



Session 5

The New Age Movement

Notes:

Questions

1. What similarities do you see between the NAM worldview and other worldviews studied so far?
2. Where do you see reflections of NAM ideas in the following areas?
 - Psychology
 - Anthropology
 - Medicine
 - Athletics
 - movies
3. Which parts of New Age theology are reminiscent of Buddhist and Hindu views?

A Comparison of Biblical Christianity with New Age Theology and Philosophy

	BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY	NEW AGE THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY
GOD	An infinite, personal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exists (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 15:2; 2 Cor. 13:14). There is only one true God (Jn. 17:3), who is the Creator (Gen. 1:1). He is both transcendent over and immanent within creation (Ps. 11:3; 145:17; Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16-17). God is holy and righteous.	An infinite impersonal force, God can be seen as a universal law, consciousness, or energy. Many gods exist, and God is the creation, embodying monism/pantheism as the essence of all existence. Ultimately, God is amoral or evil and is immanent rather than transcendent.
MAN	Man was created in God's image (Gen. 1:27), and as such is a finite creation who will never become God. (Isa. 43:10; Ezek. 28:1-2, 9) Man is composed of spirit, mind (soul), and body (1 Thess. 5:23). Man was created innocent but is now morally fallen and evil in his true nature (Gen. 1:26-31; Rom. 3:23; 5:10-12).	Man in his true nature is fully one essence with God. In essence, man's true nature is a divine spirit, morally innocent and perfect. Souls undergo countless reincarnations, starting with organic evolution and progressing to higher spiritual levels. Heaven and hell represent states of spiritual good and evil consciousness.
SIN	A willful violation of God's moral law and character (1 Jn. 5:17). The fundamental problem of humanity originates in its alienation from God, produced through its morally fallen nature and rebellion against God (Isa. 59:2).	Ignorance of one's personal divinity and the consequences flowing from this. The major problem of mankind originates from its ignorance of its divinity and the corresponding lack of use of its divine potential.
JESUS	Jesus is the only incarnation of God, both fully divine and fully human (Jn. 3:16, 18; Col. 2:9). Born as the Christ (Lk. 2:11), denying Him is seen as "anti-Christ" (1 Jn. 4:2-3). He rose from the dead on the third day (1 Cor. 15:3-7) and is the Lord and Savior for His followers, being the only way to God (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5-6).	Some view Jesus as an incarnation of an impersonal God, like Krishna in Hinduism. In the New Age movement, gurus offer conflicting viewpoints on enlightenment, suggesting everyone is divine. This implies that while Jesus recognized his divinity, he may not have truly conquered death through resurrection, potentially merging into the impersonal Godhead and losing his individuality.
SAVATION	People are saved from their sins through personal faith in Jesus Christ, whose death on the cross satisfied God's wrath and offers forgiveness (1 Jn. 2:2; Jn. 3:16). Salvation is by grace through faith, resulting in victory over sin and death (Ephesians 2:8-9).	Salvation is about achieving enlightenment by transcending individuality and uniting with an impersonal God through yoga and meditation. It prioritizes awareness over faith in Christ, employing techniques like visualization and hypnosis. Sin is viewed as ignorance, making forgiveness unnecessary, while salvation is sought through self-perfection, rendering Christ's death and resurrection irrelevant.

DEATH	There is only one life before divine judgment (Heb. 9:27). Physical death separates spirit from body, while spiritual death means eternal separation from God. Jesus conquered death on the cross (1 Cor. 15:53-57), making it no longer an enemy for the redeemed (1 Cor. 15:26).	Death is an "illusion" without final consequences. Individuals may experience karmic repercussions, but ultimately, everyone will reincarnate and reunite with the impersonal, absolute God. New Age philosophy promotes universalism, asserting that all will eventually be "saved."
FAITH	Faith is personal trust in God's mercy, wisdom, power, and love, aimed at glorifying Him. It is evidenced in history (Heb. 11:3) and can result in genuine miracles, which are inherently good and glorify God (Heb. Ch. 11).	Faith is trust in the divine potential of human consciousness, highlighting our ability to shape reality and create a New Age. While it can lead to "miracles" through affirmation and visualization, these are often linked to demonic forces and ultimately glorify evil.
HISTORY	Linear, providential, and real.	Cyclical, e.g., in Hinduism, periodic, eternally recurring manifestations of Brahman; a result of its <i>maya/lila</i> , arbitrary, and unreal, i.e., a dream or illusion of the Absolute.
FINAL GOAL OF HISTORY AND CREATION	Jesus Christ's rule brings eternal heaven for the redeemed (Rev. 21-22). Personal faith in Christ leads to societal transformation, but a truly improved world awaits His physical return and the millennium. A perfect universe will emerge only after this period. Ultimately, Christ's redemption brings resolution to human suffering, pain, and evil (Rev. 21-22).	The New Age millennium is seen as a shift towards an impersonal Godhood, promoting personal extinction and a "leap in consciousness." This era promotes New Age beliefs, personal enlightenment, and unity that transcend differences. While some anticipate gradual change, others expect a sudden transformation. However, issues of evil and suffering remain, with ongoing karma and no final forgiveness of sin.
NATURE OF THE CREATION	Real, fallen, to be eternally redeemed in a new heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1). Rational thought, doctrine, language, etc., are rooted in God and reality since they reflect the nature of God. Jesus Himself is described as "the Word made flesh" (Jn. 1:1-14, Matt. 22:37; Rom. 3:2; 12:2; 14:5; Acts 17:11; Titus 2:1).	An illusion or dream of the Absolute (Brahman) is periodically destroyed and reabsorbed, then exuded as illusion (maya). Rational thought, language, and doctrine are inadequate and ultimately meaningless, serving as barriers to spiritual enlightenment that must be transcended or eliminated.
BASIS OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE	Divine revelation in the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16).	Solipsistic; internal, subjective, relative.
ETHICS	Absolute; based on God's nature and Word (1 Pet. 1:15-16).	Relative and amoral; based on human autonomy, situational ethics, and occult revelations from the spirit world.
VIEW OF FAITH/RELIGION	Only one is entirely true—biblical Christianity (This is a religious exclusivism, not religious bigotry or intolerance, since ideas are either true or false, not broad or narrow—Jn. 14:6, Acts 4:12).	All religions share core teachings that lead to a common understanding of a divine force, culminating in the Aquarian Age or the merging with the Absolute. This view reflects religious eclecticism and syncretism, resulting in pantheism.

A Biblical Response to New Age Philosophy

1. What Is New Age Philosophy?

New Age is a spiritual movement that blends elements from Eastern religions, mysticism, psychology, and occultism. Common beliefs include:

- All is one (monism)
- All is divine (pantheism or panentheism)
- Truth is within the self (subjectivism)
- Reincarnation and karma
- Spiritual evolution toward enlightenment or “Christ consciousness”
- Syncretism of religious traditions

2. Core Contrasts: New Age vs. Biblical Christianity

New Age Belief	Biblical Truth
God is an impersonal energy or force.	God is a personal , holy, loving Creator (Jeremiah 10:10; John 17:3).
You are divine (inner godhood).	Humans are created , not divine, and are fallen (Genesis 1:27; Romans 3:23).
Truth is relative and found within.	Truth is absolute and found in God's Word (John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16).
All paths lead to God.	Only Jesus is the way to the Father (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).
Reincarnation leads to enlightenment.	“It is appointed for man to die once”—no reincarnation (Hebrews 9:27).
Karma determines your future.	God’s grace through faith in Christ saves, not karma (Ephesians 2:8–9).
Jesus is a spiritual master or ascended being.	Jesus is God in the flesh , the only Savior (Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13).

3. Biblical Warnings Against New Age Practices

- **Deception of False Light:** Satan masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).
- **Forbidden Mysticism:** God condemns divination, spiritism, and occult practices (Deuteronomy 18:10–12).
- **Empty Philosophy:** “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy... not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).

4. Why the New Age Message Is Dangerous

- It denies sin and the need for a Savior.
- It replaces God's truth with man-centered mysticism.
- It draws people away from the exclusive claims of Christ.
- It encourages spiritual experiences not grounded in Scripture.

5. How to Respond Biblically and Graciously

- ✓ **Affirm their spiritual hunger** – many are sincerely seeking meaning.
- ✓ **Expose the contradictions** – if all is one, why is evil still real?
- ✓ **Present Jesus as the exclusive and sufficient Savior** – not just a teacher, but God who redeems.
- ✓ **Point to the authority of Scripture** over subjective experience.
- ✓ **Share your testimony** – how Christ offers true peace, not just mystical calm.

6. Conclusion: The True Light

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men... The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.” — John 1:4,9

The New Age promises inner peace and enlightenment but leads people away from the true and living God. In contrast, the **Gospel offers real peace** with God through **repentance and faith in Jesus Christ**, who alone reconciles us to the Father (Romans 5:1; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

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A Biblical Perspective on New Thought

What Is "New Thought"?

New Thought is a metaphysical belief system that emerged in the 19th century. It teaches that:

- God is a universal spiritual force (often impersonal),
- The mind has divine power to shape reality,
- Illness and misfortune result from wrong thinking,
- Positive thinking, affirmation, and visualization can bring healing, success, and divine favor.

New Thought has a significant influence on movements such as Unity Church, Religious Science, and various forms of self-help spirituality. Sadly, its ideas have subtly infiltrated some modern Christian worship, prayer, and preaching.

Biblical Evaluation of New Thought Influences

1. In Worship Songs

Examples of New Thought themes in songs:

- Overemphasis on *self*, human potential, and personal empowerment
- Lyrics like “I speak my breakthrough,” “I decree my destiny,” or “I command the heavens” reflect *mind-power* theology more than biblical worship

Biblical Response:

- Worship should center on God's character and glory, not our power (Psalm 115:1)
- True worship exalts Christ crucified and risen, not human achievement (Revelation 5:9-10)
- The focus must be on God's will, not positive declarations (Matthew 6:10)

"God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." – John 4:24

2. In Prayer

New Thought prayer promotes:

- Speaking things into existence
- Manifestation through affirmations
- Avoidance of "negative confessions"

Biblical Response:

- Biblical prayer is *humble petition*, not forceful declaration (Philippians 4:6; 1 John 5:14)
- We pray *according to God's will*, not to control reality (James 4:15)
- Jesus modeled **submission**, not self-assertion in prayer (Luke 22:42)

"You do not have, because you do not ask God." – James 4:2

"If we ask anything according to **His will**, He hears us." – 1 John 5:14

3. In Preaching

New Thought-influenced preaching may:

- Focus on attracting blessings through thought alignment
- Promise health, wealth, or success through faith declarations
- Minimize sin, repentance, and the cross

Biblical Response:

- Preaching should center on **Christ crucified** (1 Corinthians 2:2)
- The Gospel is not about self-fulfillment but **salvation from sin** (Romans 1:16)
- Biblical teaching warns against **itching ears** and man-centered messages (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

"Preach the Word... correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction."

– 2 Timothy 4:2

Key Dangers of New Thought Theology in the Church

- **Distorts the Gospel:** Shifts focus from Christ to self
- **Misrepresents God:** Reduces Him to a cosmic servant of human wishes
- **Undermines Scripture:** Replaces God's promises with affirmations and emotionalism
- **Deceives Believers:** Promotes a counterfeit faith that denies suffering, repentance, or divine sovereignty

Conclusion: Stay Anchored in Biblical Truth

Christians must be discerning. Not every spiritual-sounding phrase is biblical. We are called to **test every spirit** (1 John 4:1), examine lyrics and sermons by Scripture (Acts 17:11), and ensure that Christ—not self—is at the center of worship, prayer, and preaching.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly... singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." – Colossians 3:16