁸ Hugh Drummond, quoted in Bobgan, *Psychoheresy*, p146.

⁴⁹ Forensic scientist Ronald Schlensky, quoted in Bobgan, *Psychoheresy*, p147.

⁵⁰ Hans J Eysenck, *The Effects of Psychotherapy: An Evaluation*, *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol 16, (1952) p322. His conclusions then have been confirmed subsequently.

Quotes

There is no acceptable Christian psychology that is markedly different from non-Christian psychology.

P Sutherland & P Polstra, *Aspects of Integration*, Christian Assoc. for Psychological Studies seminar, Santa Barbara, CA, June 1976.

When ... a person does counselling, he or she may use techniques that some consider secular.

Gary Collins, *Can you trust Psychology?*, Intervarsity Press, (1988), p72.

Psychology offers a unique opportunity for a person to be of service as a disciple of Christ. ... I have found it rewarding.

James Dobson, *Dr Dobson Answers Your Questions*, Tyndale House, (1989), p498.

Remember this psychological law: any anxiety-producing thought or condition which cannot be expressed is almost certain to generate inner pressure and stress.

James Dobson, *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*, Tyndale House, (1975), p125.

When any powerful emotion is forced from conscious thought while it is raging full strength, it has the potential of ripping and tearing us from within. The process by which we cram a strong feeling into the unconscious mind is called 'repression' and it is psychologically hazardous. The pressure that it generates will usually appear elsewhere in the form of depression, anxiety tension, or in an entire range of physical disorders.

James Dobson, *Emotions: Can you trust them*, Regal Books, (1980), p93. [Note: there is no proof for this statement anywhere. In the past, more sensible forbears called this 'self-control'. In fact many scientists have discredited this 'hydraulic model of energy' [see Carol Tavris, *Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion*, Simon & Schuster (1982), p38.]

The most magnificent theory ever devised for the control of behaviour is called the 'Law of Reinforcement', formulated many years ago by the first educational psychologist, EL Thorndike. This is magnificent because it works.

James Dobson, *Dare To Discipline*, Tyndale House, (1970), p49. [These are the sins of a) looking to the wisdom of the world for help (in this case an animal psychologist); b) pragmatism.]⁵¹

Low self-esteem is a threat to the entire human family, affecting children, adolescents, the elderly, all socioeconomic levels of society, and each race and ethnic culture.

James Dobson, *What Wives Wish...*, p24.

Biblical teaching

Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. Col 2:4, 8

We should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting. Eph 4: 14

Let no one deceive you with empty words. Eph 5:6

⁵¹ Note Jay Adams, 'James Dobson's book Dare To Discipline ... while placing a needed emphasis upon discipline by structure, is based upon this non-Christian ideology. It is basically a godless humanistic book. The discipline advocated is behaviouristic (Skinnerian). According to Dobson, a child is to be trained as one would train his dog. The methodology does not differ. The presupposition (not stated, but underlying the book) is that man is but another animal. There is no place for the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion or sanctification.' *The Big Umbrella*, Baker (1972), p131.

Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge - by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. 1 Tim 6:20-21

For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.' Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 1 Cor 1:19-21

Then He said to them all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it'. Lk 9:23-24

He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Jn 12:25

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Gal 5:22-23

Conclusion

The teaching on self-esteem (along with many other secular psychological ideas) is worldly, demonic and damaging. Most of the teaching is diametrically opposed to the doctrines of the Bible, such as the emphasis upon self-denial or self-control.

Worldliness

This is a vast subject that we can only touch the fringe of.

For our purposes here worldliness is a focus upon the organised social system presiding in the earth ruled by Satan; the mores and practices of people outside of God's grace; in simple terms, 'the mind of the flesh'.

During much of church history, sound churches took pains to stay detached from the world while necessarily being in it to survive. Sometimes this was done too legalistically (such as strict social rules) and sometimes the church ended up in world flight (such as monasticism). Despite these failings, the churches generally sought to obey God's command to not be too close to God's enemy. Many times individuals would rather suffer loss than become too attached to the world.

This separatist attitude gradually changed during the 20th century until, with the Charismatic Movement, it was completely reversed. Now, various movements champion being worldly and celebrate the fact that the world accepts them.

Since the worldliness of the current age is so diverse, spanning multiple areas of life, so also the sin of Christian worldliness is equally varied and cannot be fully catalogued here.

Reversal

The church is not of this world but a part of heaven. It is an isolated outpost of true spirituality united to Christ on the earth. Thus the church should not entertain any principles of this fallen world of sin. Worldly churches are those that are the opposite; they take on board all manner of worldly and wicked principles, excluding God's commands.

Proponents

- Seeker Sensitive churches and preachers. Willow Creek and Saddleback churches. Conferences attached to this group.
- The Ecumenical Movement (World Council of Churches) and local ecumenism.
- The Charismatic Movement. [Interestingly, small, local, traditional, Classical Pentecostals were less likely to fall into outright worldliness.]
- Word of Faith Movement (which is materialistic).
- Abraham Kuyper who developed the theology of Common Grace in order to join with Roman Catholics and the world in the Netherlands in order to become Prime Minister. Kuyperism also took hold in other countries, such as South Africa.
- All churches that developed a hierarchical structure.
- Churches that are associated with the state.
- Mark Driscoll (foul-mouthed New Calvinist; Seattle-based mega pastor).

Sources

- Works by Bill Hybels.
- Works by Rick Warren.
- Abraham Kuyper on Common Grace.
- Works from Charismatic and Word Faith sources.
- Ecumenical works.
- Works based on pragmatism.
- Works based on market research.
- Emerging Churches.
- Political church movements, such as Liberation Theology.
- *Being Worldly Saints: Can you serve Jesus and still enjoy your life?*, Michael E Wittner, Zondervan.

Teachings

- Antinomianism.
- Toleration of the world. Following the world's standards.
- Focus upon temporal issues.
- Promotion of worldly lusts (such as self-satisfaction).
- A worldly Gospel message.
- Making the Gospel a sales pitch, something to be offered as a benefit.
- Pragmatism.
- Worldly ideas.
- Common Grace teachings (especially in order to join forces with the world, which was Abraham Kuyper's initial purpose in the Netherlands).
- Claiming it is acceptable to take money from the world.
- Promising healing for money.
- Focus on personal prosperity.
- Churches promoting local community with the world (e.g. Emerging Churches).
- Ecumenical doctrines (e.g. focus on love, toleration and shared experiences for unity instead of truth).

Practices

- Idolatry.
- Populism.
- Political correctness.
- Use of advertising or market research to increase congregation size.
- Changing the Sunday meeting to include various formats that are attractive to outsiders, such as drama, computer images, lighting effects, ambient music, dramatic speeches, humour, etc.
- All Charismatic methods of attracting outsiders into churches.
- Adopting rock music, folk-rock music, pop-music and other modern forms as part of an entertaining worship system.
- Writing church songs in a style that deliberately complies with the world, or is adapted from worldly idioms or copies secular melodies.
- Joining with the world in a common pursuit (such as a certain political party).
- When Gospel preachers become hucksters.
- Conducting church meetings on television for profit.
- Taking money from the world as a gift.
- Borrowing from the world.
- Taking advantage of charity status in the world for tax breaks.
- Interfaithism.
- Professional career preachers (preaching for fame, power, riches etc.).
- Preaching with the use of jokes, foul language, hip talk, and lewd innuendoes.
- Toleration of divorce / remarriage with no Biblical foundation.
- Carousing, partying, revelling.
- Licentiousness (lawlessness).
- Tolerating drunkenness.
- Lasciviousness (unbridled lust, wantonness, insolence, shamelessness, unchastely behaviour). Normalisation of worldly sexual attitudes.
- Supporting homosexuality, transgenders, transexuals, and transvestites.
- Dressing like the world, such as women being scantily clad in church meetings.
- Watching inappropriate television, video games, websites, movies and theatre.
- Being dominated by amusements.
- Unsuitable friendships and associations.

Errors

- Failure to put Christ first.
- Failure to obey God's word.
- Failure to understand sanctification.
- Failure to discern the times or the satanic origin of things in the world.
- Failure to understand God's command to be separate.
- Failure to understand that you are dead to the world.
- Failure to put off the old nature.
- Failure to see that you are a sojourner in this world.

Quotes

Evil worldly speech

Knowing that His penis would need a home, God created a woman to be your wife. ... your wife is shaped differently than you and makes a very nice home.

Mark Driscoll; Online forum church discussion using pseudonym William Wallace II, (2001). This was widely reported.⁵²

You need to go home and tell your husband that you've met Jesus and you've been studying the Bible ... then you need to drop his trousers, and you need to serve your husband.

Mark Driscoll.

Driscoll has said even worse things that I cannot write down here. His language, attitude and writings are a complete disgrace.

I wish I could just ... find one verse that says, "If you don't like 'em, kill 'em"... don't attack God's servants ... you stink... I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost machine gun – I blow your head off.

Benny Hinn, TBN's *Praise The Lord Show*, 9.11.90.

Evil worldly attitude

I came here to supply exposition, not brains.

John Nelson Darby's response to a questioner (DL Moody) during a sermon in America. John G Gerstner, *Wrongly dividing the word of truth*, p27; quoting WG Turner, *John Nelson Darby*, p21.

Evil worldly doctrine

The love of the Father is without condemnation because it is with full acceptance of the sinner's sin.

Prophet Bob Jones.

Biblical teaching

Then the men said to Lot, 'Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city -- take *them* out of this place!' Gen 19:12

You shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine. Lev 20:26

You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. Deut 15:6

You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. Deut 20:12

Depart now from the tents of these wicked men! Touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins. Num 16:26

The borrower *is* servant to the lender. Prov 22:7

Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! Isa 48:20

Depart! Depart! Go out from there, touch no unclean *thing*; go out from the midst of her, be clean, you who bear the vessels of the LORD. Isa 52:11

Move from the midst of Babylon, go out of the land of the Chaldeans. Jer 50:8

Flee from the midst of Babylon, and every one save his life! Do not be cut off in her iniquity. Jer 51:6

⁵² E.g. 'Inside Mark Driscoll's disturbed mind', Rachel Held Evans, 39 July 2014.

Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall. My people, go out of the midst of her! And let everyone deliver himself from the fierce anger of the LORD. Jer 51:44-45

You are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Jn 15:19

I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Jn 17:14-16

The carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. Rm 8:7

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Rm 12:2

Owe no one anything. Rm 13:8

Therefore 'Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean'. 2 Cor 6:17

Do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. Gal 1:10

You once walked according to the course of this world. Eph 2:2

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, **not** on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Col 3:1-3

The love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil. 1 Tim 6:10

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jm 4:4

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world. 1 Jn 2:15-16

They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. 1 Jn 4:5-6

Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 1 Jn 5:4-5

Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. Rev 18:4

Key principles that have undergirded the demise of truth in the church

Shamanism

A shaman is essentially a witch-doctor; someone who is able to engage with, and influence, spirit beings in order to effect a material change. This involves being able to enter into a trance (ASC) and summon spirits on behalf of members of their community. There are various means to achieve this trance: drugs, frenzied dancing, chanting, and mostly self-hypnosis.

Shamanism is one of the oldest forms of the occult and dates to before the flood. It can be found in the root practices of tribes from the whole world, whether it is a Native American Indian medicine man, an Australian aboriginal elder, a Celtic druid priest, a modern sorcerer or an Aztec *tiamacazqui*.

Underneath this is a belief in a universal, divine force within all life such as the Chinese *chi*, the Lacota Sioux *wakanda*, the Indian *prana*, the Polynesian *mana*. The shaman taps into this energy and supposedly manipulates it in favour of someone. Compare this to Mesmer's 'magnetic fluid', the mystic's 'inner light', or New Age 'superforce'.

Shamans will use spirit-guides to achieve and control this power, which are clear to Bible believers as demonic angels. All of this became evident within modern forms such as: Wicca, Theosophy, New Age practices, and many others.

Essentially, shamanism is rebellion; it uses satanic means to try to overcome God's providential will without God. It is usually centred in healing, divination or prophesying.

Thus the manipulations of a universal energy (which is identified as the Holy Spirit as a force), with angelic assistance (demons) to manipulate supernatural power to heal, prophesy or change events within Charismatic circles is nothing but age-old shamanism dressed up. William Branham conjuring up his spirit-guide to produce a 'word of knowledge' to an audience is nothing but shamanism.

Shamanism is also the basis of psychoheresy since shamans used the same techniques centuries before: sharing groups, psychodrama, dream analysis, hypnosis, guided imagery, and psychedelics.

Inner healing also uses many of these forms such as guided imagery and spirit-guides. The effects of the Toronto Blessing (screaming, dancing, laughing etc) are nothing but the effects of shamanistic hypnosis releasing serpent power (kundalini).

Humanism

Many of the defections from God's truth begin when someone turns from trust in the sovereignty of God and his revealed will and instead looks to human rational conclusions. Time after time humanistic ideas prompted a new heresy, such as: Pelagianism, Socinianism, New Divinity etc. All these elevated the powers of man and denigrated the truth of God regarding total depravity.

The basis of humanism is pride. Pride is the fundamental characteristic of rebellion. Rebellion is the prime source of sin.

Mysticism

Mysticism is a combination of humanism and shamanism but directed inwards rather than outwards. It is where man becomes his own God being found within the depths of his being. Multiple deceptions and heresies are based on mysticism.

Anything that promotes passivity and suggestibility is getting close to mysticism. Charismatic worship services are a hotbed of such passivity. The new trance music worship sessions are even worse.

Greed and lust

Money

Although many heresies are based upon a delusion in some well-meaning person, it is also true that a significant number of errors stem from someone who sets out to make a lot of money from fooling people. The classic example of this is L Ron Hubbard who founded Scientology in order to become a millionaire, which he did.

Power

Others are greedy for power rather than filthy lucre. The classic historical examples are the 'prophets' that took over the town of Munster during the Reformation, leading to social disorder, licentiousness and carnage. Sadly, large numbers of gullible people fell for the claim of an imminent millennium and the need to be ruled by Charismatic messianic leaders. The fact that hundreds of thousands of supposed Christians are doing this today, submitting to the lies of apostles and prophets, show that this error is still powerful.

Lust

Yet others are greedy for lust and use their lies to gain positions of power in order to prey upon young women. Sadly that has been all too common in Charismatic / Pentecostal circles. Multiple leaders have been exposed as fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals and frequenters of prostitutes.

Unbridled rationality

This is similar to humanism in some ways but humanist heretics need not be intellectuals or academics. Perverted rationality is where people trust someone clever and professorial rather than the truth of God's word. Thus rationalistic errors can be so smart and convoluted that only the adepts can understand the teaching, yet many follow it.

Deism claims to be intellectual and godly when it is neither. Sandemanianism is based upon the intellect but is simply another Gospel based upon human understanding rather than divinely given faith. Open Theism pretends to be intellectual and humanistic when it is just a radical form of Arminianism with Socinian overtones. Liberal theology is the classic form of wrong rationality; all those lofty statements from the late 19th century have now fallen into the dust, trashed by actual facts emerging from archaeology and other disciplines.

Emotionalism

Although many of the heresies that give rise to unbridled affections are linked to shamanism and mysticism, there are some emotional excesses that are not. However, many of the results of emotionalism going to extremes produce very similar manifestations to shamanism.

Emotionalism emphasises feelings rather than intellect; indeed many emotional based heresies deny the intellect completely. Often these heresies are based upon 'love' but there is usually no definition of what this love is and there are many demonic inspired emotions that pretend to be love. Thus Wesleyanism based instant sanctification upon an experience

of pure love, despite the fact that no one could prove that it was godly love or that it was even divine. Thus Wesleyan sanctification is based upon emotionalism. That this fails is proven by John Wesley's old age written claim that he did not love God and never had.

The emotionalism found in crusade evangelism is not usually shamanism but it is a stirring of the affections, which are mistaken for regeneration. This is a serious mistake, which explains why the vast majority of crusade evangelism converts fall away. The evangelist's job is not to stir the emotions but to convince the mind of sin and guilt, demand volitional repentance and centre the sinner upon Jesus. Paul sought to persuade men (2 Cor 5:11) not tickle their emotions.

The pattern of history

Many believers, and especially most Charismatics, think of church history as a period of:

- early rain – being the apostolic church and immediately afterwards, which they think was full of glory and success;
- followed by a period a darkness;
- and then the latter rain where the church will be glorious and successful at the end. Many (such as Rick Joyner) claim that the end-time church will be greater by far than the apostolic church.⁵³

The latter rain period will be gradually introduced by a series of revivals of truth starting with the Reformation. There are various suggestions regarding what these are but a typical pattern would be:

- Revival of the truth of justification by faith through Martin Luther.
- Revival of the secret of sanctification by John Wesley.
- Revival of mass conversion under either CG Finney (mid 19th c.) or DL Moody (late 19th c.).
- Revival of the baptism of the Spirit teaching and spiritual gifts with Pentecostalism.
- Revival of powerful healing ministry under various Pentecostals and the 50s Healing Revival.
- Revival of baptism in the Spirit and spiritual gifts in the wider churches in the Charismatic Movement.
- Widespread gifts of healing and miracles in the Signs and Wonders Movement.
- Miraculous expressions of power in the Toronto Blessing.

All of these constitute a gradual restoration of Biblical truths to a church that had lost them.

There is so much wrong with this interpretation of history that it is laughable. These are actually stages of destruction (apart from the first).

Firstly, the early church had many problems, some of which are identified within the pages of the NT. The Corinthians were beset by licentiousness, the Galatians by Judaisers, the Colossians by Gnostics, the addressees of John's first letter by Docetists, the letter of Hebrews addresses Jewish Christians who were turning back to Judaism and so on. Then Paul explains that 'all in Asia' deserted him. The churches were never without severe problems.

⁵³ This is based upon the early Autumn rains in Israel followed by the latter Spring rain that enabled the harvest, seen symbolically as a precursor early revival followed by the fulness of final revival. However, there are three Hebrew words used to denote the rains of different seasons, (1) *Yoreh* (Hos 6:3) or *moreh* (Joel 2:23) denoting the former or the early rain. (2) *Melqosh*, the "latter rain" (Prov 16:15). (3) *Geshem*, the winter rain, 'the rains'; the heavy winter rain is mentioned in (Gn 7:12; Ezra 10:9; Song 2:11). The early or former rains commence in Autumn in the latter part of October or beginning of November (Deut 11:14; Joel 2:23; cf. Jer 3:3) and continue to fall heavily for two months. Then the heavy winter rains fall from the middle of December to March. The latter or Spring rains fall in March and April, and serve to swell the grain then coming to maturity (Deut 11:14; Hos 6:3). After this there is ordinarily no rain, the sky being bright and cloudless till October or November. Rain is referred to symbolically in Deut 32:2; Ps 72:6; Isa 44:3, 4; Hos 10:12. [Partly, Easton's Bible Dict.]

After the apostolic age things went downhill fast with multiple heresies plaguing the church for centuries, such as: legalism, authoritarian church leaders, clergy / laity split, Arianism, Sabellianism, Monophysitism, Eutychianism, Pelagianism and many more. The doctrines of the Trinity, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church and salvation were all subverted. Not so rosy in the first 400 years then.

During what is termed 'the Dark Ages' there were also many bright lights expounding truth and doing good works. We could mention Alfred the Great, Gottschalk, John Wycliffe, Savonarola, Jan Hus, Jerome of Prague, the Waldenses and many more. God never left his people without a witness.

Then we have the great witness of the Reformation. This was a true revival above all revivals. This is a great light that splits history in two.

After the Reformation there were good and bad events. There were multiple heresies and erroneous movements and there were many great men who testified to the truth, who also had big followings. This contrast continues to this very day. In the last 500 years sometimes the good has shone bright, sometimes the bad has been in the ascendancy (as today), but it has always been a contrast.

Regarding the list of precursors of latter rain we can say this:

- Yes Martin Luther was used by God to bring to light the truth of justification by faith.
- John Wesley was a serious heretic who was unlikely to be a true Christian since he promoted multiple heresies all his life and at the end stated that he never loved God. Regarding his perfectionism (instant sanctification) this was a serious heresy in itself.
- Regarding the mass conversions under Finney, Moody or anyone else, these were based upon Pelagianism in the case of Finney and Arminianism in the case of Moody, both did great damage to the Gospel (it is hard to see how Finney could be a genuine believer, who even denied Biblical regeneration). In all crusade evangelism most of the emotional converts fade away over time. In the case of Finney it was stated that most of his supposed converts never remained.
- Regarding Pentecostalism, I have already shown that this was a demonic means of bringing in all sorts of heresies and erroneous practices into the church. In the worst cases these were pagan and occult ideas and both were fully manifested in Azusa Street with witches and mediums being allowed to fully participate so that many Christians were scared to attend. The chaos was so bad that Seymour had to put his head in a shoebox to pray, while his mentor Parham stated that it was utterly satanic. This was the start of multiple heresies.
- The healing ministries were even worse. Branham was a terrible heretic who did not believe in the Trinity and said that women were not worth a good clean bullet. He thought that the Zodiac and the Pyramids were the word of God and practised fraudulent means to effect healings. He is one of the worst occult-ridden people that the church has ever seen. Other so-called healers were simply charlatans and frauds. Some were alcoholics and fornicators.
- The Charismatic Movement has been nothing but a Trojan Horse through which all sorts of demonic teachings have been pushed on the churches. The same goes for the Sign and Wonders Movement that is closely connected to it. My various papers list the occult teachings that have emanated from these sources.
- As for the Toronto Blessing, if you cannot see how this has been an expression of demonic control over people making a laughing stock of them, then I cannot help you. I will give one example. A famous church leader and musician, who was once a friend, at

the height to the Toronto explosion stood at the front of a church meeting jumping up and down (pogoing) for a long period of time. While he did this he shouted, '*I am a piece of toast*'. This is an utter delusion created by the enemy that gripped gullible people.

Another problem in this arbitrary list is anachronism. For example:

- The proposal that Wesley originated his false doctrine of perfectionism is hilarious; such error goes right back to the time of the apostles. Multiple preachers espoused forms of perfectionism before Wesley, including some that attributed it to an emotional, mystical experience (like Wesley) and to 'perfect love' (like Wesley). Even the Reformation saw occasions where heretics preached this sort of perfectionism (such as certain Anabaptists). Early churches influenced by Gnosticism taught this sort of error. In fact, Wesley himself was influenced by the perfectionism of William Law and Jeremy Taylor.
- Mass conversions have been occasioned throughout church history long before the 19th century; some based on sound doctrine, some based on false doctrine. In fact, George Whitefield was doing this before Wesley with better doctrine, better results but without any organisation into groups (which Wesley was good at). Even Wesley was long before either Finney or Moody. Savonarola preached to great crowds long before Whitefield.
- It proposes that the baptism in the Spirit began with the Pentecostals. It did not. The phrase was first used by John William Fletcher [1729-1785] during the Methodist movement regarding instant perfection and was commonly used in the Holiness Movement regarding holiness.
- The gift of tongues is said to originate in the Pentecostal Movement, initially under Charles Parham at Topeka (actually Agnes Ozman was the speaker). In fact tongues had broken out many times throughout history in various ecstatic, heretical groups (and occult groups). It had also been a part of some Holiness Movement meetings. Tongues and prophecy, and even apostles, were also a key part of the Catholic Apostolic church in Victorian London that predated Pentecostals.
- Healing was said to originate with the Pentecostal healers and especially Branham onwards. In fact healing has been experienced throughout history in localised areas and faith healing under some leader (such as Maria Woodworth-Etter) was commonly practised in the Holiness Movement; in fact it was prominent in this movement for many years. Before the Holiness Movement, certain German Christians developed very successful healing ministries, such as Dorothea Trudel and Otto Stockmayer (see earlier).
- The manifestations exhibited during the Toronto Blessing have all been seen many times before in various ecstatic eruptions in heretical churches in history, in occult meetings, and in Hindu yoga. Many aberrant revivals manifested these sorts of exotic behaviour (such as the Cane Ridge Revival or the Ulster Revival). Some groups were notable for this, such as the Shakers (mid 18th C.) or the Cevenol Prophets (i.e. Camisards, late 17th c.). There have been some famous secular manifestations, such as the St Vitus Dance fever (chorea) in the Middle Ages. They appear wherever people abandon self-control and submit to passivity and hypnotic suggestion, accepting delusions. It is the worst sort of abandonment of rationality, decency, godliness and spirituality. It is a triumph for the devil.

In other words, this simplistic attempt to describe waves of blessing to the church leading up to modern Charismatics is nonsense and is based on a complete ignorance of actual church history.

Conclusion

The devil's objective in the world is to bring about the opposite of all the characteristics of God's law. Thus he seeks the abandonment of justice, charity, love, peace, security, righteousness, lawfulness and so on, replacing it with lawlessness, iniquity, hate, cruelty, brutality and death. This is well underway in the 21st century.

Before he could do this he first needed to get the church immersed in the opposite of the doctrine that God taught in his Word. The church has the spiritual control of the world as God's representative so Satan needed to ruin the church's efficacy by getting it to throw away God's truth and replace it with demonic lies. Thus doctrine after doctrine was perverted and practice after practice was corrupted. Even worse, paganism and occultism were introduced wholesale into churches.

Thus we saw that great truths / doctrines that the church had long upheld were perverted into the opposite of what the Bible teaches.

This small paper only explains a sample of the great corruption, which is still ongoing. The church is gradually being turned into a demonic imitation of what God desires. Jerusalem is being turned into Babylon.

The Lord's people must be wise about what is going on, understand the issues, and take action accordingly.

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