

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

The
DISCERNER

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Editorial for the DISCERNER

Dr. William BeVier

I would like to take the opportunity of this first editorial as editor of the *Discerner* to give tribute to my predecessor, Dr. John Dahlin. Dr. Dahlin was the editor of this publication for 33 years. He has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Religion Analysis Service for most of its over 40 years of existence.

None of us know how many words Dr. Dahlin has written, how many questions he has answered both in print and in person, or how many hours he has spent during his years of involvement in the ministry of R.A.S. I'm confident our Lord knows and will eventually reward him. Matthew 25:21 comes to mind, the time when the Lord will say to some: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; . . ."

A few weeks ago, as many as possible of the Board of Directors of R.A.S., and their wives, shared an evening meal with the Dahlins. It gave us an occasion to express our appreciation to both of them. I'm happy to inform you that Dr. Dahlin is continuing as a member of our Board, and his wise counsel—based on his many years of experience—is still available to us. Rev. Ewald Eisele continues as our Office Manager and

is the one who provides most of the daily contacts and help between the Religion Analysis Service and those who write or telephone us for assistance.

The ministry of the Religion Analysis Service continues as it has for many years, providing literature and other information to those encountering the cults in these days.

Many years ago, while a student in seminary, I took a course in the cults. During the following years I had personal contacts with individuals involved in various cults and had opportunity to direct them to the Bible, the only sure revelation we have from God. After joining the faculty of Northwestern College, I was assigned to teach the College's course titled "Modern Cults." I realized my need to update and expand my knowledge of the subject. Thankfully, Religion Analysis Service was located in the same area as the College, and when Dr. Dahlin learned I had been assigned the cults course, he contacted me offering R.A.S.'s assistance. As my knowledge and interest in the cults increased, the Board of R.A.S. saw fit to invite me to become a member.

Through study of the subject, I've come to certain conclusions of what constitutes a cult, what distinguishes a cult from a "mainline" Christian denomination, from a sect, and from a false religion. Others have come to the same or similar conclusions. However, for the sake of our readers, I would like to express my personal views.

I define a cult as a group or movement, which claims some affinity with Christianity but holds a non-Biblical view of either the person of Christ or the work of Christ, or both. This is true of all of the older major cults which came into existence in the 19th century in this country. To be specific, the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints ("Mormons"), the Seventh-Day Adventists (but not all Adventist groups), the Christian Scientists, and the Jehovah's Witnesses.

In addition to these major ones, major in terms of numbers of members, wealth, and continuation of existence, there have been many, many other smaller and less well known cults in this country and elsewhere which should be considered. Some have arisen and died out in one generation, such as the Peace Mission Movement of "Father Divine," or Jim Jones' Jonestown, though they destroyed spiritual lives while they existed. Others, though small in numbers of members, have outlasted their founders and are still with us, e.g., The Way International, Scientology, and the World Church of God.

And any ministry such as R.A.S. needs to be alert to the never-ending appearance of new cults, such as the now solidifying New Age Movement,

and be ready to provide help to those needing it as they encounter these new groups or movements.

To reinforce what I said about identifying marks of a cult, I briefly refer to Scripture. The Apostle Paul in Galatians 1:6-9 states that if anyone, even an angel from heaven, proclaimed any other Gospel than the one he proclaimed, let that person be accursed (vss. 8, 9). The Greek word he uses transliterated into English is **anathema**. There should be no doubt about what he meant.

The Gospel Paul proclaimed is declared in I Corinthians 15:1-4. It relates directly to the work of Christ in His death for our sins, burial, resurrection, and appearances and the necessity that we believe (I Cor. 15:2), trust, have faith in this finished, completed work of Christ. John 3:16-18; 3:36; 5:24; Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8-9; etc. states the same basis of Christian salvation—faith in Christ as Lord and Savior, plus nothing.

The Apostle John, in I John 4:2-3, 15; 5:1; and elsewhere, states the necessity of properly identifying Jesus Christ as both the Son of God and the Son of Man, or as the theologians of the Council of Nicea stated it in A.D. 325, "Very God of very God, and very Man of very man," the God/Man. Anything other than this is not the true New Testament presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every religious group and every individual should be examined by these two standards, (1) what they believe about the work of Christ, and (2) the person of Christ, as compared with Scripture. At these points we should all be like the praiseworthy Bereans in Acts who "... searched the Scrip-

tures daily . . ." to determine if what they were being told, even by the Apostle Paul, was true (Acts 7:11).

In addition to wrong views on the person and work of Christ, many cults have other features which separate them from Christianity. Many have, or claim to have, a revelation from God in addition to the Scriptures. For example, the **Book of Mormon**, the writings of Seventh-Day Adventist supposedly "inspired" prophetess Ellen White, Christian Science's **Science and Health and Key to the Scriptures**, or the anonymous books and periodicals which come from the headquarters of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

The cults also tend to look to a human leader or leaders who received or continue to receive revelations from God, as claimed by Joseph Smith, Jr., Charles Taze Russell, Victor Paul Wierwille, and Herbert W. Armstrong. Continuing or progressive revelation is a related feature of many cults.

Many cults and many cult leaders also claim the only way to God and truth is through their group and there is no "salvation" outside themselves. This is expressed in the "remnant" church concept of the Seventh-Day Adventists and others.

It is true, the Lord Jesus Christ did state in John 14:6 that: "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes unto the Father, but by me." And Peter stated in Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in any other [referring to Jesus Christ]; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is one way to soul salvation, but it is through Christ alone, none other. This, in the context of the New Testament, is what Paul meant when he wrote Galatians 1:6-9.

These, I believe, are the marks of most cults and the standards by which we should evaluate all claiming to have the "truth:" their view of the person and work of Christ; do they claim a revelation other than, or in addition to, the Bible; is there a leader who claims to be the source of revelation; do they claim to have the truth so that there is no salvation or deliverance outside their group?

It is understood other, perhaps more theological, issues may be considered, e.g., what is an individual's/group's view of the sovereignty of God, of sin, of eternal punishment, of the authority and inspiration of Scripture. But the issues stated above are simple enough that most any true Christian can evaluate a cult by the Scripture.

HOW VALID ARE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES?

By Pastor Herbert V. Caneday, Taylors Falls, Minnesota

"I have no fear of death because I have been halfway through it and returned to remember the long, dark tunnel, the bright light at its end, the beautiful scenes, and delightful music I experienced while in that state."

This was the boast of my grandfather subsequent to a narrow escape

from death by drowning. All this happened more than a hundred years ago when CPR and drowning resuscitation had not been perfected. A companion saved him from the water, and knowing no better method, rolled him on the beach until he began to breathe and regain consciousness.

However, Grandpa complained of what a painful process that rescue was, saying: "I would like to have killed that man as he worked to bring me back from the brink of death, because it would have been easier to go on into the paradise which I had seen." The problem with his story was that he was a fourth generation rebel against God, profane, and as anti-Christian as any man could ever be.

Reared in that Godless home, my father was converted at the age of nineteen and sought by his changed life, verbal testimony, and prayer, to share his trust in the Savior with all members of his family, each of whom became converted, except for Grandpa. He steadfastly maintained he had nothing to fear, for "I've been to the end of that road already once and found it peaceful and serene."

Grandpa scoffed at the Gospel message, denied the Deity of Jesus Christ, and ridiculed God's way of salvation. He trusted that subjective experience; but would not trust the Savior who has pledged to go with His redeemed ones through "the valley of the shadow of death." Jesus Christ had made no such promise to those who reject Him from their lives. Rather, he pulled aside the veil of the unseen world to inform us that at death, the ungodly rich man: "... lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment..." (Lk. 16:19-31).

My grandfather was beguiled into a snare that has become a highly efficient tool of Satan in our time. Seldom can one go to a grocery checkout counter, read a magazine, or watch TV without encountering similar tales told by an ever-increasing number of deceived per-

sons. Satan's weapon is a two-edged sword, for it immunizes the self-deceived narrator against the Gospel; while by repeated exposure to this Satanic lie, others are seduced into the same deception. "After all, who wants to believe there is anything other than bliss after death!"

One would be in error to deny the possibility of having out-of-the-body or visionary experiences. Many Old Testament prophets seemed to have such. John did, as he wrote the book of Revelation. So real was Paul's experience (II Cor. 12:2-4) that he could not be certain whether he had left his body when he was "... caught up into paradise..." (v. 4). To him it did not matter whether he was in his body or out of it, because the glorious ecstasy of that event, thereafter made him long to depart and "... be with Christ, which is far better."

However, Paul's confidence for his future departure did not rest in his preview of paradise; but in the fact that He knew his sins were taken away in the shed blood of Christ. His assurance of heaven rested not on **WHAT** he believed was awaiting him after death. Rather, he said, "I know **WHOM** I have believed, and am persuaded [fully assured] that He [Christ] is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12b).

Think now! How many of the persons telling of near-death visions, of which you have heard, read, or seen on TV, have said "Now I do not fear death because I have trusted Christ as my Savior who died for my sins so that I can have eternal life?" Almost without exception they say the same thing my Godless grandfather did, or its equivalent: "Now I do not fear

death because I've been halfway there, and it's beautiful."

With the exception of those special, Biblical accounts, such experiences are highly subjective, unreliable, and not subject to verification, and are therefore untrustworthy as valid assurance of one's salvation. Moreover, Satan, is the fallen Lucifer (the shining one) who presents himself to men as "an angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14). He is a liar, deceiver, and murderer from the beginning. He is able to induce unconscious persons to have a seductive experience like this that will keep them from turning to the Savior, while they trust the eternal welfare of their souls to the wispy figment of an illusionary vision. Anyone is a fool who rests his eternal soul on the transient bubbles of a subconscious illusion rather than upon the sure Word of the living God who cannot lie.

How many such souls, upon experiencing the reality of death, do find that the personage behind the light at the end of the tunnel is the Devil, the illusionary "paradise" to be a camouflage disguising the mouth of Hades, and that the "delightful music," has masked the cries of tormented souls already there? Lost souls find the way of truth unpleasant to their ears; but are drawn like moths to the flame of death and destruction, trusting their eternal destiny to a "will-o'-the-wisp" of Satan's cunning.

Eagerly, they embrace the lie. "They . . . weave the spider's web: . . . Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works . . ." (Isa. 59:5, 6). The one garment in which a sinner is acceptable in the

presence of God is the robe of Christ's righteousness. Dying in our place on the cross, the filthy garment of our sins was laid upon Jesus Christ who bore our judgment so that we shall not be judged. Now the garment of Christ's perfect righteousness has been imputed to the believer.

Therefore the redeemed soul can sing: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of [His own] righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels" (Isa. 61:10).

And passing from this vale of tears into the Savior's presence will not be the dread of a long, dark tunnel or fantasy of a deceiving "light" at its end. Rather, hand in hand with the Savior, who once passed that way in our behalf, we can sing with the songwriter:

There's a light in the valley
of death now for me,
Since Jesus came into my heart!
And the gates to the city
beyond I can see,
Since Jesus came into my heart.

I shall go there to dwell
in that city, I know,
Since Jesus came into my heart!
And I'm happy, so happy
as onward I go,
Since Jesus came into my heart.

(NOTE: There are other arguments that can be used; but I wish to submit it in this form first for consideration, for *THE DISCERNER*. I am preserving it on my video-writer disk for any alterations necessary.)

JONESTOWN: Can It Happen Again?

By Bill Mc Keever, Director of Mormonism Research Ministry

It's hard to believe that it has been over ten years since nearly 1,000 people perished in the jungles of Guyana, South America, under the leadership of Jim Jones.

On November 18, 1978, Jones ordered his followers to drink poisoned "flavor-aide" concocted of a mixture of cyanide and tranquilizers. Moments before, Jones' henchmen had murdered Congressman Leo Ryan and three newsmen as they waited to board their plane at the Kaituma Airport six miles outside of Jonestown. Also among the dead was a defector from Jones' "People's Temple" named Patty Parks.

The tragedy caused a national outcry demanding something be done about religious cults, especially the kind such as Jones' which demand strict allegiance to the words of their leaders.

The Mormon Church has insisted time and again that they are not a cult, but in fact represent true Christianity; however, when one examines the teachings of Mormon leaders both past and present, a striking parallel quickly develops. The fact is, Jim Jones expected really nothing more than Mormon leaders when it comes to obedience.

In 1945, the Mormon Magazine "*Improvement Era*" ran an article stating Lucifer gains a great victory when he can get members of the Mormon Church to speak against their leaders and to "do their own thinking." It went on to say, "When our leaders speak, the thinking has been done. When they propose a plan—it is God's plan. Whey they point the way,

there is no other way which is safe. When they give direction, it should mark the end of controversy" (*Improvement Era*, June, 1945, pg. 354).

Heber C. Kimball, who is recorded in the Journal of Discourses (JOD) describing Mormonism's founder, Joseph Smith, as the Mormon "dictator when it came to the things of God" (2:106), also stated that Mormons were to "Learn to do as you are told . . . if you are told by your leader to do a thing, do it, none of your business if it is right or wrong" (JOD 6:32).

In a sermon given Jan. 29, 1860, Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt asked the question, "Have we not a right to make up our minds in relation to the things recorded in the Word of God, and speak about them, whether the living oracles believe our views or not? We have not the right . . . God placed Joseph Smith at the head of this Church; God has likewise placed Brigham Young as the head of this church . . . We are commanded to give heed to their words in all things, and receive their words as from the mouth of God" (JOD 7:374, 375).

Not only are Mormons expected to obey when it comes to spiritual matters, but secular as well.

Mormon Prophet Wilford Woodruff, said, "Now whatever I might have obtained in the shape of learning, by searching and study respecting the arts and sciences of men—whatever principles I may have imbibed during my scientific researches, yet, if the prophet of God should tell me that a certain principle or theory which I might have learned

was not true, I do not care what my ideas might have been, I should consider it my duty, at the suggestion of my file leader, to abandon that principle or theory" (JOD 5:83).

There is no evidence to support the idea that Mormonism has changed in recent years; in fact, it appears they are just as emphatic about total obedience as ever before.

A classic example of this can be seen in Ezra Taft Benson's 1980 speech entitled "The Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet." In his pronouncement, then Apostle Benson hammered home the importance of putting complete confidence in the leadership when it came to spiritual and temporal matters. Benson expounded, point by point, the need for the Mormon membership to look to the prophet, and him only, as the only man who speaks for God in everything.

He also claimed the words of the prophet exceed the importance of even the Mormon's Standard Works (The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, & the Bible). In doing so, he not only declared these books to be fallible, but also took away the Mormon's foundation for how they view truth. Should there be a contradiction between the words of the prophet and what is written in the four books comprising the Standard Works, the Mormon has no choice but to discard the Standard Works, leaving themselves prey to the whims of an aging man in Salt Lake City.

Benson also downplayed the significance of past leaders when he stated, "The living prophet is more vital to us than the dead prophet." Knowing full well Mormonism's his-

tory is one of mass confusion and contradiction, Benson tells his people to ignore those points which openly declare Mormonism to be a fraud, and trust instead in the living prophet.

In point number four in his speech, Benson quoted Wilford Woodruff, who stated it was not in God's program for the President/Prophet of the Mormon Church to lead the church astray. The absurdity of this statement lies in the fact that many of the teachings given by past leaders have been openly denounced by leaders of the present. For instance, in 1976, at a priesthood session of conference, Spencer Kimball denounced Brigham Young's Adam-God doctrine as heresy, though he claimed it was only "alleged" to have been taught. History, however, shows Young did teach this and claimed in 1873 that God Himself gave him the Adam-God doctrine. The question Mormons must answer is, who is right, Brigham Young or Spencer Kimball? And if Young was indeed wrong (as Mormon leaders have recently said), why does the Mormon Church still recognize him as a true prophet and how can they still insist a Mormon prophet cannot lead the people astray when apparently Brigham Young did by teaching Adam was God?

In concluding this message, Benson threatened the membership by saying, "The Prophet and the Presidency, the living Prophet and the First Presidency, accept them and be blessed, reject them and suffer." This idea was reiterated at the 155th General Conference when Elder James Faust told the membership that disagreeing with the leadership would bring "spiritual peril."

Should a Mormon accept these

teachings there is little doubt that a situation such as Jonestown could happen again. When people place their complete trust in man, just about anything can happen. Why else would God, in His wisdom, tell the prophet Jeremiah, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm?" (Jeremiah 17:5).

Would a Mormon drink poisoned "flavor-aide" or harm himself or others at the wish of his leaders? Most insist they would not and qualify their answer by saying, "He would never ask me to do that." That is not the question. The question is, what if he did? To be a good Mormon one would have to obey.

Should you think most Mormons are too smart to do such a thing, let me relate the following story. On June 9, 1987, I sat in a bishop's office

here in San Diego at the request of a man who told me he was contemplating joining the Mormon Church. The topic turned to following the prophet at which time I asked this bishop if he would drink poisoned "flavor-aide" at the command of his prophet. Without hesitation he replied, "Yes." The man who invited me, looking rather startled, interrupted by saying, "I think he is referring to Jim Jones (which, of course, I was). Undaunted, the bishop responded, "it doesn't matter, I'd do it anyway." Bear in mind this man leads some 200 people in his ward. In light of this, I don't think we can say it can never happen. Let's hope not!

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[The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was formed when the founder of the Movement, Joseph Smith, was killed. Most of the members followed Brigham Young and eventually settled in Utah and became the Church of Latter-day Saints (Mormons).

A smaller group, claiming to be "The True Church," continued with Joseph Smith's son, Joseph III, as their prophet/president. They have continued to the present with sons in the family replacing the elder Smiths as leaders to the present time.

The two churches disagree on several points of doctrine: R.L.D.S. rejects polygamy, baptism for the dead, the Adam is god doctrine, multiple gods, and several others. It considers itself a Christian denomination, but though it uses the terminology of Orthodox Christianity it is an apostate cult because it denies every fundamental of the Christian faith. It does believe that the Book of Mormon is the Word of God.] E. E.

THE TEMPLE ENSIGN OF PEACE?

By Carol Eskridge

In Joseph Smith, Jr's day, building temples united a constantly dividing church. While Joseph Smith never built a church, he designed and dedicated four temples. Only one of these was completed during his lifetime—Kirtland, Ohio temple. But

the temple that would occupy the minds of all Mormon groups would always be the temple Joseph Smith said would be built in "Zion" the "Center Place" of Independence, Missouri.

In a recent publication by the

Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, we find under the subheading of "The Dream Becomes Reality," an indication that this temple to be built by the RLDS in Independence will be the fulfilling of the dreams of Joseph Smith and his early followers. "To see these hopes become reality will be a spiritual empowering experience for the church, and one which has the potential for uniting the church in common purpose in a way which has not been possible for many years." (Temple Ensign of Peace, Herald House)

From "The Temple Ensign of Peace" video being sold by the RLDS, we find these statements, "In 1894 Joseph Smith III, through revelation, declared that the storehouse and the temple and the salvation of my people are the same to me now that they were in that day when I gave [Joseph Smith, Jr.] the revelation." (That was Joseph's revelation to build a temple complex in Missouri.)

Then in 1929 Albert A. Smith, Grandson of Joseph Smith, Jr., gave a revelation at an RLDS communion service, saying in the usual method of RLDS prophets speaking in the first person of God, "When the time shall come, in my way and in my hour, and in my manner, which is a way of law and of order, I will command you further concerning the building of my temple in Zion."

Many years went by. The Temple in Zion became a memory in reserve as the RLDS grew and became a "world" church with strong purposes in third world countries.

In 1966 the Prophet/President issued a call to his people through revelation that "The hastening time

is at hand when the principles of stewardship accounting and Zionic procedures must be applied more fully than hitherto." (Reorganized Doctrine & Covenants, section 148:9)

Two years later at the church's next World Conference this same man, W. Wallace Smith, once more brought the word of "God" to his church, and the call for a temple to be built in Zion became the hopes and dreams of his twentieth century followers. This call to build a temple in the Center Place was followed by another revelation at the next World Conference in which Smith, speaking for God, said, "Continue your study toward defining the purpose and selecting a place for erecting a temple in my name for the teaching of my priesthood." (RD&C 150:8).

In the Reorganized Latter Day Saint church the prophet's revelations leave an open door for follow up. In this case the temple and its accompanying ministries and offices have been meted out through revelation as the prophet and his triumverate presidential council felt the need.

So we naturally come to the next and tremendously important revelation from April of 1972. Bear in mind that our nation was in chaos, eastern religious thinking dominated much of our youthful society and Viet Nam dominated the news. Marching, burning, and terrorizing in the name of "peace, love and liberation" had come to be glamorized in our books, movies and colleges. The Peace Movement was on the march. Women's liberation, gay liberation, freedom of choice for abortion had all become issues to be nationally organized and approved by the Hollywoodized, televised peoples throughout large sections of the globe.

With this in mind, and realizing that the RLDS church has always been "into" whatever the latest intellectual craze has been, we will quote the next "prophecy" from W. Wallace Smith: "These are portentous times. The lives of many are being sacrificed unnecessarily to the gods of war, greed, and avarice. The land is being desecrated by the thoughtless waste of vital resources. You must obey my commandments and be in the forefront of those who would mediate this needless destruction while there is yet day. Continue your study toward defining the purpose and selecting a place for erecting a temple in my name for the teaching of my priesthood..." (RD&C 150:7-9).

Soon after the prophet's revelation to be in the forefront the Saints became active in every popular movement afoot. Important men in the RLDS structure joined force with such organizations as the National Organization for Women (NOW), and many of the Saints became involved in the Peace Movement, and the Hunger Movement which is limited to it. Others heralded gay rights, abortion rights, ecology, nuclear disarmament and in short, those organizations in the "forefront" of liberal society. Activity in the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches became more involved for RLDS officers. The Church stood fourfold for liberating all society on a humanistic, socialistic basis and had by this time hopelessly linked itself to the world system.

Again, in 1974 Smith delivered another revelation saying further, "You who are my disciples must be found continuing in the forefront of

those organizations and movements which are recognizing the worth of persons..." (RD&C 152:4).

Two years later, the "word" is given that W. Wallace Smith's son, Wallace B. Smith, is called of God to take his father's place as prophet, seer and revelator of the Church. By this time many of the Saints had become discontent with the deeper intrusion of the world system into their church, yet they unwittingly continued to uphold the Smith prophet's revelations.

Conference of 1978 saw the ordination of Wallace B. Smith. He became the Prophet/President and accordingly delivered his first revelation at this conference. As the sixth Smith Prophet/President he is prolific and vocal, and has the ability of his great grandfather, Joseph Smith, Jr. to blend Bible Scripture into his speeches and to demand and gain his way in all matters concerning the RLDS Church.

In 1982 Wallace brought words admonishing the Saints to trust their leaders. The real revelation that divided the RLDS church came, however, in 1984 when the famous revelation calling for the ordination of women into the RLDS priesthood was delivered. More importantly, this was the first extensive revelation on the Temple and its ministries. "The temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace [peace and hunger movement meetings will be held in the Temple Complex]. It shall be for reconciliation and for healing of the spirit." (the Prophet and his church have sponsored holistic health conferences and we may expect more of the same on a larger scale in the Temple.) "By its ministries an at-

titude of wholeness of body, mind, and spirit as a desirable end toward which to strive will be fostered . . . it shall be a place in which the essential meaning of the Restoration as healing and redeeming agent is given new life and understanding inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world." The Temple is to be a large complex of offices, training areas and meeting facilities, capped by a worship center seating up to 2,000 people with a spiral tower twenty-six stories tall.

We see in this revelation (#156 RD&C) the tie-in with Joseph Smith and the founding Mormon movement: "Hear, O my people, regarding my holy priesthood. The power of this priesthood was placed in your midst from the earliest day of the rise of this work for the blessing and salvation of humanity. President Alan Tyree confirms this view when he says the Temple must be built for the sake of the world. One is left to wonder what they feel Jesus Christ came to do and to complete!

"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech . . . they said Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name" (Genesis 11:1 & 4).

Wallace B. Smith speaking of the spiral Temple design: "... the design also gives an impression of seeking to link that which is earth-bound with a creator who is beyond our reach" (*Saints Herald*, October 1988).

The building for the RLDS Temple staggers the imagination in its spiral design, size and purposes. Its awesome spiral tower of 340 feet will

surpass even the Temple of Diana, one of the ancient seven wonders of the world in Ephesus which reached 239 feet in height. However, with all its severity, the new Temple is only another step towards the socialism taught by Joseph Smith and the revelatory religion he founded in which nothing stays consistent except change.

Joseph thought of his people as a "collective" from which to establish the Theocratic Kingdom of God. The early Mormon movement tried to communalize their constituents by having church members deed their properties over to the Bishop. The Bishop then doled out properties and items to individual families as he felt their needs and just wants demanded. Today, the RLDS commit their stewardship statements, containing their assets and liabilities, and tithing owed, to a Bishop. They pay the tithing owed and anything given over and above that is freewill offerings. However, we are seeing a constant new emotional appeal to get the RLDS people to conform to more socialistic forms of giving and commitment. The idea of "Zionist principles" is identical to socialist ideals where the impossibility of all being equal is enforced by those in power. The RLDS call this "Theocratic Democracy" and it will be taught in the Temple.

Many of the RLDS people are not happy with the new Temple. They are most unhappy with constantly changing revelation although they do not see this fallacy in Joseph, and fail to see what Robert McKay so aptly expressed in the *Utah Evangel* for March 1988: "In Mormonism, any previous revelation is subject to revi-

sion or even outright change by further revelation . . . If God is who the Bible says He is, any revelation He gives must be absolutely final . . . it is impossible for Him to give a revelation that contains an error. Thus no revelation given by God requires editing or correction by later revelation to bring it into conformity with the truth."

Yet we see more appeals sent to the Saints as the 1990 construction date nears. There is a constant harking back to Joseph Smith's dreams of the 1830's because RLDS leaders know Joseph is what the RLDS church members best respond to. And while many of them are offended by the shinanigans of their leaders they are afraid to speak up—for Wallace B. Smith has silenced all those who oppose his revelations and doctrines. Many silenced Elders have had their own revelations saying that God will come and straighten out the church in due time, so they cling to this anti-Christian church believing what their Elders say instead of clinging to the all-sufficient Jesus Christ of the Bible.

The Latter Day Saint movement has always been more deeply attached to the world system of thought than it has been to Christian

beliefs and ethics. This massive temple structure is the epitomy of their desire to impress the world and to gather world leaders of the new age together as one in their great temple.

RLDSism and their temple builders remain in rebellion to Christianity as taught in the Bible and they remain in opposition to the Biblical world view in which humanity is hopelessly unable to cure the ills of its society without bending the knees to Almighty God who loves, cares, and is able to heal our foolishness, our wars and our hatreds.

This does not mean that Christians are not community-minded or that they choose to ignore political situations. It means that Christians see from a Biblical viewpoint and will continue to call sin, sin. It means that Christians know that a better society can only come from a repentant society. Temples, ordinances, priesthood and cunning devices will not cure man's ills—only the Savior can do that. His solutions are far superior to ours and they are laid out plain and precious in the Bible. The RLDS solution would be to collectivise our consciences, but to do so would only be to collectivise our sin!

[All bold print emphasis are mine
—C. E.]

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT (Part Two)

by Rev. Ewald Eisele

Here is a partial list of key persons, institutions and practices that lie within the mainstream of NEW AGE expression.

Authors and Lecturers:

MARILYN FERGUSON
FRITJOF CAPRA
KEN WILBUR
MARK SATIN
CARLOS CASTANADA
GEORGE LEONARD

DONALD KEYS
EDGAR MITCHELL
ROBERT MULLER
KEN KEYS, JR.
PETER CADDY
JOSEPH CHILTON PEARCE.

BENJAMIN CREME
DAVID SPANGLER

SHIRLEY MacLAINE
LEVI (Levi H. Dowling) wrote THE
AQUARIAN GOSPEL OF
JESUS CHRIST

Gurus and spiritual teachers:

BABA RAM DASS	DARSHAN SINGH
DA (BUBBA FREE) JOHN	TRUNGAPA RINPOCHE
BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH	J. Z. KNIGHT
MA GURU (Elizabeth Clare Prophet [CUT])	
PIR VILAYAT KAHN	JACH PURSEL

“REVEREND” TERRY COLE-WHITTAKER, the self-styled
“Evangelistic, Pentecostal, Metaphysical Space Cadet,” “pastor” of
Foundation For Spiritual Study.

Psychic PENNY TORRES

MAHARISHI MAHESH YOGI, who brought TRANSCENDENTAL
MEDITATION to America and who teaches that the New Age began in
1975 when he brought in the AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT with his own
NEW WORLD GOVERNMENT and himself as world leader. TM is an
attempt to discover the nature of reality by investigating the process of
thought rather than the objects of sense. The philosophies of Kant, Hegel,
and Fichte are types of Transcendentalism.

In TM one transcends, or goes beyond specific thoughts and arrives at what
its leader calls the “source” of thought. Part of the technique is the chant-
ing silently a teacher-assigned “mantra” (a secret word from the Sanskrit,
the classical language of India) until an altered state of awareness called
“Cosmic Consciousness” is realized.

Some of these are “CHANNELS” for spiritual entities. These entities are
not human but demonic spirits who advise, predict, and dispense Satan’s
philosophy. Some of these spirits have been named: BASHAR, MAFU, RAM-
THA, LAZARIS. In order to channel, a person must go into a self-imposed
trance state so that his mind is not involved with the physical world. To be a
genuine channel one must voluntarily allow himself to be possessed by a
spiritual being, which, of course, is not the Holy Spirit. This makes it possible
for a spirit, or spirits, to control the individual and give his message through
the channel, either for the channel himself, or for an audience brought together
to receive the “revelation.” There are many “channeled” books in the occult,
New Age, and metaphysical book stores which are best-sellers. Some are books
written as a spirit directed a channel, and some are written by channelers for
potential channels who need instruction in the craft. The activity of a chan-
neler is practically the same as that of the old-fashioned “medium.” Shirley
MacClaine uses the terms interchangeably in OUT ON A LIMB.

Channelers, those who contact these spirit entities, usually are interested
financially, and are well paid for their efforts. Lazaris is channeled by Jach
Pursel. For a weekend seminar it costs \$275.00 per person to attend. An
average of 700 people attend each seminar—which means that Lazaris/Pursel
take in around \$190,000 per week! “They” have a two-year waiting list for

private consultations at a mere \$93 per hour!

PAT RODEGAST, channeler for the demon "Emmanuel"

JANE ROBERTS, channeler for the Seth Books

Then there is the popular book JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL which was dictated to RICHARD BACH by an entity that appeared to him in the form of a bird!

J. Z. KNIGHT channels for the 35,000-year-old man, RAMTHA! His message: God is within us all. Knight has a staff of 14 to help organize her semimonthly seminars at \$400.00 per person (big business!). \$400.00 times 700 average attendance equals \$280,000.00 twice a month!!

Religious groups:

ECKANKAR

ANADA MARGA YOGA SOCIETY

SCIENTOLOGY

CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT

MANY UNITARIAN, UNITY AND UNIVERSALIST CHURCHES

FREEMASONRY (In the book, *THE MEANING OF FREEMASONRY* it states, 'Now that we are going into the Age Of Aquarius, and so many groups are working for the restoration of the mysteries, we Masons are the proper people to bring these teachings to the world, because, after all, this is the same thing we have been teaching all along.')

Communities:

ESALIN

MUTKANANDA ASHRAMS

FINDHORN

NAROPA INSTITUTE

THE FARM

CHINOOK LEARNING CENTER

STELLE COMMUNITY

LAMA FOUNDATION

LORAIN ASSOCIATION

LINDISFARNE ASSOCIATION

Some of these are semi-official think tanks.

FINDHORN (in Scotland) COMMUNICATIONS CENTER keeps a computerized referral list of New Age-oriented individuals, groups, and communities.

Conferences:

HUMAN UNITY CONFERENCE

MIND, BODY, SPIRIT FESTIVAL

MANDALA CONFERENCE

WHOLE LIFE EXPOSITION

Holistic Health Groups: (Any method of promoting health or preventing disease has the potential for being holistic, but some methods are just naturally more holistic than others.)

ASSOCIATION FOR HOLISTIC HEALTH

AMERICAN HOLISTIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Holistic (wholistic) refers to the whole person, body, mind & spirit.

Therapies:

Acupuncture

Acupressure

(This article will be continued in the next issue of *THE DISCERNER*.)

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NEW BOOKS IN STOCK NOT IN CATALOG

THE NO-NAME FELLOWSHIP—Carol Woster. In our catalog on page 26 we list three other books on this cult under the name of TWO BY TWO'S or COONEYITES. This booklet, written by a graduate of St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, is not entirely negative, for there is much that the author sees in this group that is biblical. There are several excellent insights that are not found in other publications. Since there is very little written about the group, we are glad to have any additional input regarding them. Catalog #J1-55 28 pp. \$1.50

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, JESUS CHRIST, and the GOSPEL OF JOHN—Robert M. Boman, Jr. The author has written this book so that ordinary Christians need not be intimidated by JW's who defend their mis-translations of John 1:1 and John 8:58. The errors expounded by the Watchtower Society are exposed and dismissed in precise language that can be easily understood by laypersons who have no knowledge of Greek. The value of the book is enhanced by the Select Bibliography, Index of Names, Subject Index, Scripture Index and Greek and Hebrew Words Index. This book is a welcome addition to the available literature in the area of cultic studies. Catalog #MC17 170 pp. \$8.95

I LEFT THE LODGE—Dale A. Byers. Written in a manner that makes it easy to understand the issues involved this book is must reading for every believer who is a member of a secret organization. Masonry is neither as innocent nor as noble as it appears. It is actually a religion in its own right and holds a power of fear over its members. A full review of this book will be included in the next issue of the DISCERNER. It was received too late for this issue. Catalog #S1-10 126 pp \$7.95