

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

The
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- 2. EDITORIAL
- 4. CHRISTIAN MUSIC FROM THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION TO PRESENT TIME
- 6. BAHÁ'ISM
- 8. THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT (Part Six)
- 11. RECOGNIZING A CULT OR HERESY
- 14. BOOK REVIEW
- 15. UNIVERSAL AND TRIUMPHANT?

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dr. William A. BeVier

Rev. Ewald Eisele

WE'VE MOVED!!

Dr. William A. BeVier

A major step and undertaking has taken place in the month of February and continuing into March. Religion Analysis Service (RAS) has moved from the Lake Street location in Minneapolis to a store-front building in Brainerd, Minnesota.

Since you, the readers of the *Discerner*, obviously are interested in our organization, permit me to bring you up-to-date.

Our location in Minneapolis had many adverse conditions and was not accessible to those who wanted to come in to look at materials and ask questions. It was on the second floor of a deteriorating building and was not convenient for transporting box loads of materials and mail. Our office manager, Rev. Ewald Eisele, was patient with the circumstances, even when his safety was endangered.

We had been actively looking for a place to move then the Lord directed us to a small building (in a row of store buildings) along a main street in Brainerd, Minnesota. Mr. Eisele has a home there, and so the move not only gave us visibility and accessibility but improved his living arrangements and safety.

The move has been a major project with hundreds of pieces of literature

to be sorted, packed and transported. Since RAS had been in the Lake Street location for many years, the accumulation was great. The move, like one a household would make, afforded the opportunity to throw away some things and inventory what we have on hand.

We would ask your patience if you have not received an order from us. The process of cleaning, unpacking and putting in order has taken much time. We also have a smaller area to squeeze our office into, which requires consolidating and extra time.

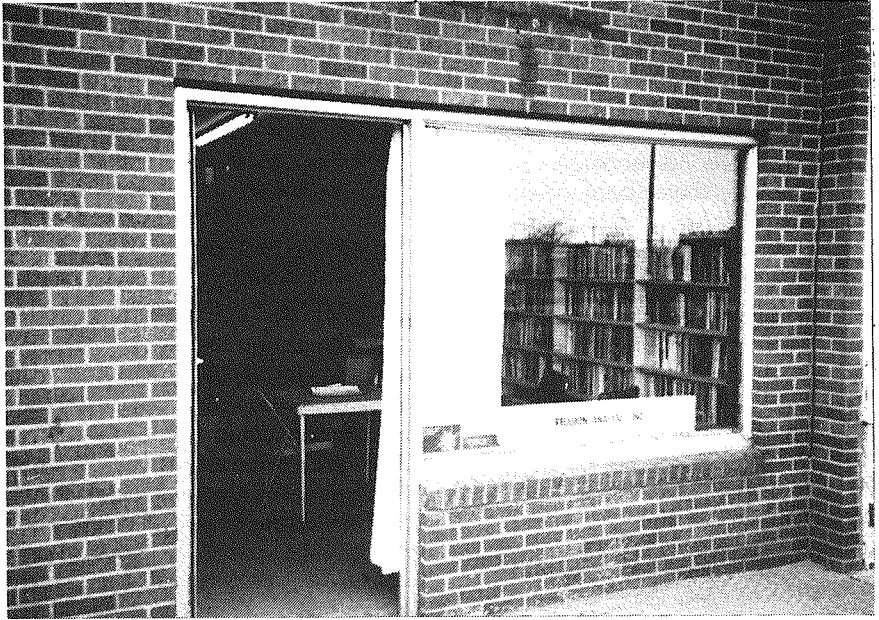
Our new arrangement will not affect your being able to contact us from any point. We now have an 800 number (for orders only, please), and you will reach the RAS office and your order will be on its way. You can also write us using our same address in Minneapolis. The mail is being picked up regularly and will be processed in the same manner as before.

A special thanks goes to those who assisted in the move, both in Minneapolis and in Brainerd.

The office will be open during the week, and you are invited and welcome to stop by to see our new location. The new address and phone number in Brainerd is:

821 Washington St.
Brainerd, MN 56401
1-800-562-9153

Entrance to new location in Brainerd



Display shelves



CHRISTIAN MUSIC FROM THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME

Prof. John E. Dahlin

In Bible times music had prominence at many occasions. At no time in history has music been absent. We will mention that even in the Middle Ages there was music, but it cannot be classified as *Christian* music. In the Renaissance period many areas had significant progress, as, for example, architecture, painting and sculpture. Music also made some progress, but it was not Christian music. The Roman Catholic priests had their chanting, but it cannot be called music.

Early Christian Music

Martin Luther, the founder of Protestantism, arranged private services during which time he featured music, Bible reading, and prayer. His immortal hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," reflects doctrinal truths in music. This has become one of the great hymns of the ages, and is sung even in our generation.

A great awakening in Europe was characterized by music at all the spiritual services. John and Charles Wesley were the leaders in this movement during the eighteenth century. Charles Wesley was the leader in the musical area, while John Wesley did the preaching. Some historians believe that Charles Wesley had as big a part in this movement as John his brother. It has often been called a singing movement. Tens of thousands were converted to Christ. Some believe it saved England from the bloody revolution which was on-going across the English Channel in France. The Methodist Church in the United

States was an off-shoot of the Wesleyan movement in England. Methodism in the United States separated from the English Methodism during the American Revolution, and John Wesley was loyal to England during this time.

In the United States at the end of the 19th century, D.L. Moody and Ira Sankey conducted great crusades across the country at which some believe that one million were brought to Christ. Sankey was a great musician and brought gospel music to the front at these services. Fanny Crosby had a vital part by her hundreds of songs that she composed, even though she was sightless. Many of her songs are listed in our hymn books today.

Billy Sunday and Homer Rodeheaver took their crusades across the United States from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century. Rodeheaver was a skillful trombonist and led the singing for Billy Sunday during several decades. In the crusades whole cities were changed, for example, Des Moines, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska. As a boy living in central Iowa I remember these great crusades.

The nineteenth century also brought the great western movement in America when the territory from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains was occupied, even though thinly populated. This took only a period of about sixty years. It is a record unparalleled in the history of the world. A few other religious groups shared in

the western movement, especially the Baptists. Christianity kept abreast of the movement during the entire period. It should be mentioned that the American Sunday School Union had a vital part in the evangelization of the West, establishing their work throughout the entire region, meeting in simple buildings. Nearly every area of this territory had the blessing of Biblical Christianity in their midst.

In this century, Billy Graham has assumed leadership in evangelization of our country. He has used the same invitation hymn, "Just As I Am," throughout the crusades. It has never ceased to be effective. Beverly Shea has continued to sing the old familiar gospel songs during this whole period of forty years. Other well-known gospel singers have also contributed much at these crusades.

We have had a very extensive expansion in hymnology and publication of Christian music in this century. Churches have expanded the use of music widely, and the radio has contributed much in bringing the gospel on a national scale. Television, to some extent, has been helpful in promoting the spiritual crusade to the people.

This, then, is a brief overview of the influence of Christian music throughout the United States.

Contemporary Music

I will link this together with music in general throughout the century. During the past twenty to twenty-five years a new pattern of music has spread widely across the nation. It is usually called "contemporary music," but many insist on calling it "modern music." This is a departure from the more traditional music. It has enticed many conservative and

Bible-believing churches. It is used by congregational singing, choral groups, and soloists. The reason for its emergence: the desire for change by the youth is widely known and understood by many who have observed present-day trends. Contemporary music is especially appreciated by the younger element in our churches. The older groups believe it's necessary to respond to the demands of the young people in order to maintain their interest in the church. We concede there may be some good in this argument, but it is not convincing to many of us. The music is not all bad, but it is not well to give it the special emphasis we witness. It is claimed it will bring many new people under the influence of the church. This claim many of us doubt, that is, its effectiveness in this manner. I confronted the director of a Chicago radio network why they include much music with a worldly touch instead of being impressive spiritually. He replied, "We do this to gain the interest of the non-spiritual people who listen to the radio and are led to listen to many of our spiritual programs." I doubt this claim is a valid evaluation.

How do we evaluate contemporary music? It has sprung from a worldly element in our society. It has a definite similarity. It is vigorous, loud, and rapid as a pattern of music with an off-beat rhythm. See I Jn. 2:15, Rom. 12:2, and II Cor. 6:7. To pass over what the Scriptures prohibit is a serious mistake.

Contemporary music does not lead to meditation and personal consecration. "Let the word of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my

strength, and my redeemer" (Psalm 19:14). Conformity to the world is scripturally forbidden. Contemporary music does not lead to spiritual depth in the Christian experience. Contemporary music may be a passing pattern, unlike that of our rich spiritual hymns. I talked with several of the leading music directors in the large established churches in Minneapolis. They had no praise for much of the contemporary music, despite its popularity, and they said it likely will diminish in its appeal to people. They did not encourage its use in the churches.

I wish to encourage you to further evaluate this type of music in the light of the historic type which has lasted many generations and has

brought blessing and inspiration to many people. The Scripture exhorts us not to remove the ancient landmarks. I have appreciated high quality Christian music throughout this century and hope it will be given the priority it deserves.

The a cappella singing introduced by Dr. Christiansen of St. Olaf College was developed over sixty years ago and has been used not only by choirs but by smaller groups. I heard this choir perform fifty-five years ago in Nebraska, and people even came from neighboring states to hear them.

I am not opposed to change, but it ought to be carefully evaluated in the light of historic Christian music.

BAHA'ISM

by Ewald Eisele

Baha'is desire to unify mankind into one religious kingdom. They are not alone in this desire, and they will be just as unsuccessful as those who have tried to do this in the past. The doctrines taught by the religions of this proposed union are in many instances contradictory, and so any effort to accomplish global, religious synthesis is a futile task. Still, Baha'ism continues to try. The religion has attracted about four million followers in almost every country, including thousands in America. The exact membership figures are never given out by the cult, but knowing that there are roughly 70,000 localities in the world where Baha'is live, it can be seen that this is no small "new religion."

The Baha'i concept of religious unity, international government, and planetary interdependence began in Persia over one hundred years ago. A businessman, Mirza Ali Muhammed (1819-1850), announced in 1844 that he was the BAB (The Gate) who would be the forerunner of the "Promised One" who would be a manifestation of God. Six years later he was killed by the Persian government(?) One of his disciples, Mirza Husayn Ali, known today as Baha'u'llah (the glory of God), came to believe that HE was the one prophesied by the now dead former leader. However, he spent most of his life in prison for plotting against the Shah. In 1863, in Bagdad, he declared that he was the promised Madhi (Mes-

siah), a progressive revelation of God onward from Abraham, Moses, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus, and Muhammad. His career was cut short in 1892 when he died. His son, Abdul Baha, brought the message of Baha'ism to the United States in 1912. He spent eight months in his missionary work and laid the cornerstone at the \$2.5 million Bahai temple in Wilmette, Illinois. Upon his death the leadership went to his grandson, Shoghi Effendi, who died in 1953. Since then the leadership of the cult has been in the hands of a National Spiritual Assembly.

Baha'i doctrine can be briefly stated in one of their own sayings, "The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens." The "theology" is in two parts. First, that there is one complete, unknowable "essence," who (must be personal!) can be "seen" through the creation and the various prophets. Second, since there is only one "essence" (who must be regarded as God), then all religions must be of and by that God. These two concepts are to be worked out in practical ways through eleven principles:

- The independent search after truth.
- The oneness of the human race.
- The unity of all religions.
- The elimination of all prejudice.
- The harmony of science and religion.
- The equality of men and women.
- Universal education.
- A universal language.
- Abolition of extreme wealth and poverty.
- A world court.
- Justice with universal peace.

As Baha'is see it, mankind is currently headed toward a socio-economis cataclysm. Out of this

tragedy a "golden age" will dawn, and Baha'is will be the only ones prepared to rule in this new world order. (The Mormons have the save idea, as does the New Age Movement!!) "War shall cease and all men shall live as brothers," was the prediction of Baha'u'llah. Unlike more passive cults, Baha'is evangelize constantly to help fulfill their founder's prophecy.

The religious practices of Baha'ism are similar to Islam, though the two faiths are entirely separate religious systems. Nine members constitute an assembly. There are weekly gatherings, an annual fasst, and a special calendar with New Year's Day occurring on March 21. There is no professional clergy, and leaders are forbidden to reveal exact membership figures to the public. As is true of the Moslems, Baha'is are expected to pray at certain times during the day, as well as to make at least one pilgrimage to the temple in the city of Acre (near Haifa, Israel) where Baha'u'llah died, and where Mirza Ali Muhammed was buried on nearby Mount Carmel.

Though Baha'ism proclaims the merits of every different kind of faith and/or religion, they insist that now all faiths must concede to the supremacy of God's fulfilled revelation in Baha'u'llah. Naturally, it would be impossible for biblical Christianity to unite with Baha'ism. Acceptance of Baha'ism means that one must deny the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ and ignore the distinctions of other world religions. Baha'is teach that all major religions hold to essentially the same truths.

The "scriptures" of Baha'ism are

the writings of Shoghi Effendi and Baha'u'llah, especially the TABLETS which are considered sacred writings and are used in their temples, temples (nine sides) and the size of a local assembly (at least nine

members).

The world headquarters is in Haifa, Israel. The main U.S. temple is in Wilmette, IL, with teaching centers in most major cities.

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

by Rev. Ewald Eisele

(Part 6, conclusion)

Parents and schools and school boards have engaged in a running battle for years over text-book humanistic contents. Especially objectionable are texts teaching:

- Rebellion against parents
- Values clarification
- Magic
- Evolution
- Supernaturalism without God
- Sex education
- Death and dying
- Pacifism
- Role playing
- One world concept (government, etc.)
- Animals equal to humans
- Centering (part of the confluent education of Dr. Beverly Galyean which teaches visualization)

The picture is changing somewhat. Humanism will be fading out gradually though some aspects will be kept because Humanism and the New Age do agree on some points. The main difference between the two is that humanism is atheistic (no God) and the New Age is Pantheistic (many gods or everything is god). But Humanism has created a school system where pupils are readily indoctrinated regarding a new collectivistic world-view and government.

Dave Hunt, in his book, *Peace, Prosperity and the Coming Holocaust* wrote,

The New Age Movement does its most strategic work in the public schools. It is teaching our children that they are gods, and that the only authority they need to follow is the "inner light" of their "Higher Self." New Age educators are deliberately trying to bring about a transformation of thinking, morals, world view, and personal identity in the public schools of America.

"Higher Self" or "Inner Self" is a New Age term for god.

In the same book the authors write that the Association for Humanistic Psychology suggested in 1979 that public school teachers incorporate the following activities into their daily routine:

THE STUDENT WILL: do Yoga each morning before class; interpret their astrolological charts; send messages via ESP; mind project; astral project; heal their own illnesses; speak with their higher selves and receive information necessary for joyful living; lift energies from the power chakra to the heart chakra (a Buddhist conception); practice skills necessary for color healing; hold an image of themselves as being perfect; receive advice from their personal guides (demons?); merge minds with others in the class to experience the collective consciousness of the group.

Many parents have opted for private schools or home schooling. Those who have not will face an up-hill battle as long as there are men in state and federal legislative positions such as Nebraska State Senator Peter Hoagland. During the legal battle with Faith Baptist Church over the legality of the church's Christian school, this Senator said:

"... fundamental, Bible-believing Christians do not have the right to indoctrinate their children in their faith, because we, the State, are preparing all children for the year 2000, when America will be part of the One-world Global Society, and their children won't fit in."

Advised by some of the New Age educators to keep the new philosophy undercover, courses are taught using other names. An example of this is Meditation, or TM, which is called "Centering." Dr. Galyean's "Centering" method in her "Confluent Education" system has teachers instruct their pupils, beginning with those just old enough to write:

Close your eyes and relax. I will lead you in a guided fantasy. Imagine a very beautiful valley . . . ahead of you is a mountain . . . you have magic powers so climbing is easy . . . at the top look into the sun, and as you do the face of a very wise person slowly appears . . . you ask . . . "What must I do to find happiness in my life right now?"

The person answers . . . listen to this person speaking . . . when you feel finished with your conversation come back to us in the room . . . write an account of what was spoken between you and the wise person.

The Newsweek magazine of August 8, 1988 had an article which stated that the National Geographic Society released a report on the dismal state of American's knowledge about the globe. "They are lost. They haven't the faintest idea where they are." The article was referring to young Americans who, like their predecessors, may still lust after adventurous trips to exotic places, but now don't have a clue how to find them on a map. Gallup conducted interviews with representative samples of adults 18 and older—10,820 in all, in the U.S., Mexico, Canada, and other industrialized countries. Sweden scored

best, while the U.S. was sixth, ahead of the United Kingdom, Italy and Mexico. Among the Americans, 14% could not pick out the United States on a world map. There were other discouraging results in the areas of current events, politics and history.

CONCLUSION. The bottom line as to the aim of the New Age in education is to eradicate the concept of the God of the Bible from the minds of everyone the movement can reach and especially the children and young people in the public schools. It also seems that those who have to do with curriculum are committed to the goal of producing a generation of illiterate rather than educated people.

The New Age in Business

The *NEW YORK TIMES* of September, 29, 1986 had an article, "Spiritual Concepts Drawing a Different Breed of Adherent." It stated, "Representatives of some of the nation's largest corporations, including I.B.M., AT&T, and General Motors, met in New Mexico in July to discuss how Metaphysics, the occult and Hindu Mysticism might help executives compete in the world marketplace."

Cited was the growing interest in self-help and human potential groups connected with the New Age Movement which could be of help in the business world. Groups such as The Form (est), Insight, Lifespring, (both of these are part of the old "est" brainwashing system of The Human Potential Movement), Silva Mind Control and Actualizations.

Many companies have involved their employees since then in these "training programs." Several suits have been brought by employees who believe that whatever the programs are called, they are only "mind control" of one kind or another. The charge is brought that the techniques promote values other than their own religious views. One charge was that training programs that use "meditation" or "guided visualization" can change a person's view of reality or religious beliefs. Some testify that they were terminated by their company because they refused to take the courses.

An American Family Foundation report stated that psychology professor Margaret Singer said that the majority of trainees from New Age Business Seminars showed "varying degrees of alienation and anomie because they were urged to give up old norms and ideals," and that a small number of them may show signs of serious psychosis.

FORTUNE MAGAZINE editor Jeremy, said that some executives find such training helpful, while others don't.

The group that is in the forefront of this trend is THE FORUM which is the old "est" of Werner Erhard. The name was recently changed, but it is the same old rot mellowed just a bit to make it more palatable. His seminars are said to enroll more than 20,000 people per week. Erhard also has started a consulting firm, Transformational Technologies," and two other seminars called Lifespring and Insight.

According to *NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RELIGION*

REPORT, there will be a **NEW AGE YELLOW PAGES** published in Southern California with 150 pages. It was scheduled for release on May 13, 1988. It will list New Age business and trade people who believe in the dawning of a new age and think that since it is to come, that it is only right to let people know that they are behind the movement.

Another development that must take place before there can be financial control in a one-world situation is the removal of all cash in any kind of public transaction. The greatest advance toward this goal is in an article in the March 10, 1986 issue of the news magazine *Insight*. The article stated:

"The first cashless society may soon be seen in Singapore, which formally launched its latest move in that direction recently. No cash transactions are permitted in major department stores, supermarkets, gas stations, hospitals and government offices. The scheme, under which shoppers use their plastic automated teller machine cards to pay for goods and services, began weeks ago.

To promote the new system, the government closed all cash payment offices, leaving citizens little choice but to join Singapore's ceaseless drive toward a high-tech—but cashless—society." End of quote.

If you do not understand the New Age Movement, perhaps you could pick up some courses at the YWCA in Reno, Nevada. Their catalog table of contents yields an excellent potpourri of New Age teachings. Under the title, "Exercises for Holistic Health" you could take Hatha Yoga, Meditation, T'ai Chi, etc. Or perhaps you would like to get into Tibetan Chanting or Kahuna Teaching, or even THE HEALING PATH OF A SHAMAN. Under the section, "Films for a New Age" you could pick up a film, TOWARDS NEW COMMUNITIES IN THE NEW WORLD, or perhaps, EXPANDING CONSCIOUSNESS. Jung, Supermemory, Psychology, I Ching, Mysticism, Dream Therapy, Right Brain, Self-esteem, and on and on, but NOT ONE MENTION OF CHRISTIANITY. They should change their name to YWOA (Young Women's Occult Association). [from Christian Information Bureau]

RECOGNIZING A CULT OR HERESY

by Ewald Eisele

One of the most frequent questions asked of our office is, "By what authority do you declare one group or another to be a cult?" The answer is very simple. We must have an unchanging authority upon which to base our decisions. We have such an authority in the unchanging and un-

changeable Word of God. We are not at liberty to change that authority. Neither is anyone else. What constitutes a cult or a heresy is the changing of that Word. It could mean adding to it or taking away from it. It also includes the common practice of basing a doctrine on one particular

portion while ignoring the whole teaching of the authority. The Scripture declares, "No Scripture is of private interpretation" (II Peter 1:20). That means we cannot lift a verse out of the context of the whole and say that this is what the Word teaches.

There is no doubt that the average Christian could at once recognize cultishness and heresy in most of the major religions of the world, but too often the same Christians do not see that so-called "Christian denominations and churches" fall into the category. So, perhaps it would be well to refresh our minds as to how to recognize false teaching no matter from whence it comes.

First and foremost, it would be well to question whether a group or individual's teaching rejects or changes any of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. This would include the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit of God, and the person of God Himself. Many today downgrade the person and work of Christ. They lift mere man—sometimes even a Biblical individual such as Mary the mother of Jesus, or Michael the angel, or Satan himself—to be equal with, and sometimes better than, the Son of God. There are also those who make a mockery of the sound teaching of Scripture concerning the Trinity.

Every false teaching in the field of religion includes some kind of salvation. Even primitive peoples looked toward a "Happy Hunting" ground or to be absorbed into the "Great Spirit" somewhere "up there" and so live forever in perfect bliss. Most, if not all, such plans, involved salvation through a subjective experience.

Either the person must do something himself or else he must have something done to him by another. This could be some kind of cutting or disfigurement, some kind of rite of initiation, or act of bravery for another, among primitive people.

It could be meditation, chanting, speaking in tongues, or even baptism for more civilized people. Whatever the process, it takes away from Christ as being the center of the Salvation offered freely to anyone who is willing to accept it. Any system which tries to include human responsibility with this supernatural work of grace in the heart of an individual is wrong. There are good works involved in salvation, but according to Eph. 2:8-10 they are the result of salvation and not to earn it.

Then also we need to question the soundness of a group if they claim to have received a "revelation" other than the one all Bible believers have received in the Word of God. For instance, there is the *Book of Mormon* which, today, is being touted as "Another Revelation of Jesus Christ." Hopefully, no real born again Christian would fall for such a blatant lie. Sun Myung Moon published his own extra-biblical "revelation" called *Divine Principle*. The Jehovah's Witnesses have their perverted translation of the Bible as well as their thousands of books—which are required reading for the members of that cult—for which they claim equal authority with the Word of God. Then there is the Apocrypha which has wide acceptance, especially in the Roman Catholic Church. There are these spurious writings in the Old Testament which were accepted by the Council of Trent but later rejected

when, at the Reformation, many Christians had their eyes opened to the extreme corruption of the church of Rome. In rejecting the claims of that church they were also freed from its judgment as to the Apocryphal books.

Today, many in the New Age Movement claim to have received supernatural messages from so-called "ascended masters." Some claim openly that they constantly are in touch with beings that are not of this realm, but the Bible claims that it, and it alone, is the revelation from God for man, in whatever age he may be living. Man has no need for a further revelation.

Along the same line would be the individual or group that claims that they alone have the right to interpret and apply the Word of God. The Jehovah's Witnesses, the Armstrongites, The Way, and the Roman Catholic Church fall into that category, as do many others. Believers are declared to be "priests unto God," (Rev. 1:6) and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Part of His ministry is to enlighten the individual believer, giving him not another revelation, but illumination. For any one individual or group to claim sole right to interpret Scripture is to lie in the face of the plain teaching of the Word.

Perhaps the most glaring sign that a group is a cult is when they blindly follow the leadership of one man or organization instead of the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. Almost every cult depends on a certain amount of what is commonly called brainwashing—the process of very subtly changing the thinking of an individual; or worse, making him incapable of thinking rationally. By

whatever means, the person can no longer make decisions for himself and must rely on the leadership, whether that leadership is a single man, as in the case of Jim Jones, or an hierarchy as is the case with the Jehovah's Witnesses. These are the extreme examples, but unfortunately, this kind of thing goes on in many otherwise acceptable groups. Whenever the right of choice of an individual is violated there is the portent of a dangerous situation. It usually is but a step toward manipulating the group to give up their personal possessions including their fortunes, however small. Every person has a God-given will and no man or organization has a right to prostitute that will.

We are often asked which is the best book on cults—which one could explain how to act and react when faced with the possibility of error. The answer is always the same. If a Christian knows the Word of God he has not only the answer to the cultist or a recruiter for the cults, but he also has the Sword of the Spirit with which to attack as well as defend. Knowledge of the Word should be the highest priority for a believer.

There are many books that instruct the believer regarding the beliefs of just about every cult. These also generally tell how one may refute their teaching. But it all boils down to what a Christian thinks to be the most important. A cultist may ridicule and reject the Word but he will never change it and if the Christian knows the truth he will always be pleasing his Lord when he uses that truth against a lie of Satan. We should never forget that when we are approached by one in a cult we have a missionfield coming to us. Those people are lost and on their way to hell

and it is our opportunity to recruit them for our Savior. They may not fall all over themselves to accept our message but if the Word has been planted, the Holy Spirit will see to it that it does not return to the Lord without accomplishing His purpose. The Psalmist, who delighted in the

law of the Lord, gave testimony to its effectiveness in Ps. 119:130, "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." He also gave testimony to its unchangeableness in verse 89, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

BOOK REVIEW

The Agony of Deceit

THE AGONY OF DECEIT compiled and edited by Michael Horton; 284 pages, hard cover, \$12.95.

Contributors to this book are Mr. Ken Curtis, Mr. John Dart, Dr. W. Robert Godfrey, Mr. Michael Horton, Dr. C. Everett Koop, Dr. Henry Krab-bendam, Dr. Art Lindsley, Dr. Walter Martin, Dr. Joel Nederhood, Dr. Rod Rosenblatt, Dr. Quentin Schultze, and Dr. R. C. Sproul. The sub-title on the cover is, "What Some TV Preachers Are Really Teaching." This is not a bedtime story. It is a book that was written only because it had to be written according to J. I. Packer, who also writes on the flyleaf, "To call some televangelists to account for their heretical teaching, their spiritual unreality, their shameless personality-cult, and the spurious dramatics of their fund-raising is unpleasant but necessary, for pastoral reasons. In demonstrating the lethal quality of some things that are taught on television in the name of Christianity, the authors of this book render us good service. With sorrow, anger, and zeal these chapters review the damning facts and point to a better way."

Inside, by way of introduction, there is a rather lengthy statement by Dave Breese which I copy here

because of all men in the church today this brother's opinions are worthy of an audience. "*The Agony of Deceit* is a book whose time has come. For more than fifteen years Christians have listened with dismay and watched with astonishment as their faith and their Lord Jesus Christ have been caricatured on modern religious television. They have sensed that something is profoundly wrong. They have been embarrassed and disquieted—but charitable—giving the speaking, singing electronic images the reluctant benefit of the doubt.

But beyond the observed emotional excesses, listeners have been disquieted at the suspicion that something is amiss **theologically**. "Is this the same Christ, the same gospel, the same faith as mine?" they have asked. They suspected it was not, but no one seemed to perceive or to articulate the difference.

Now the difference has been articulated. In *The Agony of Deceit*, twelve scholars have shown that much on television that passes for Christianity is a new Gnosticism, a revived pantheism. The authors of the book have recoiled from and deplored the media message, and they have analyzed it. They have told us why and wherein it is heretical.

This book is must reading for thinking Christians. Discerning viewers and listeners need not relax into tranquil gullibility before media

hype. They will "prove all things," which is our constant responsibility.

This book may be purchased from our office, \$12.95 plus \$1.25 postage.

UNIVERSAL AND TRIUMPHANT?

by Ewald Eisele

You may have seen it! The article was in the March 26, 1990, issue of *Time Magazine* and had to do with another wild attempt by a cult to escape the wrath to come. The cult is The Church Universal and Triumphant (CUT). It is not exactly a new cult, having been started in 1958 by Mark Prophet. He and his wife, Elizabeth Clare Prophet spent the years collecting a large following and multi-million dollar land holdings. After his death in 1973 Elizabeth Clare Prophet became the sole leader.

Originally named The Summit Lighthouse, she changed it to CUT in 1975. It has a history of being devoted to receiving and passing on messages from **The Great White Brotherhood**. This is a group of ascended masters, so-called, in the spirit world who supposedly influence occultic receptive members of the human race on planet earth.

Since Mark became a member of **The Great White Brotherhood** when he died, the message soon came that Mrs. Prophet was the sole vicar of Christ on the earth. A later, more important, message revealed that the ascended masters had declared her to be the Mother of the universe, and she immediately took a new name,

"Guru Ma." The worldlings like the sensational, naturally, and immediately the cult became extremely popular. So it is no wonder when Guru Ma says that there are hard times coming and the faithful need to take precautions there is an immediate response.

She moved the headquarters from Washington, D.C., to Colorado Springs, then to Pasadena, and under her direction the cult has now purchased 33,000 acres of land just north of Yellowstone National Park. They are in the process of constructing steel and concrete bomb shelters back into the hills of Montana. The reason for all of the excitement at the present time is the fear that with the easing of the cold war the United States is letting down its guard and is vulnerable to nuclear attack and annihilation. The *Time* article states that several thousand followers have arrived with bag and baggage, children, dried food, and all the equipment in order to survive a long stay in the bowels of the earth. They have come from Europe, South America and from all over the United States. Many have sold houses and businesses. We cannot help but think of the Jim Jones fiasco! How contrary to

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what the Bible says in Revelation 6. Today in Montana they seek to hide in the earthen caves from some kind of man-made Armageddon, but eventually the same ones, unless they come to salvation, will beg (pray to!) those rocks to fall on them and hide them from the "wrath of the lamb" (Rev. 6:16).

Guru Ma, the favorite name of Clare Prophet, is pictured in the article with the caption, **Her Doomness**. Biblically speaking she has every right to be a "prophet of doom." This cult, steeped as it is in the occult, denies all of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. As such there is nothing but eternal doom in store for them along with their "Mother of the Universe." The article quotes one woman who left the cult last year as saying, "The woman (Guru Ma) is crazy." But she isn't, really. Very

simply, she is demon possessed. No one can believe as she and the members believe and expect to escape the wrath of God. Their faith rests in a monistic approach to matter. Everything is a manifestation of God, and so God is all, and all God. Man can be enlightened through the revelations coming from the leader, Guru Ma. Using a discipline of chanting and meditation, the individual can come to the place where he can declare himself to be the "Great I Am That I Am." Eventually he will, after a cycle of reincarnations, enter the eternal state and become a member of **The Great White Brotherhood**.

Man, it seems, never wearies of running away from the Christ of Calvary who died in order that man could face, not only life, but the future of eternity with perfect peace.