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4 – PROBLEMS IN CHRISTIANITY

Getting back to the question about the legitimacy of New Age and Eastern Mysticism, as mentioned before, any branch of knowledge can be used for good or evil purposes. Consider the example of a medical doctor. He or she possesses knowledge about the body and various healing methods. Most doctors aim to use that knowledge to help their patients. But some also have the wrong motivation and use their knowledge to serve their own agendas – usually for the sake of making more money. And the same holds true for energy healers (those who are adept in pranic healing, reiki healing, acupuncture, and other disciplines). And most of them are dedicated to using their skill and knowledge to help and to heal their fellow human beings.

Why then has the discipline of using spiritual energy acquired a bad reputation, as if it were something that belongs to the realm of spiritual Darkness, using spiritual energy for evil purposes? It is true that some do make use of their knowledge for the wrong reasons: selfish gain, to make a name for themselves, to manipulate others. Such misuse of spiritual energy could be referred to as occultism or witchcraft.

But the same is true across the board. Any branch of knowledge can be used for good or evil purposes. And this has happened in Christianity too. From individuals to nations, much harm has been done by those who professed to be Christians but twisted the teachings of Christ to serve

their own ends. The life and message of Christ is good and pure, but as so often happens, down the line, many who profess to follow Christ are actually following their own agendas. And this they justify by misapplying and misinterpreting Christ's teachings in a way that serves their own advantage.

Jesus foresaw such problems cropping up in the future among those who claimed to be His followers. *"They will also persecute you… But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me… yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.* (John 15:20-21, 16:2) And in the *Book of Revelation* Jesus addresses the earliest groups of believers, commending those who were doing well and admonishing those who needed to get back on track. (Revelation 2-3)

Further ahead in the Book, the Lord expresses His anger against a modern day empire, the *Great Harlot* – symbolic language for nations that are known to be "Christian" but have become so corrupted that their behavior and influence is a complete denial of all that Christ taught and stands for. In fact, two whole chapters in the *Book of Revelation* speak of God's displeasure with that kind of modern Christianity. (See the series of posts *Fall of the Great Harlot* about Revelation 17-18.) And from those passages, we learn about the chastisement that will have to be dished out to the *Great Harlot* empire. Jesus Himself targeted this kind of wayward Christianity in His Sermon on the Mount:

> **Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!" (Matthew 7:21-23, NIV)**

Sad to say, the corrupted state of the modern Church gave the early founders of New Age teaching (the movement known as Theosophy) plenty of fuel for a negative view of Christianity.

Back again then to the question, how did New Age and Eastern Mysticism acquire a bad reputation in the Christian world? The common

opinion is that these areas of knowledge carry subtle undercurrents, difficult to detect, that undermine faith in Christ. There is truth to that, yes, but perhaps the more important question that needs answering: how did those hidden, subtle undercurrents get embedded in New Age teaching and practice? (That will be addressed in upcoming posts.)

And hopefully, once that question is answered, it will make it easier to know how to proceed and how to focus on learning about and making use of spiritual energy in the way that God intends.

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Continue to: 5 – Origin of the Western Version of Eastern Mysticism