

The New Age Movement Q & A

The “New Age” Worldview

I. Historical Influences

- * Eastern Religions: Hinduism & Buddhism**
- * Spiritualism & the Occult**
- * American Transcendentalism (Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman)**

*** “New Thought” Movement (Unity/ Christian Science/ “I AM” movement)**

*** Revival of Neo-Paganism (Wicca)**

*** Depth Psychology**

--> Carl Jung & the ‘Collective Unconscious’

--> Transpersonal Psychology

*** Revival of Interest in Ancient “Gnosticism”**

--> *Gospel of Thomas; Gospel of Judas*

II. A Common Theme: “Monism” (Pantheism)

- 1. The highest reality is that all things are One and the One is divine**
- 2. Humans are ultimately divine**
- 3. The human problem = ignorance of our true divine self**
- 4. The solution = becoming aware of the unity of all things, and embracing our true divine nature**

Eckhard Tolle

Introduction

1. The Tolle-Oprah Extravaganza

2. Who is Eckhart Tolle?

3. Influences on his thought

I. What is Ultimate Reality?

1. For Tolle, Ultimate Reality is ONE

--> Individuals, relationships and love are not ultimately real (they are “*maya*”).

* The biblical teaching that “God is love” (I Jn.4:8) is “not absolutely correct (106)

* “God is the One Life and beyond the countless forms of life. Love implies duality: lover and beloved, subject and object. So love is the recognition of oneness in the world of duality “(106).

* "To love is to *recognize yourself* in another" (105, emphasis added).

- * **“Love your neighbor *as yourself* means you neighbor *is yourself*, and that recognition of oneness is love” (“Ripples on the Surface of Being,” What is Enlightenment? www.wie.org/j34/tolle.asp.)**

2. In Scripture, Ultimate Reality is LOVE

- * God is LOVE (Trinity)**

- * God creates others distinct from himself to invite them to share in his love forever**

II. Freedom From Beliefs?

- 1. Tolle (and Oprah) claims he's NOT promoting beliefs (17)**
 - * “Every belief is an obstacle” (189)**
 - * Tolle claims to be helping usher in a new age that will witness the end “not only of all mythologies but also of ideologies and belief systems” (21)**
 - * “Saying ‘I am right and you are wrong’ is a dangerous thing” [for it is] “one of the ways in which the ego strengthens itself” (69)**

2. a) The belief that every belief is an obstacle is itself a belief!

b) Almost every page of Tolle's book dogmatically advocates "right" beliefs and criticizes "wrong" ones.

*** The belief that God is love is not absolutely correct (106)**

*** Our "true self" is "one with all things," "God," "the Source," the "I AM," etc**

*** Evil has only a "relative" reality and it is identification with forms (22)**

- * “All religions are equally false and equally true, depending on how you use them” and anyone who believes “only your religion is the truth” is “using it in the service of the ego” (70-71).**
- * every experience we have, regardless of how much suffering it involves, is good for us for it helps us evolve (e.g. 41, 57)**
- * Jesus’ message was distorted when he began to be worshipped (15)**

- * Jesus, like Buddha and other “Enlightened masters” was an “early flower” in the evolution of human consciousness (15)**
- * Gnosticism recovered original insights of Jesus (16)**

III. Tolle consistently twists Scripture to conform with his beliefs.

- * When Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life,” he meant to say “[t]he very Being that *you are* is Truth” (71, emphasis added). He was speaking of the “I AM” that forms “the essence identity of every man and woman, every life-form in fact.” (71).**
- * When Jesus talked about “heaven” he was referring to “the inner realm of consciousness” (23).**

- * When Jesus told us to deny ourselves, he was saying t we were to “[n]egate ... the illusion of the self” (79).**
- * When Jesus referred to “eternal life” he was actually referring to “the dimension of the formless within” you (81).**
- * When Jesus said “the truth shall set you free” he meant “[o]nly the truth of who you are [who *Tolle* says you are]... will set you free (80)**
- * When Jesus said “blessed are the meek” he was referring to those are “egoless” and “feel their oneness with the whole and the Source” (309)**

- * The story of the Prodigal Son is a story of the “Journey from unconscious perfection, through apparent imperfection and ‘evil’ to conscious perfection. (*Power of Now*, 101)**
- * When Jesus died on the cross he was giving us “an archetypal image” of how our evolving consciousness is “burning up” our “ego” (102).**
- * The “new earth” the Bible talks about is “the emergence of a transformed state of**

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